

# OXHILL PARISH PLAN

2014



## Acknowledgements

A document like a Parish Plan does not just happen, it comes as a result of hard work and commitment, largely but not only, by the members of the Steering Group, who have contributed, commented, distributed, collected and discussed the surveys and then developed the Plan. I would like to thank them for their time and efforts.

I am very grateful to Gill Stewart, Ann and Peter Hale and Tony Eastaugh, for their expert knowledge and to Grenville Moore for his unstinting support and guidance.

But mostly, I am mostly grateful to the people of Oxhill for responding to and completing the surveys, attending village meetings and for all their comments and encouragement during this process. Without your commitment there would be no plan.

One of the strongest themes emerging from the survey is the strong sense of community in Oxhill.

This Plan is another example of the community of Oxhill at work!

Sue Hunt

Chair

Oxhill Parish Plan Steering Group

**Our parish is defined by those who live and work here, an area to which people feel they belong. However, we can be open to change, welcoming new people, new ideas, and new buildings that would enrich and enhance our neighbourhood without degrading or losing what we already have.**

**Grenville Moore**

**Chair, Oxhill Parish Council**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1. Stratford District Council (SDC) is following the lead set by the Government in its Localism Act 2011, with Parish Councils and their communities becoming more involved in the future development of their villages, through the development of **Parish Plans and Neighbourhood Plans** that will form part of the bedrock of new Local Development frameworks.
- 1.2. In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out how these policy plans should contribute to the achievement of sustainable forms of development. The Government has also determined that, over the next few years, there must be a significant increase in the number of new homes created. To that end, local authorities are charged with ensuring that sufficient land is identified to meet challenging targets.
- 1.3. Stratford District Council (SDC), in preparing their response to this challenge, have finalised their Core Strategy, spanning the plan period, until 2031, which will demonstrate how they plan to meet this challenge.
- 1.4. In The Core Strategy, SDC have amended the list of criteria that define a 'Local Service Village' (LSV) and have determined that Oxhill meets the qualifying criteria for the lowest category (4), with an expectation of growth of 10-25 houses over the Plan Period until 2031.
- 1.5. **This Parish Plan** comprises the findings from the surveys and consensus views from village meetings, **Oxhill Value Statements** informed by the survey, together with an **Action Plan** that identifies aspirations of Oxhill residents and sets priorities, with regard to their quality of life, future needs and wishes as a community, their environment, and future housing development. Oxhill Parish Plan and Village Design Statement, when adopted, will become a supplementary planning document and a material consideration in the assessment and determination of future planning applications in the village.
- 1.6. **A Village Design Statement** has been developed that will provide guidance to developers and builders, in order to protect and preserve the characteristics of Oxhill. **(Appendix 8)**

## **2. PROCESS**

- 2.1.** Following a Village meeting, called by the Chair of the Parish Council, in February 2013, Oxhill residents determined to develop, initially, a Parish Plan and, potentially, a Neighbourhood Plan, in order that the Parish Council and SDC have a formalised way of understanding local needs and wishes for the current and future development of the village. The reason for this was that it was considered premature to pursue a Neighbourhood Plan in the absence of a clear Core Strategy in February 2013.
- 2.2.** A steering group was formed, terms of reference identified (Appendix 1) and plans developed to conduct a Village Housing Survey and a Village Household Survey that would, together, inform the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement.
- 2.3.** The Housing Survey was conducted in June 2013, with all houses in the core village being assessed by a range of parameters, including their age, construction material, location relative to other properties and their impact on the rural landscape.
- 2.4.** The Village Household Survey was carried out in October 2013. 137 survey questionnaires were distributed, one to each household in the Oxhill Parish, excluding empty properties. 114 completed survey forms were returned, giving an 83% return. Comments and responses in the returns represent the opinions of 254 people, comprising 222 adults and 32 children under the age of 17. Not every question was answered in each survey, whilst some questions allowed for multiple answers.
- 2.5.** The results of both surveys were used to develop a draft Parish Plan that was then presented at a village meeting in February 2014, where residents were asked to comment on and then validate the proposed Action Plan.

### 3. LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING OF OXHILL

- 3.1. Oxhill lies in a broad swathe of farmland running from Shipston-on-Stour north-eastwards to the M40 and beyond. The area around Oxhill and Tysoe is known as the Vale of the Red Horse which confers upon it a strong sense of local identity. Its landscape, typical of the Feldon area, is characterised by the largely flat, low-lying clay vale running along the base of the Jurassic escarpment of Edge Hill which marks the southern extent of Warwickshire. Seen in this context, Oxhill Hill, rising only 20-30m above the surrounding country, is a notable eminence to the north-west of the village, and beyond that, the higher land around Pillerton Priors, a former shoreline, is a containing feature of the Vale.
- 3.2. The Vale, with its heavy poorly-drained soils, is sparsely populated agricultural land, comprising isolated farmsteads surrounded by medium-sized geometric-shaped fields often bounded by hawthorn and blackthorn hedges. There are few hedgerow trees and few areas of woodland, so long views across the landscape are possible, and the prevailing impression is of big skies and open vistas. Many original hedgerows have survived and some new hedge planting is taking place.
- 3.3. There are no rivers of any significance, but the landscape is dissected by small streams fed by drainage ditches. The streams create very shallow valleys which provide some definition to an otherwise largely flat landscape and the stream courses and occasional ponds are often marked by willows. Such a stream skirts the eastern edge of Oxhill.
- 3.4. The Vale produces good pasture and livestock rearing was the predominant activity until it began to give way in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to arable farming, which can produce high yields, given good management and drainage. Nevertheless extensive areas of permanent pasture remain and there are well-defined areas of ridge and furrow close to the village that provide a tangible link with the past.
- 3.5. Oxhill stands on the south-western side of a shallow valley through which runs a small stream, for centuries known only as 'the brook', but latterly sometimes referred to as The Torrent. It eventually joins the Stour near Tredington. Oxhill Manor stands isolated from the village to the east of the stream. With that single exception, the floodplain has acted as a constraint on the eastward expansion of the village from its earliest origins. A series of ponds at the south-eastern corner of the village probably originated as fishponds associated with the manor at Church Farmhouse.

**'Oxhill is an attractive, small village in beautiful countryside with green spaces within the village, rural in location, appearance and character, with uninterrupted views of and integration with countryside.'**

#### 4. HISTORY OF OXHILL

- 4.1. The Oxhill area was settled in Roman times, and a Roman villa has been excavated just a few metres beyond the parish boundary in the direction of Pillerton Priors, no doubt taking advantage of the nearby water source. The Domesday Book records that Oxhill, formerly held by a Saxon named Toli, had been granted to the Norman, Hugh de Grandmesnil, a powerful man with wide-ranging estates. The village church dates from the Norman period.
- 4.2. In medieval times, the village had more than one manor, but no resident lord. One manor or large land-holding, was based around the present Church (Farm) House, and the second centred around the present Manor House, situated just to the east of the village proper.
- 4.3. Oxhill was slow to accept the religious changes made at the Reformation, and was in trouble for not removing the Pope's name from its service books. Later it faced the even greater upheaval of the Civil War, and in 1644, the Parliamentary cavalry camped briefly in the village. Their reception is unrecorded, but the Rector at the time was a Royalist, as was Daniel Blackford, who fought at Edgehill and lies buried in the church
- 4.4. Enclosure of the open fields in 1797 took away from the labouring class any rights in those fields and they became dependent agricultural workers, living a life of great poverty, overcrowding and disease, and the infant mortality rate was high in Oxhill. The stream was the main water supply but it was polluted by sewage from Tysoe. During the agricultural depression of the 1870s many villagers emigrated, and cottages were left to decay and ruin in a long decline that lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1871 the population had been 376; by 1901 it had fallen to 172.
- 4.5. Methodism took early root in Oxhill, largely due to the Ward family, who held cottage meetings before the opening of the Chapel in 1814. They also supported a Methodist Boarding School at Payn's House. The Chapel was well-attended for many years but eventually closed in 2003 after its congregation dwindled. The building is now in private hands.
- 4.6. The Church of St Lawrence underwent a period of decline in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but in 1878 there was a major restoration. At one time there was a Church School but this, together with the Methodist School, was made redundant with the opening of the Village School in 1878, which ran until 1945 when the departure of evacuee children made numbers unsustainable. The old school building is now used as the Village Hall.
- 4.7. Oxhill lost seven men in the First World War, but fortunately none in the Second, though several men served in the forces. The village received evacuee children and employed POWs on its farms.
- 4.8. Farming has ceased to be the predominant occupation, and working villagers now mostly commute to work.
- 4.9. From 1944 a few houses were built by the War Agricultural Committee and the Rural District Council, and later, private housing development spread along the roadsides of Green Lane and Whatcote Road, and also on infill plots in the historic core of the village.
- 4.10. In 2013, Oxhill Parish comprises 140 properties. 128 of these form the 'core village' bounded by the Main St and conservation area, Whatcote Rd. and Green Lane, forming a triangle of linear development, surrounding a central area of agricultural land that comprises 8 fields that extends to the heart of the village. This provides almost all properties in the core village with

open countryside views and is seen as 'the green lungs of the village', an essential characteristic of Oxhill. The remaining 12 properties are outlying farms and conversions from what had been, originally, farm buildings.

## **5. BIODIVERSITY IN OXHILL**

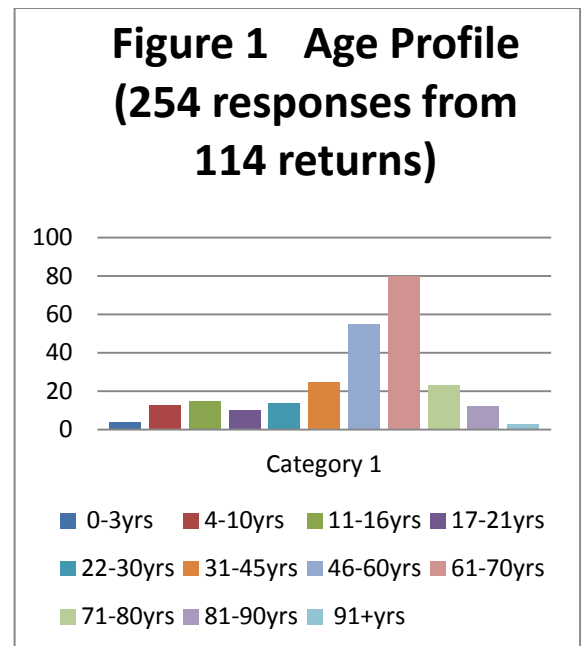
- 5.1. Biodiversity is a fundamental part of the earth's life support system, providing the many basic services for humans, such as fresh water, fertile soil and clean air. Biodiversity helps pollinate our flowers and crops, clean up out waste and put food on our tables. Without it we would not be able to survive.
- 5.2. So how well does the parish of Oxhill fit into this system? Surprisingly well. The village is unique in that it is laid out in a triangle with nine small fields with hedgerows in its centre. Many of the gardens support wildlife areas and have ponds.
- 5.3. Three years ago a Local Biodiversity Action Plan Group (LBAP) was set up allied to the parish council. This group is now known as OWLS (Oxhill Wildlife Society). The purpose of this group is to promote and help sustain biodiversity through communication and practical projects
- 5.4. OWLS' first task was to measure the fauna and flora of each garden in the village by means of a survey. 50 species of birds were recorded with another 14 in the surrounding farmland, including a pair of yearly returning curlew. Our ponds revealed toads, frogs, common (smooth) newt and a seeming abundance of great-crested newts.
- 5.5. OWLS have installed owl and kestrel boxes within the parish, and barn, tawny and little owls are all present in the parish as well as kestrels, sparrowhawks and buzzards. Red kites and raven are also recorded. Bat walks have taken place recording five different species of bats. A village butterfly survey revealed 27 species (including some moths). A current ongoing project is to reinstate and encourage wildflower areas. OWLS has worked with Warwickshire Highways Department to co-ordinate a reduction in verge mowing and a large area of the churchyard has now been set aside and managed for wildflowers and wildlife. A wildflower count revealed 53 wildflowers, six grasses and nine trees and shrubs. In the wider parish 131 wildflowers, 19 grasses and 14 trees and shrubs have been identified. In the near future the church is due to be re-roofed and OWLS will liaise with the PCC to install swift nest boxes. Plant-rich meadows, hedgerows, woodlands and ponds are being lost at an alarming rate throughout Britain. It is important and essential that the decline in our fauna and flora is halted. Strong local support for the work of OWLS indicates that the people of Oxhill want to play their part"
- 5.6. The triangular shape of the main residential roads of Main St, Whatcote Rd and Green Lane almost completely enclose an area of agricultural pasture land, crossed by public foot paths, that not only support the wide variety of flora and fauna but are viewed as the 'green lungs of the village' and highly valued by the community.



## 6. THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY FINDINGS

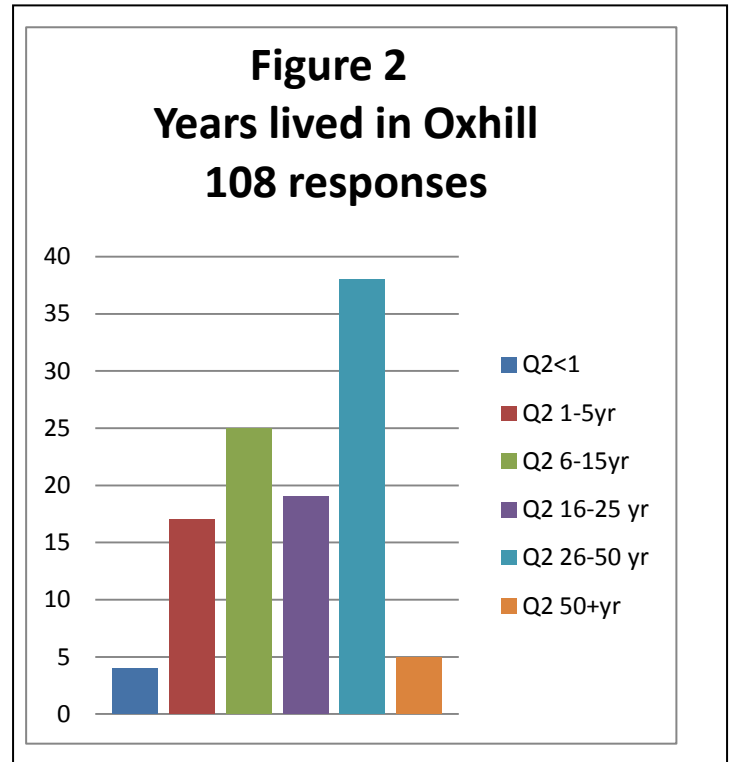
- 6.1. Oxhill people have had the opportunity, through public meetings, individual household surveys and other communications, to express their aspirations for the future of Oxhill. The historical perspective and housing survey has provided a rationale of how Oxhill has developed, how properties sit within the broader landscape and identified features that are seen as important.
- 6.2. The survey questions were developed following an initial 'trawl' to identify key issues. The questions sought to provide information about the people who choose to live in Oxhill, their homes, means of transport, what people like and dislike about living in Oxhill, and their attitude and concerns with regard to future development
- 6.3. The data has been analysed and the results presented as graphs and commentary in this section. Some questions provided opportunities for multiple responses. All graphs show actual numbers of responses and, where applicable, show both the number of households responding in addition to and the total number of data items shown.
- 6.4. The results have been incorporated into a series of 'Value Statements' (Conclusions. Section 11) , an Action Plan. and A Village Design Statement (Appendix 8)

- 6.5. **The people.** From the 114 (83%) households who responded to the survey, identifying 254 people, there are 32 children under the age of 16, 49 adults between the ages of 17 and 45, 55 adults between the ages of 46-60 and 118 people over the age of 61. Of this latter group, 15 are over the age of 81.(Fig. 1)
- 6.6. Population breakdown by gender shows 108 Adult males, 114 adult females, 15 male children and 17 female children.
- 6.7. Whilst this is not the total number of people living in Oxhill (281 on 2013 Electoral Roll), the response is fully representative of the age and gender profile of the whole population.

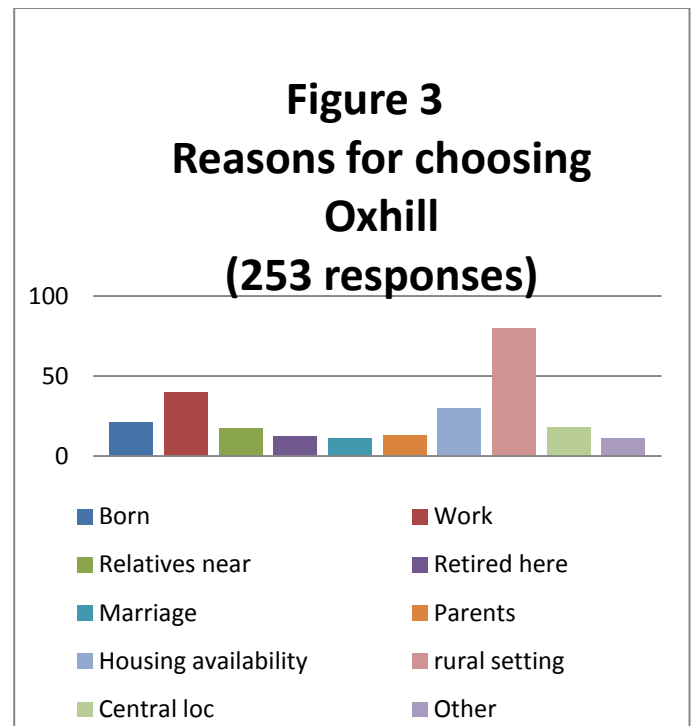


### 6.8. Length of time resident in Oxhill

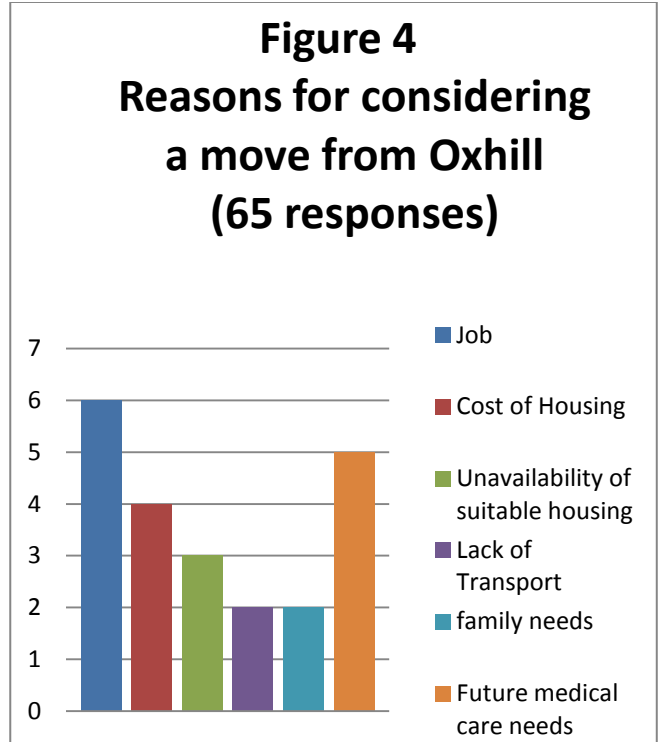
The survey shows that most people who choose to live in Oxhill stay for a significant length of time. 62 (45%) of households stated that they had lived in Oxhill for more than 16 years. (Fig. 2)



6.9. The most common reason, ( 80, 72%) for choosing to live in Oxhill was given as 'the rural setting'. Some responses gave more than 1 reason (Fig.3)



6.10. Only 9 households indicated they did not plan to stay in Oxhill, indicating a 93% desire to stay in today's Oxhill, although 24 households gave reasons for why a move from Oxhill might be considered in the future. (Fig.4)



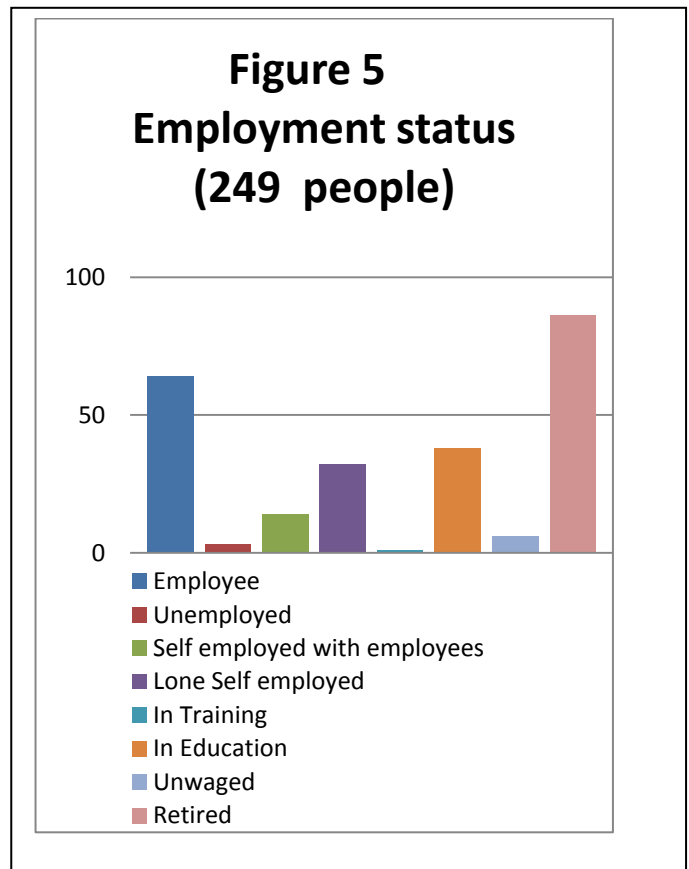
**6.11. Employment**

6.11.1. Of the 212 adults represented by the survey, the largest single group (40%) described themselves as 'retired'.

6.11.2. 38 (33%) people indicated that they were in education.

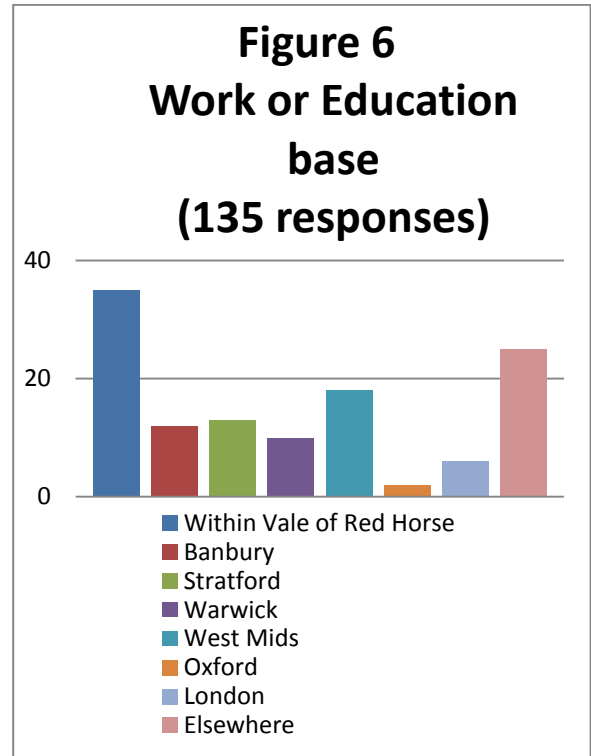
6.11.3. Of those in employment, 46 indicated they were self employed, of which 14 employed others. Many of these work from a home base.

6.11.4. Only 3 indicated they are currently unemployed. (Fig.5)

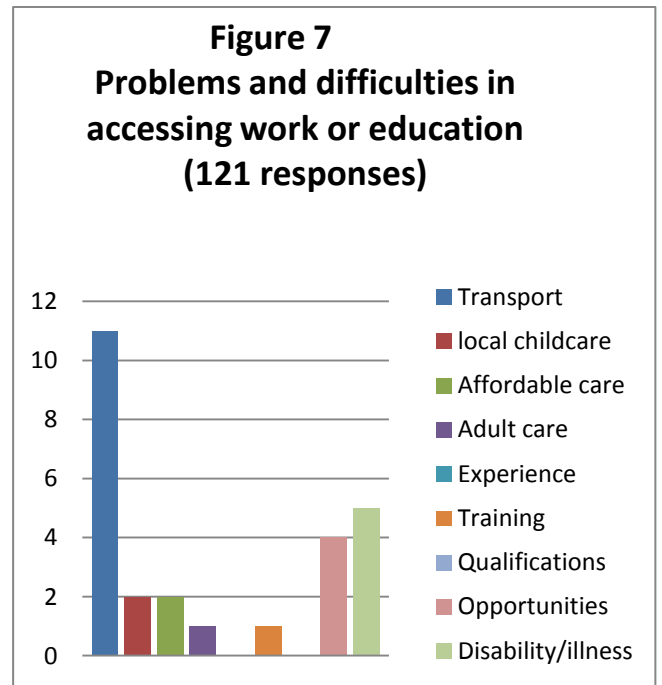


**6.12. Work or education base**

From the responses, it is clear that a wide range of locations are accessed from Oxhill. , Where 'other' was indicated, these include Brackley, SE England, Leyland, Leeds, Manchester, Epwell, Worcestershire Shropshire, Kenilworth, Reading, Shipston, Chipping Campden, Rugby, Newcastle, Wales and Bicester.(Fig. 6)



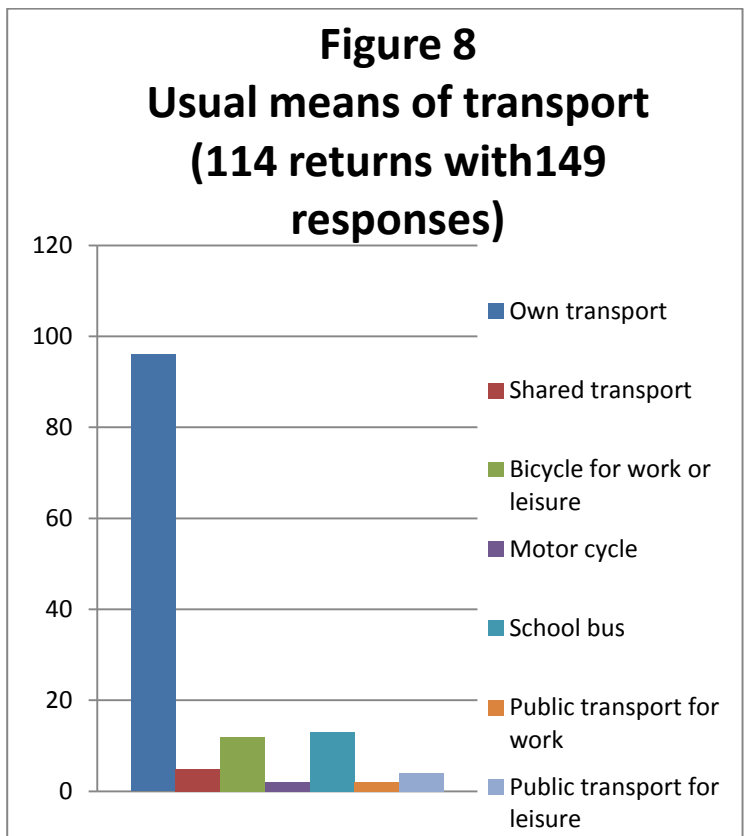
6.13. Few people reported problems with a range of factors that might impede access to employment. 95 (78%) households indicated they had no problems, whilst the single most indicated was transport. (Fig 7)



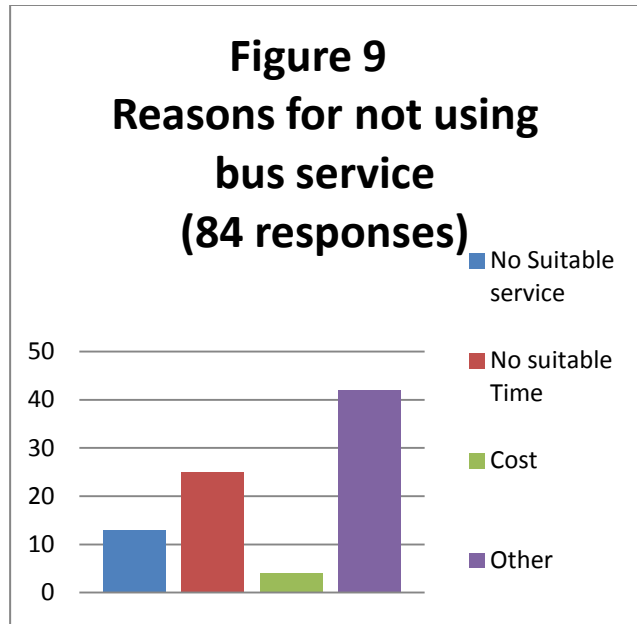
- 6.14. **Independent Living** Despite the age profile of Oxhill residents, few people reported that they required assistance to maintain independence. Of those who did, 5 use friends and family, 3 use private services and 1 uses Social Services.
- 6.15. This is not surprising, given that friendships have been formed over many years. It is also an indicator of the strong community spirit evidenced by the high number of comments when asked what responders liked about Oxhill.
- 6.16. In the survey a number of people suggested ways in which a community network might be formed to provide support or transport for shopping, visits to doctors etc. (Appendix 4)

## 7. TRANSPORT

7.1. The survey shows that Oxhill residents are reliant on the car as the means of transport. Only 2 people indicated that they use the bus to travel to work. Other regular bus users are children attending local schools many of whom use special school bus services. (Fig 8). However, the few people who do use the bus regard it as vital.



7.2. Public transport is seldom used. Most people stated that the bus was inconvenient by virtue of time, frequency or destination. Where people gave a reason for the largest single response (other) these included phrases such as 'not needed' and 'do not wish to' (Fig. 9)



7.3. There is no train access within 10 miles of Oxhill. However, some Oxhill residents use the train, mostly occasionally, although a few use the train to access work. A variety of stations are used, although most people choose to use Banbury.

**7.4. Distances travelled**

7.5. People who choose to live in Oxhill are aware that services such as schools, shops, post office, bank, medical services, dentist, hairdresser and leisure activities all require a journey. The main means of transport used for these was shown as 'own transport'.

7.6. The survey shows that people travel significant distances for work and education. The range of distances for education varies from 4 to 48 miles per day, with the most common being 16-25 miles.

7.7. Travel distances to work (round trip) range from 0 to 180 miles per day. 8 people travel more than 100 miles per day, with a further 50 travelling in excess of 50 miles. All of these journeys are taken by car.

7.8. There is little sharing of journeys, except for school and leisure.

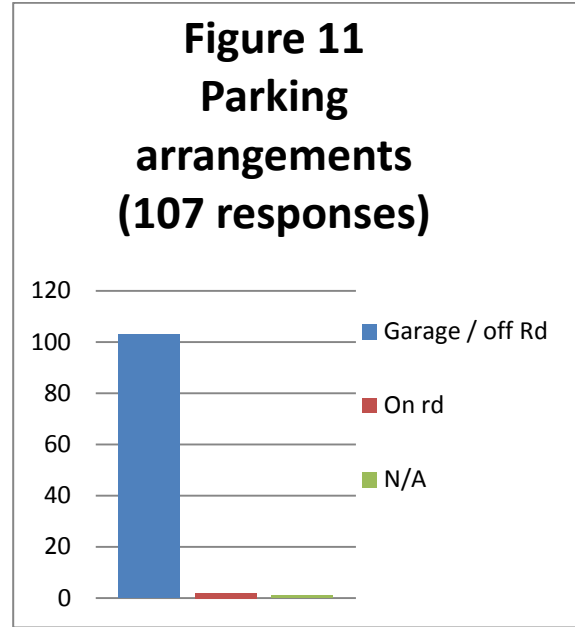
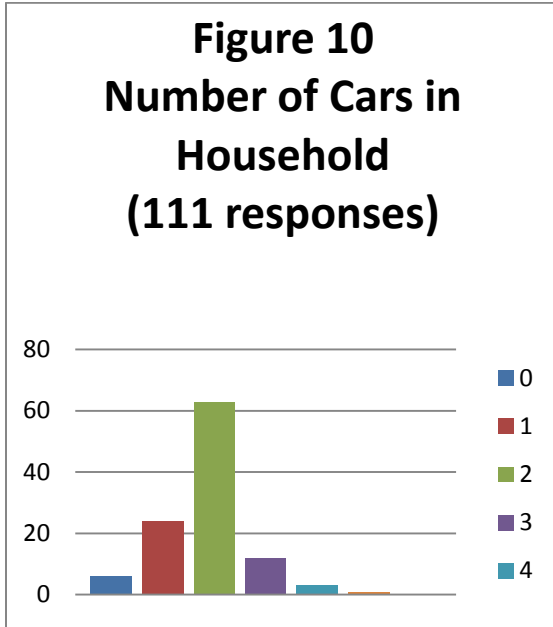
7.9. Most people travel to the larger centres of Stratford and Banbury for main shopping, (a round trip of more than 20 miles), with the convenience stores in Kineton and Tysoe also used (4 -6 miles) . A round trip to hospital is between 20 and 30 miles. Doctor visits require a round trip of 4 to 12 miles, dependant on the surgery, whilst dentists can involve trips of up to 30miles round trip.

7.10. More than 40% of households use grocery home delivery services, either regularly or occasionally.

**7.11. Car ownership**

7.12. Only 6 adult responders of driving age stated that they did not own or have access to a car. The majority of households have 1 or 2 cars. (Fig 10). (These figures do not include 'hobby' or classic cars). Most houses have garage or 'off-road' parking more than adequate for their needs. Only 2 households said they were obliged to park on the road. (Fig 11)

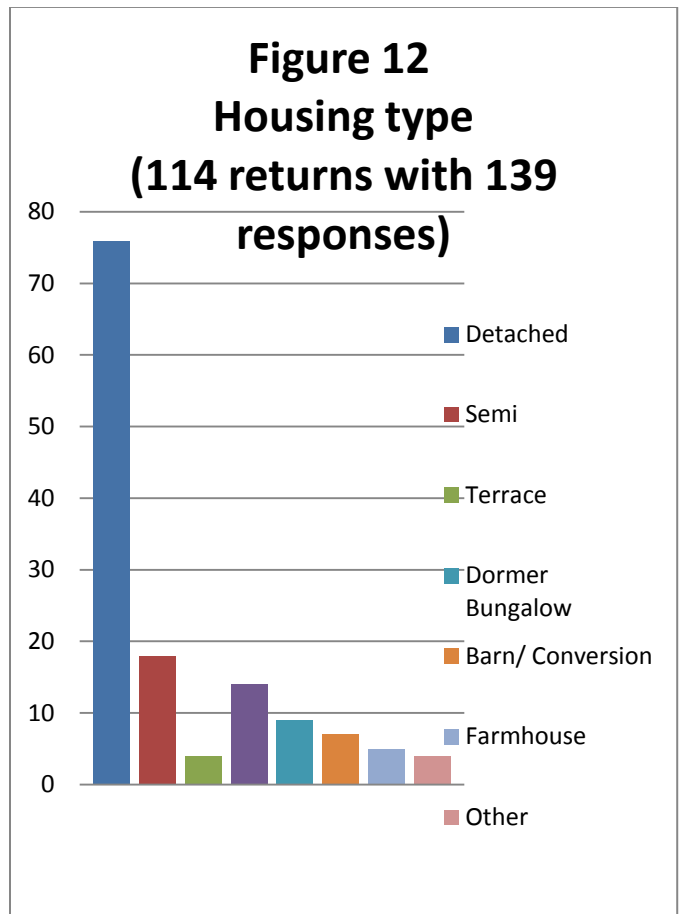
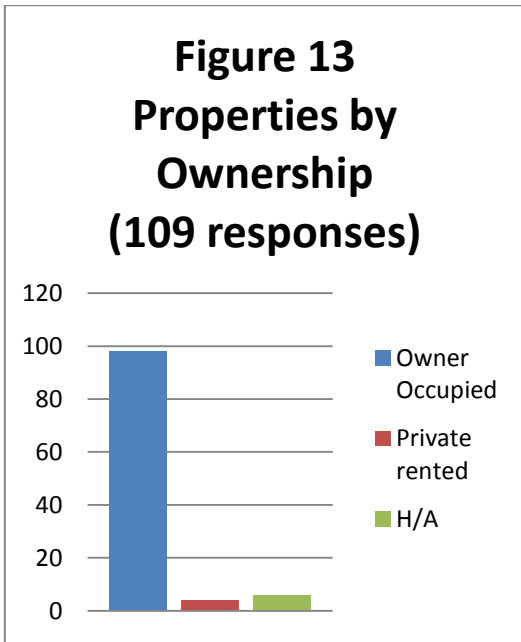
7.13. Of the 112 households who answered the questions, only 6 households had no-one who could drive. Of these, 3 were over the age of 91, 2 over 70 and the remaining 1 self employed. 8 households had more drivers than cars (usually 2 drivers and 1 car). The remaining 94 households owned as many cars as there were drivers. indicating the almost universal dependence on the private car for essential and leisure journeys



**8. HOUSING**

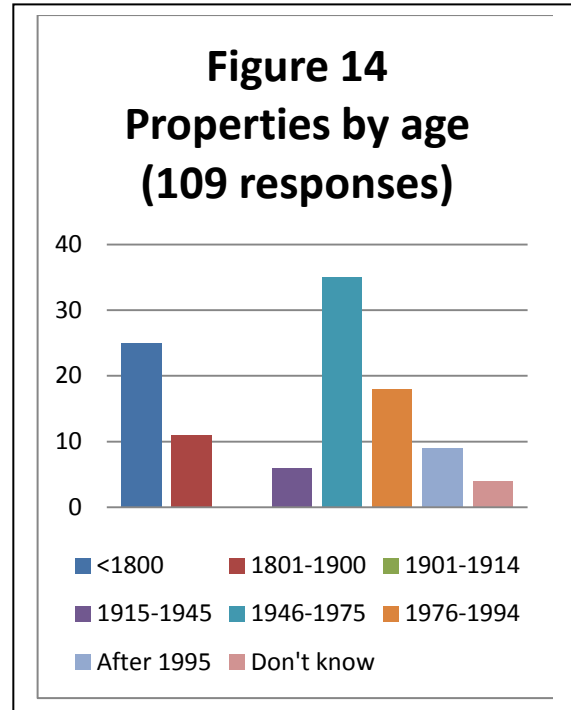
- 8.1. The results of the Housing Study, conducted in June 2013, when taken together with the Village Household Survey questions have provided detail of current housing.
- 8.2. Oxhill has developed over time. Post war development in Whatcote Rd and Green Lane has been gradual, by different builders and at different times. The largest single development has been The Sett, where a cul-de-sac of 6 properties was built in the 1990's. There has been no large single development to change the general character and balance of properties in the village.

8.3. The majority of houses in Oxhill are owner occupied, detached and sit in medium to large gardens. (Figs. 12 & 13). A significant characteristic of Oxhill is that the majority of properties have views into the surrounding countryside or agricultural land. This amenity is much prized by the residents, some of whom stated this as a reason for choosing Oxhill.

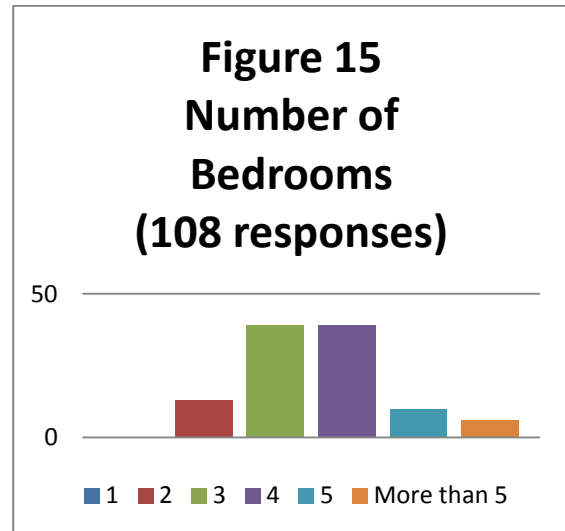




8.4. The housing survey identified that 42 properties were built prior to 1900 and 62 since 1946. (Fig. 14). This is confirmed, pro rata by the Household Study responses.



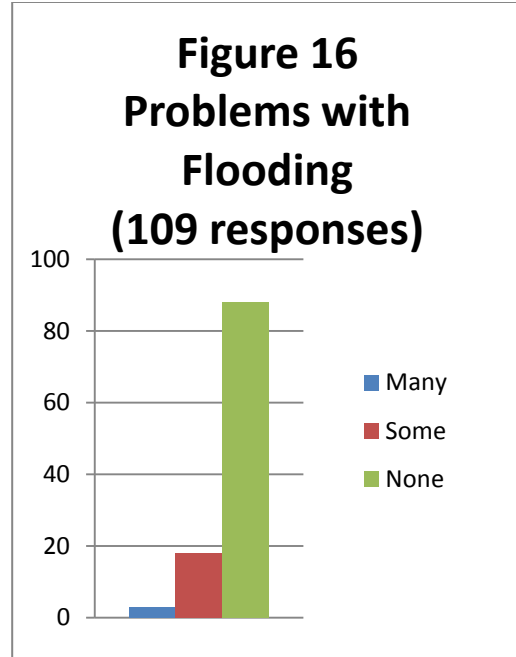
8.5. The majority of houses have 3 or 4 bedrooms. (Fig 15)



8.6. The majority of responses would indicate that people do not consider their houses too large or small, although 23 said they would consider moving to a larger or smaller house if an appropriate property became available.

**8.7. Problems with Drainage and Flooding.**

- 8.8. 21 households reported that they have many or some problems with flooding. Several are along the course of the brook.
- 8.9. Other properties are affected by water run-off from The Leys field, where water flows under and across Main St and down Gilkes Lane, Rouse Lane and Beech Rd.
- 8.10. There are some problems with mains drainage in Whatcote Rd, due to a collapsed sewer. Plans are in hand for the replacement of the sewer in early 2014.



**8.11. Heating fuels**

- 8.12. There is no gas supply in Oxhill. The predominant heating fuel is oil, with a number of properties using wood or open fires and electrical heaters in addition to oil.
- 8.13. 10 properties have some form of electricity generating system, the most common being solar panels attached to the roof.

**9. LIVING IN OXHILL**

- 9.1. The survey asked a number of questions relating to the quality of life in Oxhill.
- 9.2. People enjoy living in Oxhill. There is a strong sense of community, shared values and mutual support.
- 9.3. When asked what they most and least like about living in Oxhill (Appendix 1 & 2) the ‘top ten’ factors identified were:-

**Most Like**

Subject area	No. of comments
<b>Community spirit &amp; people</b>	74
<b>Rural location, appearance and character, with uninterrupted views and integration with countryside</b>	62
<b>Peace &amp; tranquillity</b>	58
<b>Attractive, small village in beautiful countryside with Green spaces within the village</b>	22
<b>Pub</b>	17
<b>Village Hall &amp; Range of activities available</b>	14
<b>Lack of ‘urban’ environmental pollution</b>	11
<b>Feeling Safe</b>	10
<b>Church</b>	4
<b>Convenient Central Location</b>	3

**9.4. Least like**

A number of responders commented that there was nothing to dislike. The ‘top ten’ least likes were:-

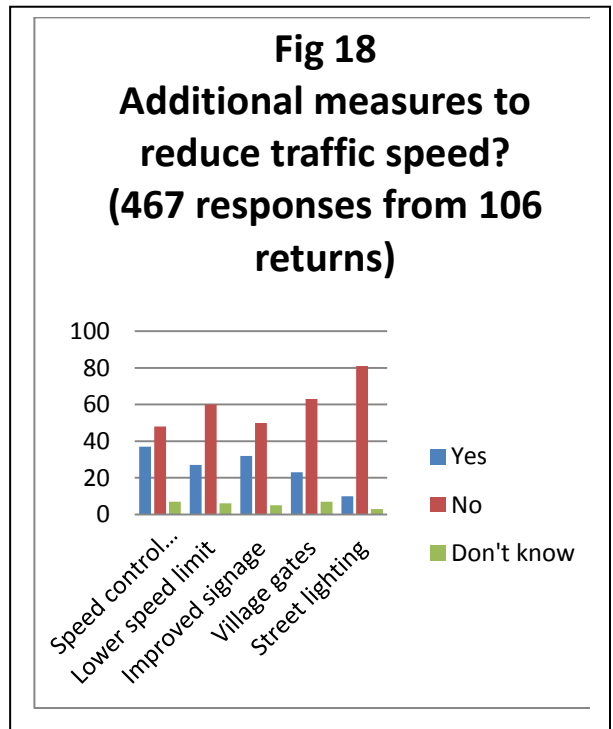
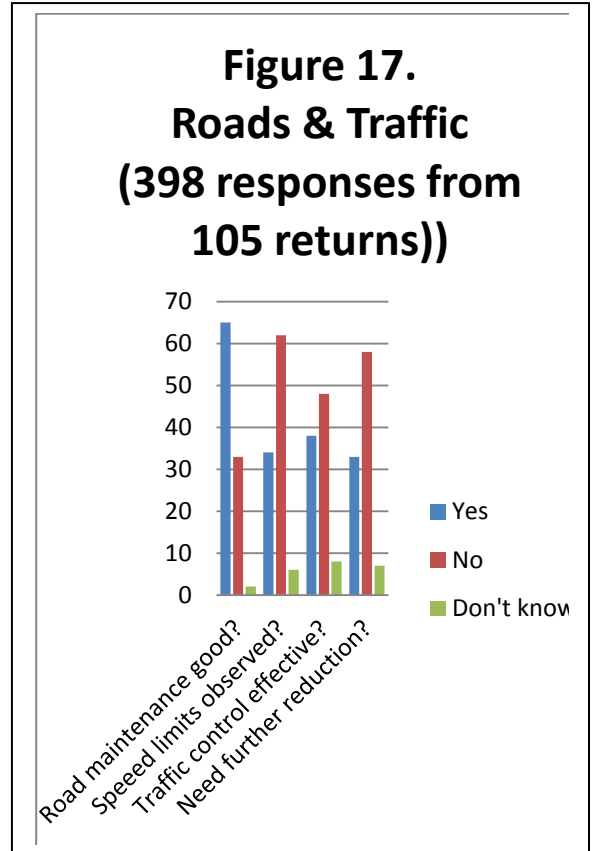
Subject area	No. of comments
<b>Traffic and speed</b>	21
<b>Lack of Shop</b>	18
<b>Negative Attitudes/ people</b>	10
<b>Fear of Development</b>	9
<b>Pub</b>	9
<b>Quality of Broadband and phone signal</b>	8
<b>Dependence on car. Lack of adequate bus service</b>	8
<b>Utilities</b>	6
<b>Dog Fouling</b>	5
<b>Flooding</b>	4
<b>Irresponsible parking</b>	4

9.5. **ROADS AND TRAFFIC** In the main, roads are considered to be fairly well maintained. (Fig 17) There were a number of comments about pot-holes, particularly on Kineton Rd. Some comments about the condition of Beech Rd have been resolved since the survey.

9.6. There is a great deal of concern with regard to the speed of traffic in both Main St and Whatcote Rd, with a disregard to speed limits and ineffective traffic control measures. When asked what people least liked about Oxhill, the greatest number of responses (21), about a single issue, were about traffic. e.g.:-

- Speeding from vehicles
- Fast cars downhill from A422
  - Speeding cars using the village as a rat run
  - Large vehicles using Oxhill as shortcut.
- Heavy traffic
- Tractors using Oxhill as short cut
- Cars using Oxhill as a 'rat run'
- The constant heavy traffic on Whatcote Rd vibrates the house.
- Delivery vehicles and their disregard for our verges.

9.7. Whilst the majority of people do not wish to see a further reduction in speed limits, there is a consensus that would like to see the current speed limits better enforced. (Fig 18) Suggestions as to how this might be achieved include improved signage and clearer messages about slowing down and the village limits. Several responders proposed that consideration be given to the 30 mile limit being extended to south of the Whatcote Rd/Green Lane junction. Few people would like village 'gates' and even fewer would like street lighting. Notably the lack of streetlights is cited as a reason why people like Oxhill.



9.8. **Local Environment**

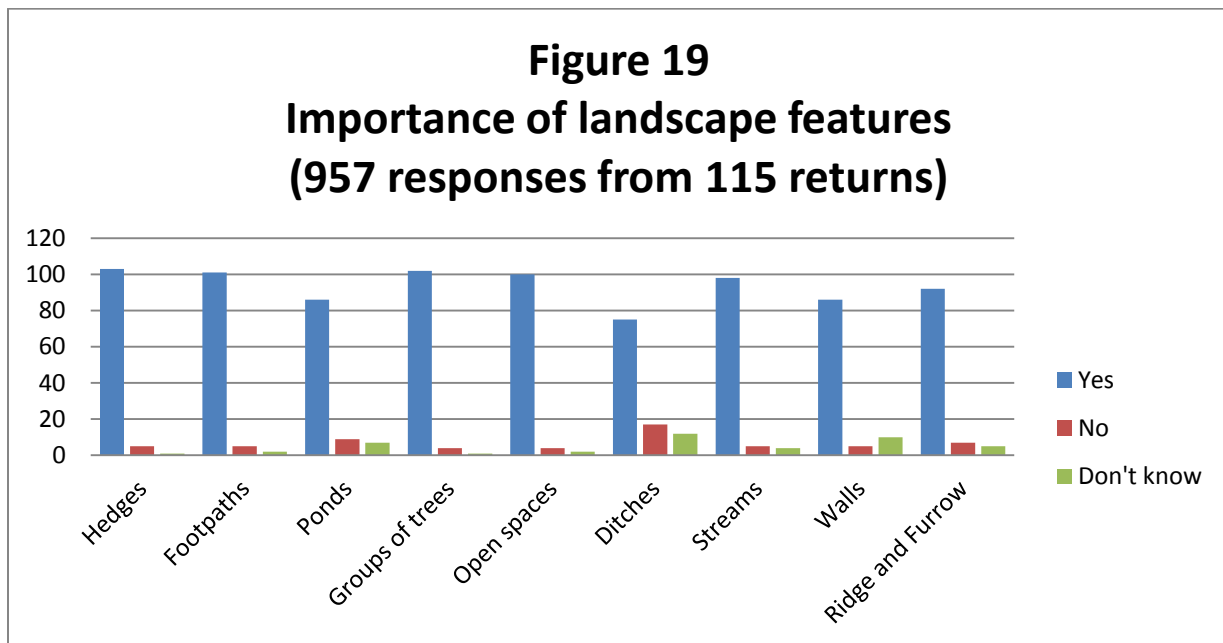
9.9. Landscape features. The survey asked responders to consider the contribution of a number of typically rural landscape features to their enjoyment of life in Oxhill. (Fig 19)

The responses indicate that these features make a significant contribution to the quality of life and enjoyment of living in Oxhill. This is reinforced by responses to what people like about living in Oxhill, where there were 84 comments that can be summarised as

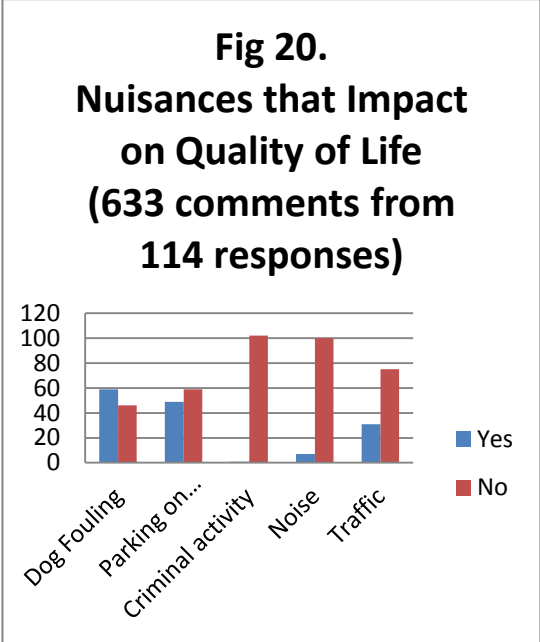
**‘Oxhill is an attractive, small village in beautiful countryside with green spaces within the village, rural in location, appearance and character, with uninterrupted views of and integration with countryside.’**

9.10. This is further evidence of the value placed on the rural nature of Oxhill, as suggested by the work of OWLS.

9.11. Oxhill people make regular use of local footpaths and bridle paths that are considered to be, mostly, well maintained.



9.12. The survey asked for residents opinions on a range of nuisance issues that impact on the quality of life in Oxhill. (Fig 20). Responses show that, for the most part, Oxhill is considered to be a very pleasant place to live. Whilst there is little anxiety over levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, a significant number of responders stated that dog-fouling and parking on pavements are seen to be a problem.

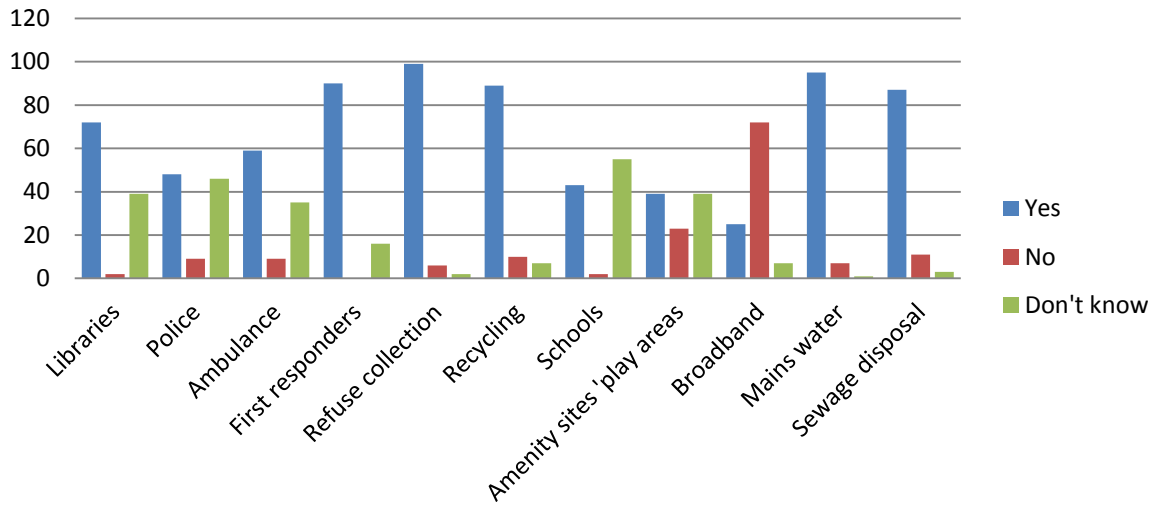


9.13. **Public services**

9.14. There is broad satisfaction with the range of public services, (Fig 21), with the exception of the speed and reliability of Broadband in Oxhill. Given the number of self-employed and ‘working from home’ residents, this presents a significant problem to them in addition to an inconvenience to others who use the internet.

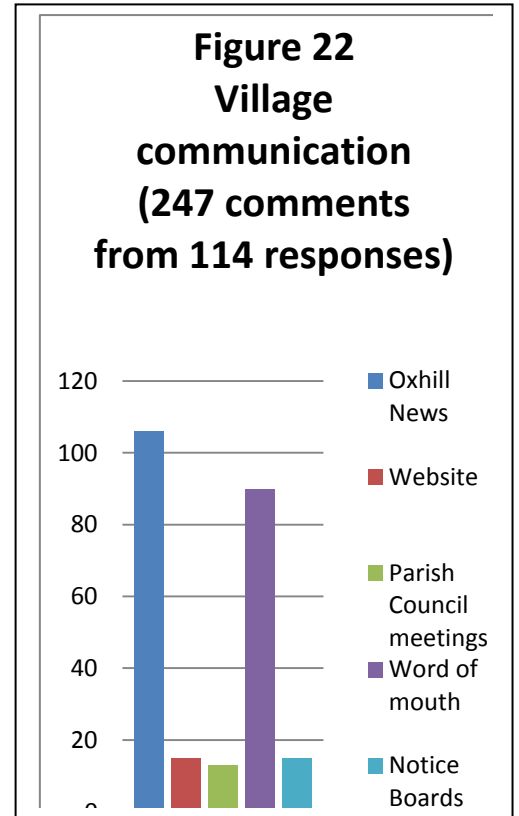
9.15. A number of comments were made with regard to the difficulties in accessing the recycling centre in Shipston.

**Figure 21.**  
**Satisfaction with public services**  
**(114 responses with 1138 comments)**

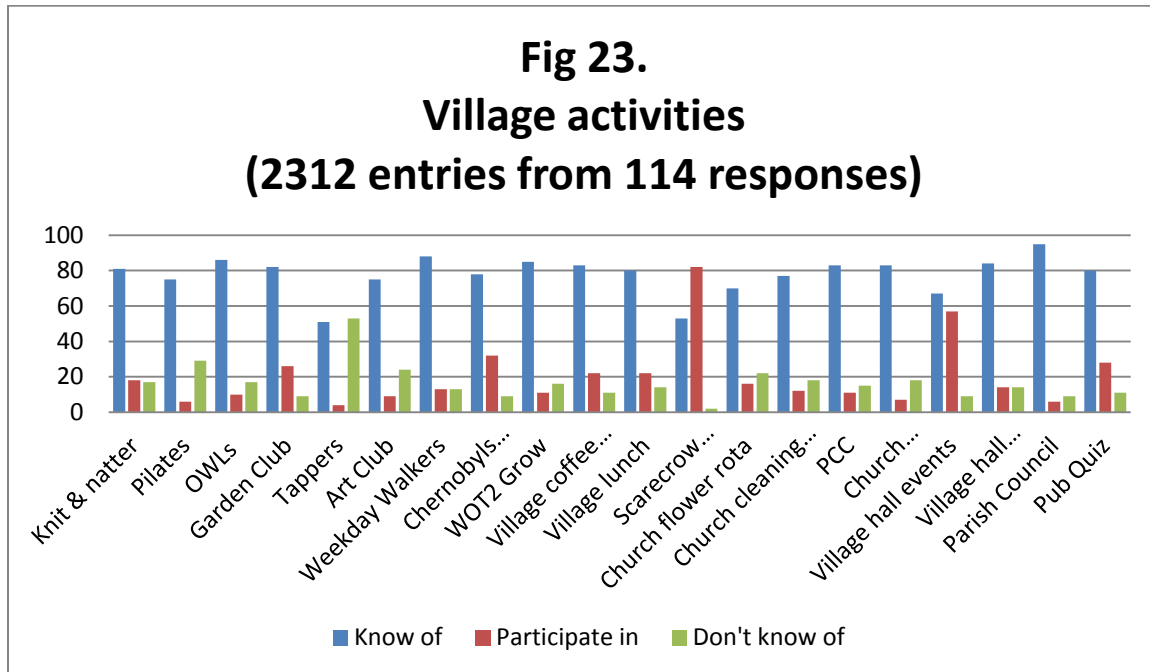


9.16. **Village Activities** The most common way of finding out what is going on in the village is by reading the Oxhill News, a monthly publication financed by the Parish Council (Fig 22). As might be expected in a small community, word of mouth is a well used means of disseminating information.

9.17. Parish Council meetings are not well attended by members of the public. Parish meetings and reports are notified in the Oxhill News. A number of comments were made requesting that Parish Council minutes be made available on the Parish web-site.



9.18. The survey asked about knowledge of and participation in a range of village activities. (Fig 23)

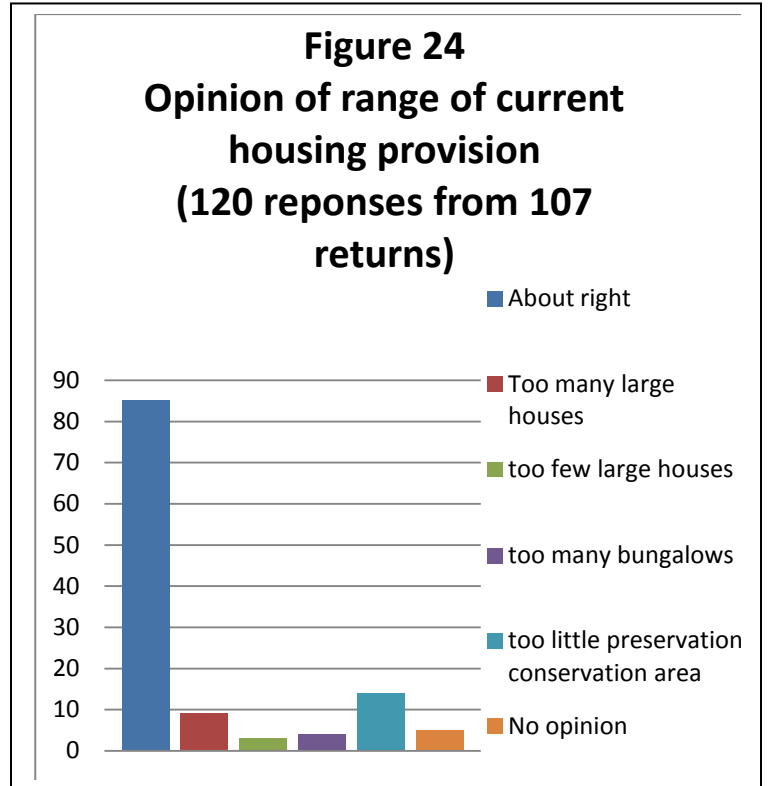




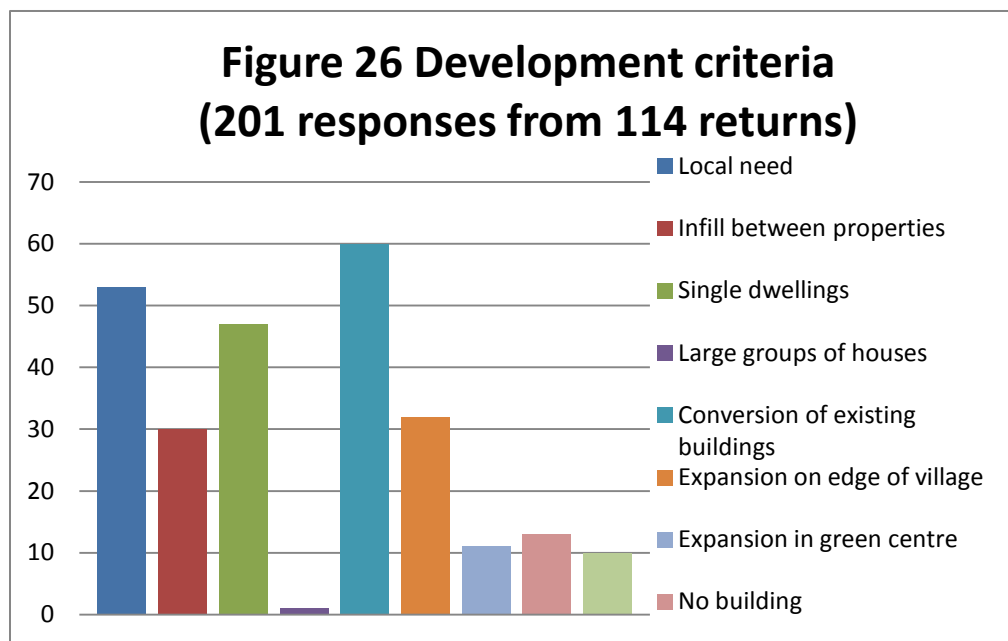
- 9.19. From the responses, the majority of people are aware of most of the wide range of activities organised in the village, with 42 people recording involvement in their organisation. However, it would appear that, whilst programmes are listed monthly in The Oxhill News, there is no available list of activities together with contact details of organiser. This could be very helpful to people considering attending an activity, or wishing to find out more.
- 9.20. Activities associated with supporting and maintaining the Church are less well known than those of the village hall.
- 9.21. A number of suggestions were made with regard to possible future activities, with several requests for activities for young people. 39 people said they would be willing to organise or assist with activities. (Appendix 5)

## 10. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- 10.1. The survey asked for response to a number of questions about the current housing provision in Oxhill (Fig 24) and what impact development might have.
- 10.2. Oxhill is a small village, with its own character and few amenities. Apart from those born here, people who choose to live in Oxhill do so in the knowledge of this. Most residents do not want this to change and are concerned about the impact that excessive development may have on this. Despite this, there were few responses wanting no new development at all.



- 10.3. When asked about what criteria should be used when considering development, the range of responses shows that people were most in favour of conversion of existing buildings, infill between dwellings and limited developments such as single dwellings, all to meet local need and were least in favour of large developments and expansion in the green centre. (Fig 26)



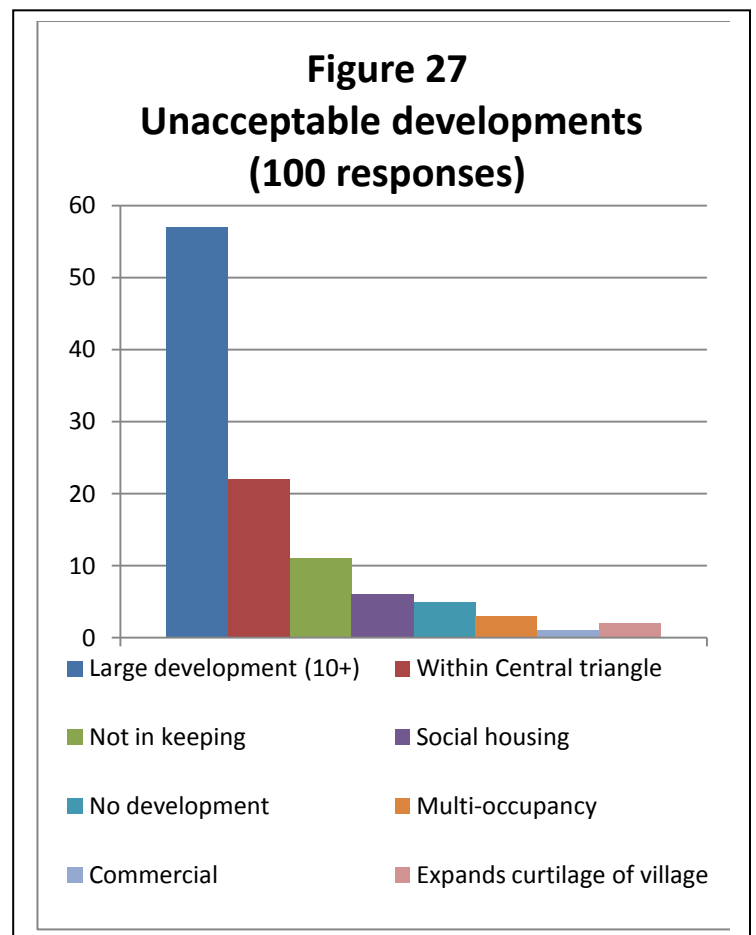
10.4. Where they were made, individual associated comments were that development should include:-

- A variety in keeping with the current village, including infill.
- Building that maintains the current integration with and views of the countryside.
- Limited individual houses only
- Building on Whatcote Rd/ Green Lane corner
- Development that will enable young people to remain local -youngsters leaving home and starting own families - normally have to move away.
- Village should grow organically rather than a large number at the same time. Well built sympathetic design
- A small number of affordable homes in suitable areas where it would not cause flooding
- Small groups of housing linked to but not in the 'old' village, built using vernacular material, plus artisan workshops.
- In moderation
- Limited affordable housing for young people, the next generation and some sheltered accommodation for older residents willing to 'trade down'

10.5. **Unacceptable Developments.**

When asked what development would be unacceptable, there was a range of responses, summarised in (Fig 27) and listed in the subsequent table.

10.6. From the responses it is clear that most people are concerned about the impact that large development would have on the character of the village, or would have a significant impact on the integration of a large number of new residents at any one time.



10.7. **Additional comments**

Topic	Number of comments
<p>Dense development  Dense development  dense modern development  Too many houses built too quickly.  large development of starter homes  large estates, especially without serious consideration to design and drainage  A large estate -  Large estate of soulless houses.  A large development of any sort  major development of any type  A large scale development/development of large homes  A large housing estate anywhere in or around the village  A large number of houses on an estate  Anything more than infill building  Housing estate  Housing estate, Social housing. V large Executive housing  Toy town' housing estates.  Housing estates  Housing estates/multiple dwellings/  Large groups of houses together (difficult to integrate into village life)  Multi dwelling developments  Major developments outside current building lines  Large, major development by a single builder estate  Large housing estates  large estate type of development with little landscaping  Any medium or large housing development  Any large housing estate and any which will lead to increasing hazard because of access  New housing estates &amp; lots of homes crammed into small spaces  Numerous modern developments  Estate type development altering the village character  Any estate style multi dwelling development  Large housing estate not in keeping with village  Large areas  Large scale groups of houses/flats etc  A large housing development  Large numbers of houses  Large development either on edge or within village  Large estate of new houses  Large scale development would ruin the character of our village  Large estates  Large soulless development as in Newbould and Stratford  Large housing development especially of larger houses</p>	<p>46</p>

<p>New estate or groups of houses  Large scale development extending the built up limits of present village  Multi housing development  Large developments on the outside of the village  Large developments on the end of our village</p>	
<p>Building on the central triangle.  Anything in green centre  Infill of the centre  Infill in the centre green area  Expansion in the Green centre.  Expansion in the Green centre.  Expansion in the green centre  Filling in the village centre  infill  anything on central core  In fill,  On the green centre  Development of the green centre of Oxhill  Development on fields surrounding village or in centre  A large development in the centre of the village  Totally opposed to building in the green centre  Large estate in centre of village (behind the Peacock)  Building in the field next to the Chapel  Expansion in the Green centre  Developments that destroy the green lungs of Oxhill  Large development ,particularly in centre of village  Anything in the green triangle or Gardeners field</p>	22
<p>A group of more than 10 homes in any one place  Anything over 10 properties in a single area of the village  more than 4 properties in one location  10+ dwellings  More than 10 houses  Housing estate (plots with more than 4 houses)  Large scale development over 6 units on any one site  No single development more than 2 or 3  Anything large - say 10+ houses  Any large development greater than 4 houses  Any large scale residential units greater than 3.</p>	11
<p>Development out of keeping with local area  Blocking of peoples outlook by new development  Anything not in keeping with conservation area or the street scene.  Modern architecture 'spec housing'.  Infilling of 'old village'  Building on water meadows  Building on village greens</p>	11

<p>Building on 'backland'  Green belt or village expansion  Anything that spoils/restricts the existing rural outlook - or behind existing houses  Cul de sac. Or 'Urban' style estate. Anything that reduces rural visible landscape</p>	
<p>Social housing  Social housing accommodating no local residents. The facilities are inadequate this type of development  Social housing  Social estate  Green field council houses</p>	6
<p>Any. We moved here due to the spectacular views and rural location. We do not want to live somewhere more developed (either bigger or with street lights etc  None  Any  None  All</p>	5
<p>Multi occupancy buildings  Flats or apartments. Anything with more than 2 storey's  Blocks of high rise flats</p>	3
<p>Any commercial developments</p>	1
<p>No development on South side green Lane</p>	1
<p>Expansion on the edge of Oxhill  Groups of cheap ugly housing expanding the curtilage of the village</p>	2

## **11. CONCLUSIONS AND VALUE STATEMENTS**

- 11.1. **THE PEOPLE.** Oxhill has a significant proportion of people who have retired. Many of these have chosen to live in Oxhill because of the rural nature of the village and despite the lack of amenities. Few people require additional support or assistance. Where they do this is mainly provided by friends and family. There is very strong community spirit, with village coffee mornings, lunches and village events that provide many opportunities for social engagement and interaction. However, from the survey it would appear that there could be more assistance for the elderly, particularly with transport or shopping.

### **Value Statement 1**

**Oxhill residents want to be sure that the elderly are well supported and have access to local, community support when needed.**

**Action Point 1 A working group will be established to assess need, consider suggestions (Appendix 4) and propose action.**

- 11.2. **VILLAGE ACTIVITIES.** Whilst there is a wide range of activities available within the village, there do not appear to be many that are attractive to the younger people of the village. More work needs to be done to ensure that the needs and wishes of the young are heard.

### **Value Statement 2**

**Oxhill young people should have improved access to a range of activities provided as locally as practicable.**

**Action Point 2 A working group will be established to consider proposals (Appendix 5) and propose action**

- 11.3. **THE VILLAGE.** Oxhill is a small village, with a long history of intimate connection and integration with farming and the surrounding countryside. Uniquely, that close connection is reflected in the open views across farmland from almost every property. The OWLS work has identified the wide variety of flora and fauna that are supported by the character of the gardens and boundary treatments, with ancient hedges and ponds. People value public footpaths and other typical features of their rural landscape, particularly the central triangle, seen as the 'green lungs of the village'.

### **Value Statement 3**

**Oxhill residents want to retain the close connection with and visibility of the countryside that has always existed and that supports the biodiversity. Planning policy and planning decisions should consider The Oxhill Parish Plan and VDS and protect the close connection with the countryside and support**

### Action Point 3

1. The Parish Plan and Village Design Statement (VDS) will provide the basis for further work
2. To maintain green spaces and hedges.

- 11.4. **FLOODING.** Close proximity to water meadows, together with the surface water run-off from the Leys field has led to flooding of fields and gardens for 21 properties. Measures to reduce the threat of continued or increased flooding need to be considered.

The problems with foul water drainage in Whatcote Rd are known and remedial action being undertaken.

### Value Statement 4

**People who live in Oxhill should be confident that measures to reduce the risk of potential or actual flooding are in place.**

### Action Point 4

1. Parish Council to undertake further work to clarify the nature and extent and causes of flooding. Where necessary this will be in collaboration with other agencies
- 2 To deliver Whatcote Rd project on schedule and with successful outcome.

- 11.5. **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT** The village has seen many changes, over hundreds of years, the most recent being the 75 houses that have been built since 1945 (a rate of about 1 per year). Growth has been gradual, with step by step development along Whatcote Rd and Green Lane. The largest single development was The Sett in the 1990's. Most residents acknowledge that this 'ad hoc' style of development is likely to continue and most think this is of benefit to the village, enabling new residents to integrate with the community. However, the clear wish is that increase should be gradual and buildings should reflect the style and character of local properties and not reduce the amenity of others.

- 11.6. When asked about what criteria should be used when considering development, the range of responses shows that people were most in favour of conversion of existing buildings, infill between dwellings and limited developments such as single dwellings, all to meet local need and firmly set against large developments and any expansion in the green centre. Where they were made, individual associated comments were that development should include :-

- A variety in keeping with the current village, including infill.
- Building that maintains the current integration and views of the countryside.
- Limited individual houses only
- Building on Whatcote Rd/ Green Lane corner
- Development that will enable young people to remain local -youngsters leaving home and starting own families - normally have to move away.
- Village should grow organically rather than a large number at the same time. Well built sympathetic design



- A small number of affordable homes in suitable areas where it would not cause flooding
- Small groups of housing linked to but not in the 'old' village, built using vernacular material, plus artisan workshops.
- In moderation
- Limited affordable housing for young people, the next generation and some sheltered accommodation for older residents willing to 'trade down'

These comments, concerns and criteria, together with Stratford District Council target for a Level 4 Local Service Village, have been used to develop a Village Design Statement (Appendix 8)

### **Value Statement 5**

**Development in Oxhill should reflect the requirements of the The Stratford District Council Core Strategy and meet the target of 10-25 properties between 2011 and 2031. Growth should be gradual and individual development schemes should be of a scale that does not impact on the established character of the village and reflect the Village Design Statement**

**Action Point 5** The Parish Council and SDC to support the recommendation contained within the Parish Plan and associated VDS and take them into account when consulting on planning applications.

**TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT** There is very little employment available in Oxhill or nearby, except for those who are self-employed and /or working from home. Those who work, unless it is from a home base, need to travel, often considerable distances.

Oxhill people are heavily dependent upon the car as the means of transport, seen as the only credible way to access work, shopping and leisure.

Of the 112 households who answered the questions, only 6 households had no-one who could drive. Of these, 3 were over the age of 91, 2 over 70 and the remaining 1 self employed. 8 households had more drivers than cars (usually 2 drivers and 1 car). The remaining 94 households owned as many cars as there were drivers.

It is difficult to see how a cost-effective improved or increased public transport system could support the diversity of destinations required. The very high degree of dependence upon the car for every household member has a bearing on the number and type of houses that should be built in Oxhill.

- 11.7. **THE ENVIRONMENT** A significant number of people indicated concerns about the speed of traffic through Oxhill. Few wanted additional speed reduction or traffic calming measures. Most wanted drivers to comply with current speed limits. The two most common comments were about dog fouling and parking on pavements

## **Value Statement 6**

**Oxhill residents want to be safe and expect people to behave responsibly**

### **Action Point 6**

- 1 The Parish Council should work with Neighbourhood Police to ensure speed limits are enforced and**
- 2 To consider the use of additional alerts for motorists.**
- 3 Raise awareness of responsible dog ownership.**
- 4 Reduce obstruction of pavement by inconsiderate parking.**

**11.9. PUBLIC SERVICES** There is a high degree of satisfaction with public services and amenities, the significant exception being access to Broadband. This has a negative impact on the many self-employed, those who work from home and others for whom access to Broadband maintains links with family, supports independent living with access to internet shopping and helps maintain interests.

## **Value Statement 7**

**Oxhill residents should have access to a reliable and fast Broadband service#**

**Action Point 7** On behalf of PC, a nominated Lead to lobby providers, identify preferred provider and investigate the implementation of superfast Broadband services for Parishioners

**VILLAGE COMMUNICATION** The Oxhill News is seen the most effective means of communication, followed closely by 'word of mouth' as might be expected in a small village. More people are aware of how the village hall is organised than arrangements for the church. However, there were some comments about the need for a comprehensive list, or programme of village activities, accompanied by contact numbers.

Parish Council meetings are not well attended and the activities of the Parish Council not widely known. Meeting minutes continue to be handwritten, thus maintaining a valuable historical chronicle and are available on request. Although abbreviated notes of Parish Council meetings are printed in The Oxhill News, more might be done to explain the role and work of the Parish Council.

## **Value statement 8**

**Oxhill residents should be well informed about how the Parish Council, church and village hall events are organised and local activities are arranged.**

12 OXHILL PARISH PLAN

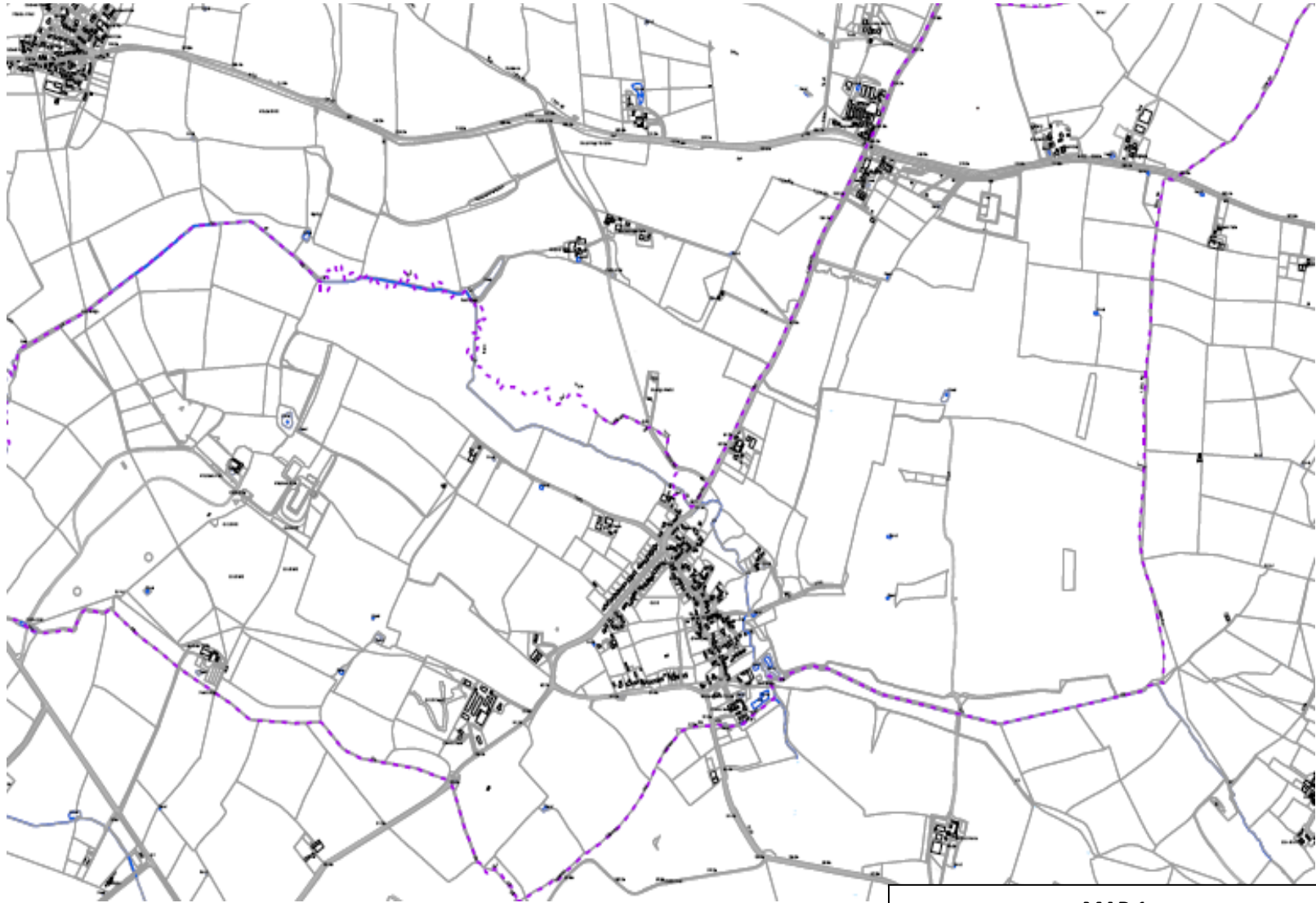
ACTION PLAN

	<b>Value statement</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Success criteria/ evaluation</b>
1	Oxhill residents want to be sure that the elderly are well supported and have access to local, community support when needed.	1. Formation of working group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to assess needs,</li> <li>consider suggestions and</li> <li>formulate plan</li> </ul>	Parish Council delegated lead	6 months	Elderly people feel well supported by the community.
2	Oxhill young people need to have access to a range of activities provided as locally as practicable.	1. Formation of working group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify wishes and formulate proposed actions to meet need.</li> </ul>	Parish Council delegated lead	6 months	Young people have access to leisure activities as close to home as practicable
3	Oxhill residents want to retain the close connection with the countryside that has always existed and that supports the flora and fauna. Planning policy and planning decisions should consider the Parish Plan and VDS and protect the close connection with the countryside	1. Maintenance of green spaces, hedges. 2. The Village Design Statement (VDS) should be basis for further work	OWLS Parish Council Residents SDC	On going	Maintained character of Oxhill
4	People who live in Oxhill should be confident that measure to reduce the risk of potential or actual flooding are in place.  Foul water overflow should not happen	1 Parish Council to undertake further work to clarify the nature and extent and causes of flooding. Where necessary this will be in collaboration with other agencies 2 To deliver Whatcote Rd project on schedule and with successful outcome.	Parish Council Affected residents WCC Flood Team  Severn Trent Water.	Ongoing	Reduced risk of flooding for affected properties
5	Development in Oxhill should reflect the requirements of the The Stratford District Council Core Strategy and meet the target of 10-25 properties between 2011 and 2031. Growth should be	The Parish Council and SDC to support the recommendation contained within the Parish Plan and associated VDS and take them into account when consulting on planning	Parish Council SDC	On going	Developments conserve and maintain character of Oxhill

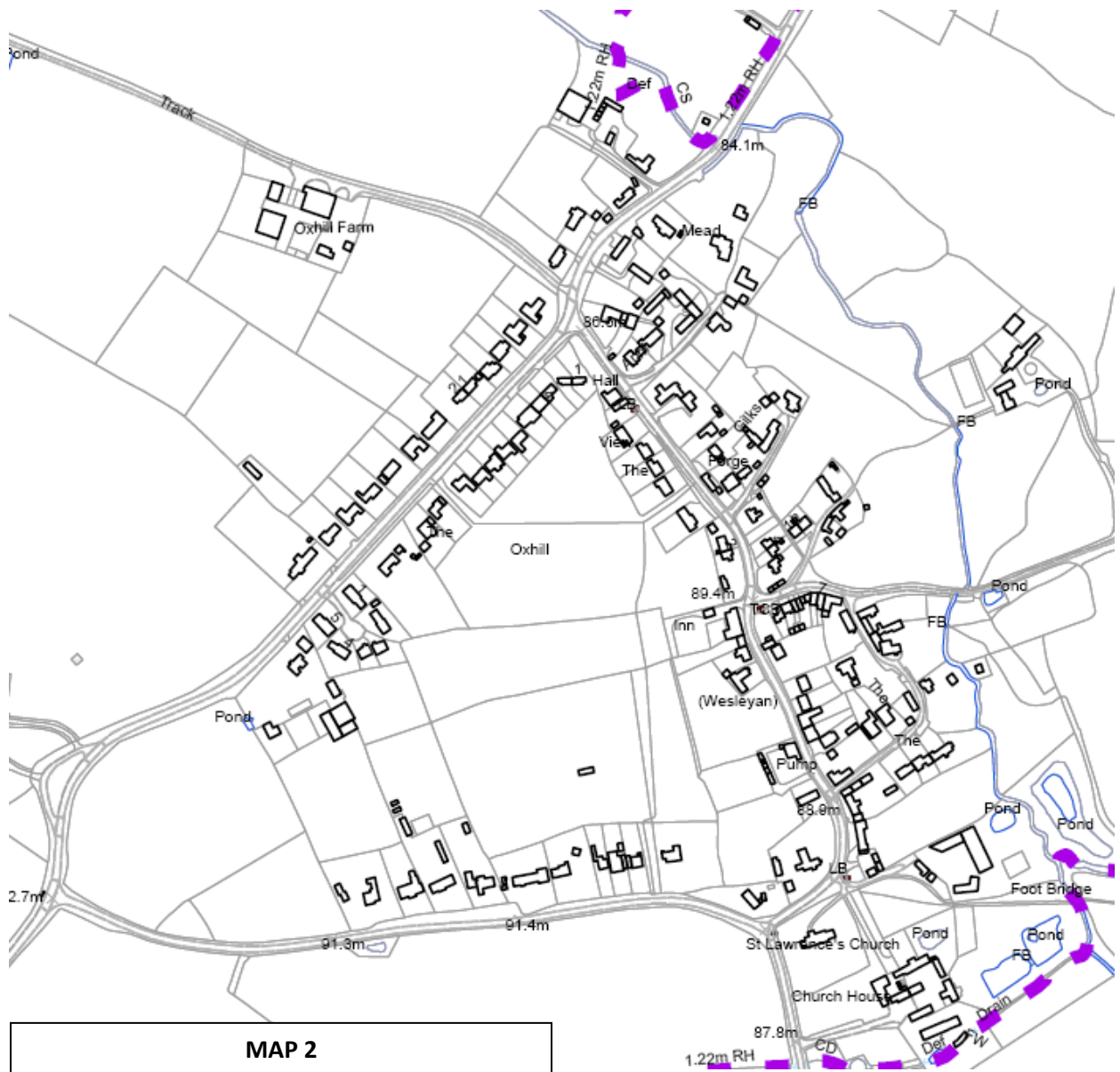
	gradual and individual development schemes should be of a scale that does not impact on the established character of the village and reflect the Village Design Statement	applications.			
6	Oxhill residents want people to behave responsibly	<p>1 To work with police to ensure that speed limits are enforced</p> <p>2 To consider the use of additional alerts for motorists would be of benefit.</p> <p>3 To raise awareness of responsible dog ownership and reduce occurrence of dog fouling on pavements</p> <p>4 To reduce obstruction of pavement by inconsiderate parking.</p>	Oxhill Parish Council	12 months	Reduction of nuisance
7	People should have access to a reliable and fast Broadband service	On behalf of PC, a nominated Lead to lobby providers , identify preferred provider and investigate the implementation of superfast Broadband services for Parishioners.	Oxhill Parish Council Nominated lead Service provder Residents	12 -18 months	Improved Broadband
8	Oxhill residents should be well informed about how the Parish Council, church and village hall events are organised and local activities are arranged.	Parish Council, Village Hall Committee and PCC should consider how to improve communication. Consider the production of a list of activities and contact details of organiser	Village hall committee PCC  Parish Council	6 months	A response from Parish Council, Village hall Committee and PCC

### 13. Next Steps

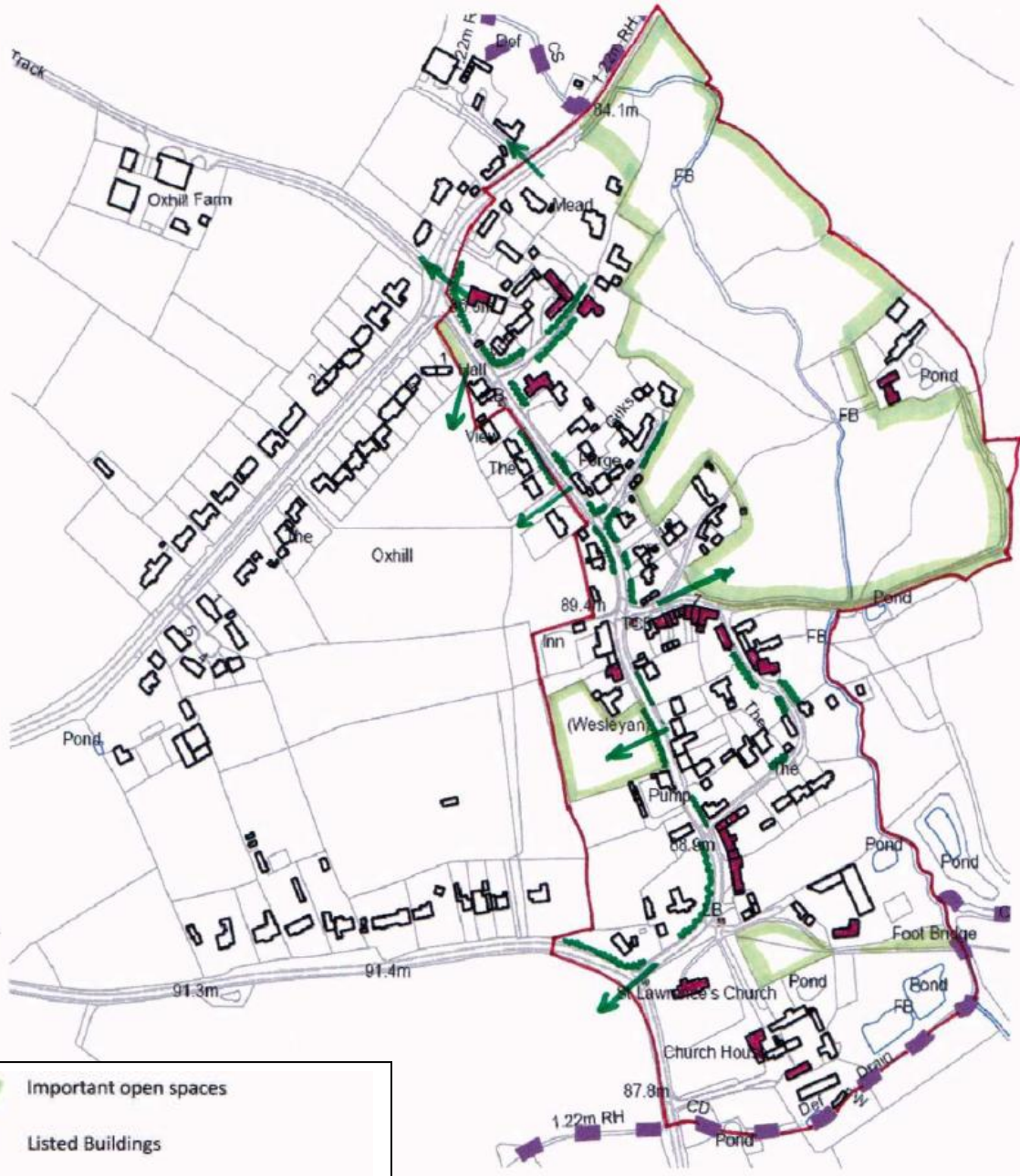
- 13.1. The Parish Plan, together with the Village Design Statement (VDS), having both been confirmed as an accurate reflection of the village at a village meeting in January 2014, will be presented to the Parish Council for approval and onward submission to Stratford District Council for adoption.
- 13.2. The Parish Council will be responsible for ensuring that the Action Plan is delivered and establish effective monitoring processes.
- 13.3. The Parish Plan will provide not only a rich source of information about the village and the community but will provide additional guidance to the Parish Council, groups and individuals when considering priorities for the use of public resources and the provision of local activities.
- 13.4. It is hoped that the views of local people as expressed in the Plan and VDS will be taken into consideration by individuals and government bodies when planning the future of the community.
- 13.5. In particular, it will be used –
  - To assess the merits of development schemes in relation to local and national requirements as a Local Service Village, level 4.
  - As a material consideration in making planning decisions
  - To identify opportunities for environmental and other enhancements.
- 13.6. One of the most significant areas of concern identified within the survey is the impact of future building proposals, in location, density, size and type
- 13.7. Consideration will be given to the merits of developing a Neighbourhood Plan. This is different from a Parish Plan, in that it deals exclusively with issues relating to building development, including the type, number and location of housing in a specified area.
- 13.8. A Neighbourhood Plan would enable the village to identify areas for development that would meet the LSV requirement and identified local housing need. The Plan would have more legal weight than a Parish Plan.
- 13.9. However, the development of a Neighbourhood Plan requires detailed public consultation and would need to be subject to a local referendum. As such this work requires the identification of considerable financial and manpower resources.







**MAP 1**  
**OXHILL PARISH**



**MAP 2**  
**CORE VILLAGE**



-  Important open spaces
-  Listed Buildings
-  Important hedges/walls
-  Views out of the Conservation Area

**Map 3**  
**OXHILL CONSERVATION AREA**



# Listed Buildings in Oxhill, Warwickshire, England

Some building names may be abbreviated or partial; this is how they are recorded in the original register.

[See buildings on parish map](#) (Warning: this may be very slow to load if there are a large number of listed buildings in this parish)

- **1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, Beech Road**  
**Grade II**  
Beech Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Barn East of Oxhill House Farmhouse**  
**Grade II**  
Rouse Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Barn South East of Church Farm**  
**Grade II**  
Tysoe Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Barn South East of Payn's House**  
**Grade II**  
Back Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Base of Preaching Cross Approximately 6 Metres North of Porch of Church of St Lawrence**  
**Grade II**  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Bilton Cottage**  
**Grade II**  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Chest Tomb Approximately 8 Metres South of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence**  
**Grade II**  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Church Farmhouse**  
**Grade II**  
Tysoe Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Church of St Lawrence**  
**Grade I**  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Fexloe House**  
**Grade II**  
Back Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Group of 9 Headstones and One Chest Tomb Approximately 2 Metres to 6 Metres South West of South Door**  
**Grade II**  
Tysoe Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire

- **Headstone Approximately 8 Metres South East of South Door of Church of St Lawrence**  
**Grade II**  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Headstone of Edward Eden Approximately 5 Metres South of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence**  
**Grade II**  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Oddcott**  
**Grade II**  
Oxhill
- **Oxhill Hill Farmhouse**  
**Grade II**  
Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Oxhill House Farmhouse**  
**Grade II**  
Kineton Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Oxhill Manor House**  
**Grade II**  
Beech Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Payn's House**  
**Grade II**  
Beech Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Post Office The Homestead**  
**Grade II**  
Kineton Road, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **The Hollies**  
**Grade II**  
Rouse Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **The Old House**  
**Grade II**  
Back Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **The Old Rectory**  
**Grade II**  
Main Street, Oxhill, Warwickshire
- **Tomb of Myrtila Approximately 3 Metres South of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence**  
**Grade II\***  
Church Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire

## APPENDIX 1

### Most like about Oxhill

Subject area	No. of comments	Example comment
<b>Peace &amp; tranquillity</b>	58	Peace & Quiet, Respect of privacy Quiet location Quiet village but not too far from some local shops. Not a thoroughfare Lack of irritating noise Quiet commuter village in a rural setting.
<b>Attractive, small village in beautiful countryside with Green spaces within the village</b>	22	It's pretty Pleasant walk around village Old world charm Small village community A nice place to live Nice size Beautiful countryside Knowing most people in the village on a casual basis. Green space within the village Green spaces within and around the village The village retains much of its rural appearance, green spaces and landscape Central agricultural centre of the triangle produces wonderful wildlife scenarios
<b>Rural location, appearance and character, with Uninterrupted views and integration with countryside</b>	62	Uninterrupted views from property. Green outside front and back The houses are well spaced out affording views of greenery and countryside Scenery Most houses (80%) have a rural outlook and this produces feelings of calm and wellbeing. Rural character of village life Rural England as it should be Lots of local walks and fields Access to good footpaths and country lanes for cycling Oxhill is a place of long history, now somewhat eroded but still valued Surrounding countryside Isolation from main roads The way the rural environment has been preserved & not encroached. Natural habitat Nature & wildlife
<b>Community spirit &amp; people</b>	74	A friendly & supportive community with active and varied local social groups Community spirit. Good people

		<p>Consideration for village people          Opportunities for social interaction          Community spirit, lots of events, people willing to help each other.          Village hall, pub, chapel encourage community celebrations          A close knit community          Neighbourliness          There is a strong sense of community and villagers join together well in common enterprises and celebrations          Neighbours          Friendly neighbours          Mixed age &amp; social groups          Unsuitable for the unemployed.</p>
<b>Village Hall &amp; Range of activities available</b>	14	<p>Wide variety of activities and events that go on          Social events          Village Hall events          Plenty to join in if you want to</p>
<b>Lack of 'urban' environmental pollution</b>	11	<p>No street lights, standard bus shelters, speed humps          Can see stars          Clean air</p>
<b>Safety</b>	10	<p>Lack of crime          It feels safe          Safe environment for children</p>
<b>Convenient Central Location</b>	3	<p>Convenience in reaching a variety of centres for shopping and entertainment          Access to Stratford          Central location of the village</p>
<b>Home &amp; garden</b>	1	Home & Garden
<b>Development limits</b>	1	Limited planning/scope for large scale new housing
<b>Pub</b>	17	<p>Good local pub          AKA Town Hall          Excellent, welcoming pub</p>
<b>Church</b>	4	
<b>Oxhill News</b>	1	
<b>Parish Council</b>	1	
<b>Historic heart</b>	1	Historic heart
<b>Clean air</b>	1	
<b>Dog walking</b>	1	Great for dog walking
<b>Size</b>	1	Comfortable size population
<b>Lack of traffic</b>	1	Little traffic

## APPENDIX 2

### Least like about Oxhill

Many responders recorded that they could not find anything to record

Subject area	No. of comments	Example comment
<b>Traffic and speed</b>	21	Speeding from vehicles Fast cars downhill from A422 Speeding cars using the village as a rat run Large vehicles using Oxhill as shortcut. Heavy traffic Tractors using Oxhill as short cut Cars using Oxhill as a 'rat run' The constant heavy traffic on Whatcote rd vibrates the house. Delivery vehicles and their disregard for our verges
<b>Spraying of fields</b>	2	Spraying of fields with chemicals and human effluent
<b>Removal of hedges</b>	1	People removing hedges & making front garden an open car park
<b>Isolation</b>	4	It's a long way from shopping, commercial, leisure facilities, motorway, station etc. 2 cars needed & fuel costs high. Commute to work but this is more about our jobs than Oxhill. Difficulty of finding help with small handyman jobs in house, garden and with computer problems
<b>Pub</b>	9	Peacock not welcoming to drinkers only – prefer eaters Good food, poor service and attitude Noise from late night drinkers at pub Local pub predominantly a restaurant – although very good food. Expensive pub Occasional late night noise from the pub Lack of a drinking local pub
<b>Emergency Services</b>	2	Fear response time from emergency vehicles Disinterest from local police
<b>Development</b>	9	Fear and uncertainty of excessive development Weak planning controls. Threat of development in centre of village Planning regulations being ignored Threat of inappropriate development Risk of losing rural views
<b>Whats on</b>	1	Difficult to find out about local activities and events. No comprehensive list
<b>Parking</b>	4	Car parking on pavements
<b>Green space, play area</b>	3	Lack of public green space. Need a village green Lack of recreational facilities for children to enjoy safely
<b>Shop</b>	18	Lack of shop & PO

		No local shop although understand this would never be viable No shop within walking distance Lack of retail outlet
<b>Hunt</b>	1	Hunt not under control – hounds in garden – safety concern
<b>Dependence on car. Bus service</b>	8	Limited public transport and dependence on cars Bus service not practical Not enough Could do with earlier/later buses. Driving kids into town because of lack of bus Lack of consistent affordable public transport, especially to Banbury We are no longer able to have a free bus service to Shipston Schools, limiting choices for our children. No bus service when there has been some snow but the roads have been cleared.
<b>Bird scarers</b>	1	Ban all bird scarers
<b>Attitude/people</b>	10	No good if single Snobbery Cantankerous farmers who think they own the place Too many retired people (teachers) Too many newcomers not understanding country ways then try & stop development or small business start up Cliques Some of the people People who move into the village and care little for the country Lack of consideration from some neighbours –prolonged building work causing disruption & noise etc. Lack of other families with children. The village lacks the cohesion it once had and recently a ‘clubbing attitude’ has grown up, with the consequent exclusion zones, especially village hall events. A sad reflection of our times. Divisions between farmers and villagers New residents moving here without an interest in the countryside. New residents complaining about countryside noise, smell, lack of amenities. Some of the people Lack of facilities for older people
<b>Dog Fouling</b>	5	
<b>Footpaths (Pavements)</b>	4	Lack of public footpaths and bridleway Lack of footways within the confines of the village and to adjacent villages
<b>Utilities</b>	6	Lack of mains gas Occasional power cuts The sewage capacity
<b>Pig Farm</b>	2	Smells from Pig Farm Occasional smells from pig farm
<b>Broadband and phone signal</b>	8	Broadband speed Lack of mobile phone signal Broadband speed simply appalling
<b>Flooding</b>	4	Many ditches and drains are blocked – leading to flooding

		Farmers not keeping ditches clear which causes flooding in residential areas
<b>Roads</b>	1	Agricultural muck on roads Unrepaired road services & edging Icy roads in winter
<b>Village Hall</b>	3	We could do with a better village hall. Village hall needs upgrading or enlarging.
<b>Meeting place</b>	1	No casual meeting place for coffee or a chat.
<b>Helicopters</b>	1	Helicopters flying overhead
<b>Affordable housing</b>	2	Lack of affordable housing. I would like to continue living here but will not be able to afford a house after selling my current one. Lack of affordable housing has driven away young local people who would have liked to live here
<b>Urbanisation</b>	2	Increasing urbanisation and street furniture. Please, no more signs. Rather too neat roadsides in some places, making it look somewhat suburban
<b>'Dormitory'</b>	1	With agriculture no longer the main employer Oxhill has become a dormitory settlement, losing some of its rural ambience and ?
<b>Design</b>	1	Poor house/bungalow design in parts
<b>Cats</b>	1	Too many semi feral cats killing wildlife in my garden
<b>Hedges</b>	1	Removal of hedges and flail cutting of hedges – particularly worrying during nesting May-October
<b>Dog walking</b>	1	Lack of 'off lead' walks for the dogs
<b>Houses</b>	1	Not enough small houses, bungalows for single couples/retired people Modern architecture, Whatcote rd, Green Lane
<b>UKIP</b>	1	UKIP representation
<b>'Charm'</b>	1	Village lacks charm

## APPENDIX 3

### Final Additional comments from survey

Comment
The village would be ruined by street lights, substantial development, further removal of trees & hedges
We would wish to preserve the essential character of Oxhill, specifically avoiding flats & retirement homes. Oxhill would be best served by 2/3 bed homes for young families or those wishing to downsize
We love our view and would be distraught if it were affected. Open views are a unique characteristic of Oxhill. Concerns about pressure on infrastructure – traffic and drains from large scale developments. People tend not to move away – Old folk stuck in large properties! Any development of smaller houses should be protected from extensions
Any additional housing should be very limited and only after local consultation and approval
Activities at village hall do not cater for all tastes. Should there be a survey to find out what people would like
Need Mains gas, Play ground, open public green space
I count myself fortunate to have lived in Oxhill. Personal circumstances mean I cannot see future security in my house due to costs.
Young people's club or meeting venue
Does Oxhill need a mini market?
I think you are doing a great job. Time consuming and quite difficult.
Village Hall well run. Parish Council lacks credibility due to some people on it.
If in future Oxhill is to have another 25 houses built in the next 15 years they would be better built at the end of the village. This would not change the centre of the village. Also it wouldn't be so noticeable as if they were built in the old part of the village and the flow of traffic would not go through the village centre.
The parish council does not communicate back to people even when promised. Oxhill news has always refused to promote local business historically. It would be good to have a booklet of local Oxhill businesses we can promote/ use.
The gentle development of housing over the past sixty years of new and conversion of old buildings to houses has been successful
There is a need to make provision to enable young families to live in the village, to ensure its long term existence
We feel there is a lack of attention from the council with regard to flooding. Concern over dwindling police force cover Broadband
Oxhill is a lovely place to live. Hopefully any further development will be done tastefully. A mass influx of new residents and housing would not be desirable.
Any new building, be it modern or traditional must enhance, not detract from the environment. Each dwelling should be provided with a source of renewable energy, must have sufficient off road parking and garden large enough to grow vegetables.
I accept that there has to be some development in the village but hope it can be kept to a minimum to ensure the village retain its sense of community and character.
We would like to see Gardeners field become a village green
Personally no facilities, e.g. shop, PO & Doctors. Tysoe surgery full



I understand the need to create more housing but any expansion needs to blend in with what exists already and not be stereotyped in terms of architecture and purpose i.e. estate type housing.
The local schools are already over capacity. Developing new housing to bring in young families will have a negative impact.
Oxhill is a lovely village but does need more accommodation e.g. starter homes and retirement bungalows
We love it here. We accept that some further building is inevitable but hope large scale development can be avoided as this would ruin the character of the village.
The best development would be individual houses along the remainder of the North side of Green Lane and the South side of Whatcote rd. to finish the triangle. Possibly with a new village hall complex included and a few infill plots amongst existing housing around the village.
Would like a public footpath all around the village i.e. continuous one extending Whatcote Rd & Green Lane as the bend is dangerous to walk round. Children's play area with rustic type equipment could be beneficial
Drainage in present capacity is not sufficient
A wish that more residents would participate in the events organised in the village. There exists a core of people who participate and drive every event. However, events like the Jubilee show that, given the right event the whole community responds.
Before any housing development plans are accepted, consideration will be essential to provide for increased sewage and for drainage where current flooding is a problem
Would like a cycle track Oxhill-Tysoe upgrade the existing footpath route. Pub should be a bit more 'village drinker' oriented.
Only to say that some houses should not be pulled down in any area and a larger development put in its place. If it was a brick house, a brick house must be replaced, not stone.
Housing to be affordable to all.
I'd love to stay here but sadly will not be able to due to lack of affordable housing
Oxhill is pretty good as it stands. However, pressure is likely to be put upon it to host expansion in housing and this can be done constructively by allowing small numbers of sympathetic and proportionally accurate dwellings to fill existing space most sensibly on the periphery. It would be good to see less HGV's take a short cut via Main St but traffic calming and street lights would completely ruin what is a beautiful English village. It would be a perfect village if we had a central village green, i.e. the area to the side of the chapel, whilst privately owned & always available for functions, would make a great recreational focal point I would love to think the village could preserve this rather than allow someone to build on it
This survey has and will be, causing the committee a great deal of work, but it is most appreciated and for this good of all, thank you.
Any significant expansion in housing needs to include a new, larger village hall as the current one is too small to accommodate events for the existing community.
In earlier years Oxhill was predominantly an agricultural community, providing work for most of the village. Agriculture is still its largest and most important industry, but mechanisation means that less labour is needed and most people work in other occupations elsewhere. The provision of small workshops and low cost housing would bring life back to the village and make it more self-sustaining, rather than serving as a satellite to distant towns.
The fewer dwelling the better Would like shop/PO in the village
Think Oxhill desperately needs an area for community events, sports and children to play. Janet Gardeners field is perfect as it is central. The field behind Main St, Whatcote Rd is would be good,

children would be safe and it is again central. With an increasing number of young families I think green space is vital.
This household considers this to be an excellent initiative
Change is inevitable in the Parish and it must be accommodated appropriately and sympathetically. I think people are obviously more worried about radical change as in recent and proposed changes in Tysoe & the 'New Town' The paucity of parish members at Parish Council meetings indicates a general satisfaction with the status quo (or a waste of time)
I love this village and the people in it
Having moved to Oxhill recently, we picked the village as it was right for us and met our requirements. We are happy here and apart from one or two niggles we would not want the village to change.
We wish to maintain a village which evolves slowly, therefore no development above 5 units. Maintain the character of the village with strict design criteria. We do not want to become a 'big' village with an estate on the edge or outside the current development of the village – i.e. behind Whatcote Rd or the other side of Green Lane. The current facilities of the village just about cope with the numbers requiring them, but if we expand much more the village hall in particular will not cope with any extra demands!
If the 70 odd houses are built on the Oxhill Rd in Tysoe, the traffic through Main St will be horrific.
Oxhill does not need to build a lot of houses. A whole new town is proposed not far away. Too much building will lead to urbanised fields, local infrastructure cannot take much more population and the demands that brings.
Oxhill needs small development to sustain a small amount of business in the area, not just Oxhill
Oxhill is a pretty unique village, in that, amongst the many and varied residents, we have a solid community which contributes to village life. Not many people move here and then leave. To allow additional houses in our confined boundaries would alter the make-up of the community and might lead to a separation of the residents into 'cuckoos', thus excluding new residents.
We need to develop new housing that brings younger people and family groups into, or allow existing ones to stay. The demographic of Oxhill is generally an older one and the housing choice reflects this. Some new development that would encourage young couples into the village should be considered.

## APPENDIX 4

### Suggestions for consideration with regard to improving support for vulnerable people.

No easy solution, but we could look out more for our elderly residents, but first we need to know who might appreciate some support.

A list of volunteer drivers

A service where people could request help with travel and be put in touch with people travelling to that destination.

By organising some form of support system that could match needs to available support. E.g. Rotherfield St Martins scheme as described in September 2012 SAGA magazine.

There could be an attempt to organise local offers of support/lifts into a directory, Some local services in village? Such as a resident or visiting hairdresser. Difficult as you don't want to take away independence.

Local volunteers

There are enough newly retired to form a 'help club' 'Friends of the elderly. 'voluntary (unpaid) help' before active oaps sink into obscurity. ?Monthly lunch club as in Tysoe.

If sheltered homes for retired people were available in Oxhill, some of the older residents would have both support and company if desired.

A list could be held of those prepared to volunteer. ? Shipston link. Bus timetables better published

Local volunteering

Information for those needing help

Don't know

I was a volunteer driver but no-one seemed to want it. Could operate local register. I am at home in daytime.

List of volunteer drivers.

A locally based community mini bus with access aids would be a useful asset for the village

In our experience, people provide help when asked

Don't know

Additional database of those old people vulnerable put on website so that people in village can volunteer help and assistance

No idea

## APPENDIX 5

### Activity recreational activity suggestions

Badminton & reintroduction of films (I suitable village hall)  
Sporting get togethers e.g. group to go and play squash or watch football/cricket etc.  
Some form of inter village competition  
More activities for children / flicks in the sticks / orchestra or music band  
Sports / social club  
More films shown in the village  
Oxhill cycling club  
Something for the children? We are regular attendees at the Bascote Saturday film club - children daytime and adults evening.  
We already have a huge choice  
Book club  
Talks on local history ( we have also enjoyed church concerts)  
Ballroom dancing  
Yoga, pilates  
Evening exercise class. Evening/weekend cinema (just film and snacks, not a meal)  
Yoga, zumba  
Maybe something like a children's Saturday club  
Keep fit classes, tropical swimming pool  
Cookery club. Visiting speakers  
Children's club/classes  
More weekend activities as we cannot attend weekday activities.  
Film showings in village hall  
Yoga  
Use church to host/hold more musical concerts in genres other than classical/religious e.g. acoustic music  
Table tennis. Pool  
Music and poetry  
Bridge

## APPENDIX 6

### Oxhill Parish Plan Project

#### Steering Group

#### Terms of reference

Name	The Group will be known as Oxhill Parish Plan Project Steering Group (OPPSG)
Purpose	To undertake research, identify key priorities, develop action plans, consult and produce a Parish Plan, leading to the potential development of a Neighbourhood Plan, on behalf of the residents of Oxhill. To identify funding requirements as appropriate and seek to source funding, supported by Oxhill Parish Council.
Membership	Membership will be taken from the residents of the Parish of Oxhill and should represent the community. There will be 8-15 members, with the opportunity to 'co-opt' additional members for specific task and finish purposes. A chair will be nominated by the members of the steering group. The group may identify members to lead on specific areas as identified in action plans. Membership to be reviewed by the steering group and amended as needed.
Meetings	Meetings will take place at least monthly and more frequently if required. Meetings will be quorate when 6 members are present. Discussion and debate will remain confidential to the group. External communication will be through the Steering Group Chair.
Reporting	1 Oxhill Parish Council, by means of notes of meetings, workplans and progress 2 Residents of Oxhill Parish
Key relationships	Oxhill Parish Council The residents of Oxhill SDC officer leading on Parish Plans District councillor for the Vale of Red Horse Representatives of neighbouring villages with parish planning experience Warwickshire Rural Community Council
Communication	Communication is seen as a vital component of the project. The views of the community must be sought to inform, influence and approve the plan. This will be done through a variety of routes, including public meetings, mail shots, surveying and focus group meetings. Progress will be reported through The Oxhill News and public meetings, to be held at least quarterly in the case of reporting in The Oxhill News and 6 monthly for a public meeting open to all residents.
Key Outputs	Action Plans Parish Plan & Village Design Statement Potential Neighbourhood Plan, when the SDC strategy is approved and published.
Timescale	12 months in the first instance.

## **Appendix 7**

### **STEERING GROUP MEMBERS**

Ed Bracher

Mike Collins

Alan Hedley

Sue Hunt (Chair)

Adrian Marklew

Peter Rivers-Fletcher

Geoff Stewart

Carol Taylor

Stuart Whittaker

Tony Wyatt

### **Advisors**

Gill Stewart

Ann Hale

Peter Hale

Tony Eastaugh

**OXHILL VILLAGE  
DESIGN  
STATEMENT**

## Introduction

1. Oxhill Village Design Statement (VDS) should be read alongside the Oxhill Parish Plan and resulting Action Plan that has been developed following a Village Household Survey, a Housing survey and Village Meetings.
2. The purpose of the VDS is to describe the built environment and the relationships of this to the landscape. This identifies the 'unique' characteristics of Oxhill. The VDS then sets out a number of guidelines, which, when approved by the Parish Council and adopted by SDC, will be taken into account when dealing with planning applications and for the use of anyone who plans to build, adapt or extend buildings in the parish.
3. Oxhill is defined by those who live and work here, an area to which people feel they belong. However, we should be open to change, welcoming new people, new ideas, and new buildings that would enrich and enhance our neighbourhood, without degrading or losing what we already have.
4. Oxhill is a small village, with only 128 properties in the core village. Outside the conservation area the remaining properties are arranged around a triangle, in a linear fashion. Included by this road arrangement are 10 fields, showing old ridge and furrow markings that project right to the heart of the village.. These fields provide an almost unique link to the countryside from most properties, are a haven for a wide range of plants and wild-life and are seen as the 'green lungs of the village'.
5. For the future, Oxhill must reflect the changing need of the people who live and work here, whilst striving to preserve the special characteristics of the village, often the very reason why people chose to live and remain here, despite the lack of local amenities.
6. We must also respond to the National need for additional homes. SDC in their Core Strategy has determined the number of additional homes needed in the area and has identified how that need is to be met over the Plan Period to 2031. In addition to proposals for large scale developments, most communities, identified as Local Service Villages, must expect to grow,
7. Oxhill has been categorised as a Local Service Village, level 4 and should expect to provide 10-25 additional homes in the Plan Period to 2031. This growth is consistent with the historic growth of the village in the last century. (an average of 1-2 per year)
8. In the Village Survey continued growth at this rate is preferred by most residents, in order that the special characteristics of the village are preserved and so that new residents can be welcomed and encouraged to become part of the strong and cohesive community.
9. This VDS, together with the guidelines will help to ensure that Oxhill remains a special place for those who live here now and for those who choose to move here in the future.



## 1. THE VILLAGE APPROACHES

- 1.1. From the South**, the road from Tysoe, an Enclosure Road dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, runs straight and true through the typical farming landscape already described, until it turns north to enter the village adjacent to St Lawrence's Church. In winter the church tower can be seen from some distance away but in summer, the traveller is unaware of the presence of Oxhill until some of the distant bungalows fronting Green Lane become apparent across the intervening fields. The Village name sign and 30mph sign reinforce the impression of the settlement ahead and then the bungalow, Cornerways, the church wall and the church itself become visible, all within the Conservation Area. The village sign with its silhouettes of a scarecrow, a duck and pedestrians is unusual and attractive and hints at the strength of the community which works together each year to run a Scarecrow Weekend to which people come from far and wide. So from the Tysoe direction, the traveller passes directly from the rural setting of the village to the historic core with no transitional development.
- 1.2. From the South-West**. When approaching the village from Whatcote, Oxhill is wholly concealed by the topography, as there is a small increase in elevation adjacent to Church Farm. Having attained the slightly higher ground, the road bends past the junction with Green Lane (none of the Green Lane bungalows are apparent) and then the access on the left to Willoughby Grounds, a large house standing in the fields outside the village. From its entrance, the first roofs become visible, these being at the smallholding, Short Meadow. But even here, the presence of the village is unsuspected. It is only at a point about 100m south of Short Meadow that the road turns to reveal the village name sign and the 30mph sign, and beyond these, more roofs, mown verges and the driveways to the Whatcote Road dwellings come into view. But the impression is predominantly spacious as the verges are wide, almost all dwellings have substantial hedges in front, and many are bungalows.
- 1.3. From the north**, the road from Kinton runs south from the A422 and Oxhill is largely unseen until the small crest at Whitehill House, and its outlying cluster of buildings, has been passed. From that point, the roofs, gables and chimneys of a few old village houses become apparent amongst the trees at the bottom of the hill. After that the road descends steeply to the stream, passing the junction with Nolands Lane. The small pumping station adjacent to the stream is utilitarian in appearance but unobtrusive, serving the village rather than part of it. As the stream is crossed, more signs of habitation come into view around the bend, with mown verges, access drives and low stone garden walls. All of the land and buildings on the left hand side of the road are in the Conservation Area, so again there is an intimate connection between the historic core of the village and its rural setting.



**Landscape setting from the North**

- 1.4.** A less used approach to the village from the north comes via the single-track lane, known as Nolands Lane. This provides the most expansive view of Oxhill and its landscape setting. From the slight crest just to the north of the sewage works (screened by rather inappropriate conifers); there is a view across the shallow valley of the stream to Oxhill Hill and Brailes Hill beyond. Oxhill Farm with its attendant farm buildings is in the nearer foreground, but is visually separate from the village itself. Apart from this exception, there are uninterrupted views across the open farmland, from Oxhill to Pillerton Priors some 3kms away on its ridge to the north. The well-defined edge of Oxhill is identified by the backs of dwellings fronting Whatcote Road but these are subservient to this wide-open landscape, whose essentially unspoilt character is reinforced by the absence of roadside hedges.
- 1.5.** As the road drops down towards the village, its buildings are hidden by trees in the nearest gardens and by hedges alongside the lane. A small roadside barn emphasises the rural nature of this approach, and at the road end, where the lane joins Kineton Road, there are clear views ahead through a gateway of Edge Hill in the distance.
- 1.6.** Given the intimate relationship between the village and the surrounding countryside, the footpath network around Oxhill is well-used by dog-owners, rambling groups and others who appreciate the countryside.

  - Arriving on foot across the fields from Tysoe, the walker arrives at a footbridge over the stream, which marks the edge of the Conservation Area. A thatched cottage, the manorial fishponds, some stone houses and eventually the church come into view and one is evidently in the historic core of the village. An alternative footpath from Tysoe, slightly further to the north also enters the village via a footbridge into a small paddock and then through a beautiful garden and out through the garden gate into Back Lane, an integral part of the Conservation Area.
  - One of the most popular walks is through the fields bounded by housing on Whatcote Road (south-east side) and Main Street (south-west side) where a public footpath represents a

short-cut between the two roads, the latter coinciding with the Conservation Area boundary.

- Other footpaths lead north-westwards from the village, crossing the open landscape between Oxhill Hill and Nolands Farm and walkers using these paths arrive in the village at the junction of Main Street and Whatcote Road at the boundary of the Conservation Area.

## **2. THE BUILT FORM OF OXHILL**

- 2.1.** The historic core of the village follows the north-west to south-east axis of Main Street and its attendant lanes, Rouse Lane, Gilkes Lane, Manor Lane, Beech Road/Back Lane and Church Lane, all running down towards the floodplain, and affording views from the village over the low-lying meadows. From this historic core, designated as a Conservation Area, there are two spurs of more recent development.



**The Meadows from Beech Road**

- 2.2.** From the junction of Tysoe Road and Green Lane, close to St Lawrence's Church, ten bungalows of varying sizes and ages, spread along the north side of Green Lane for approximately 300m. All face south across the open farmland which stretches away to Tysoe and the hills beyond. Most are set back behind wide verges and have large fore-gardens, so the character of this part of the village is very spacious, with the buildings playing a subordinate role in the overall landscape.
- 2.3.** The second spur of more modern development is along Whatcote Road spreading about 350m south-westwards from its junction with Main Street. Here there are mainly detached houses and bungalows standing discreetly behind roadside hedges and wide verges. Close to its southern

end, a small cul-de-sac of six houses at The Sett represents the only example of this form of development in the village.



**Green lane**



**Whatcote Rd**

- 2.4.** The three limbs of the built-up area of the village i.e. the historic core based on Main Street; part of Green Lane; and part of Whatcote Road form an incomplete triangle of development with its open end towards the west where the latter two roads meet. Within that triangle is an area of agricultural land which penetrates to the heart of the village. It is pasture land subdivided into several paddocks, some containing ridge and furrow. Its existence is apparent from the numerous gateways that lead into it from the surrounding roads; it is crossed by a well-used public right of way; and a large number of village houses back onto it. Its presence is a defining characteristic of the village, as it extends the rural character of the area into the heart of the village.
- 2.5.** All of the approaches to the village arrive at the historic core with little or no intervening development. Almost every house has at least one outlook onto open countryside, and there are many views directly from the village streets to nearby fields and more distantly to the hills beyond

## **2.6. THE CONSERVATION AREA**

**2.6.1.** The boundary of the Conservation Area encompasses the medieval origins of the village together with a broad swathe of low-lying meadows to the east and other important open spaces. The Second Edition (1905) Ordnance Survey map of Oxhill shows only half of the present number of about 74 dwellings in the Conservation Area. The number has been made up gradually over the years by additions and adaptations, including two groups of barn conversions to residential use, and modern infilling, comprising both bungalows and two-storey houses. The lack of a consistent building line and the disorderly juxtaposition of buildings, one with another, is a defining characteristic of the Conservation Area. Older buildings tend generally to be close to the highway edge, whilst more modern infill is often set back behind longer gardens. However the close integration of both old and new, together with the assortment of brick and stone buildings, produces a constantly intriguing street scene.

### **2.6.2. The buildings:**

2.6.2.1. There are a large number of Listed Buildings in Oxhill, all but one within the Conservation Area. All of them are Grade II, except the Church of St Lawrence which is Grade I. Within its graveyard there are several features separately Listed. Details of all the Listed Buildings appear in Appendix A. Apart from two timber-framed buildings, they are all built of the local ironstone, known as Hornton stone, which weathers to a rich golden brown colour.

2.6.2.2. The Church, a landmark building, stands at the southern extremity of the village, its graveyard surrounded by larches which are lovely at any season. Arthur Mee in his history of Warwickshire (1936) describes it as “so defiant of time that nearly everything the Normans left seems but a few years old”, a slight exaggeration perhaps but it certainly warrants its Grade I listing, with two Norman doorways, windows and font. Its later tower is visible across the nearby fields, especially in winter, and heralds the southern approach to the village.

2.6.2.3. Moving north along the narrow part of Main Street, The Old Rectory and Fexloe House, both stone, make an attractive frontage, enclosing the street scene. Further north the cottages, 1-7 Beech Road, which started life as barns associated with one of the village farms, and the adjacent Payn’s House, are a quintessential English village grouping, running down the slope towards the meadows. The preponderance of stone as a building material continues around into Back Lane with The Fellows House, The Old House and The Malthouse, the latter modern in appearance but having 19<sup>th</sup> century origins. At the northern end of the Conservation Area where Main Street joins Kineton Road, more stone buildings, here more widely spaced, sustain the impression of an ancient settlement rooted in its locality.



### **The Old Rectory and Flexloe House**

- 2.6.2.4. The size and prominence of Oxhill House on the corner of Main Street and Kinton Road make it a landmark building. The Homestead on the corner of Main Street and Rouse Lane may be the oldest dwelling in the village. According to its Listing entry, it probably has 15<sup>th</sup> century origins, but it has been much altered and partly re-faced in the past. The Beech Road cottages already mentioned, together with the Peacock Inn and adjoining cottages, all in stone, mark the centre of the village. From near here, another landmark, the Manor House, standing isolated on the eastern bank of stream is visible.
- 2.6.2.5. The number of stone dwellings in the Conservation Area is almost matched by those built in brick. Unsurprisingly the brick dwellings are generally of more recent origin and represent the later phases of adaptation and infilling which proceeded gradually during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although Blackford House, a fine brick building on Main Street, is thought to date from about 1812. Some of the older brick buildings, but not all, have attractive Flemish bond brickwork (alternating courses of headers and stretchers), such as Peacock Cottages, Merrilees, Old Church House, The Granary, Weavers Barn and Gateways. Later buildings, such as Barnside and Kisdon, have conventional modern brickwork. Notably several brick buildings have stone window surrounds or other features, e.g. the Village Hall and the Old Chapel.
- 2.6.2.6. There is little homogeneity in the choice of roofing materials displayed in the Conservation Area. Many of the old stone buildings have slate roofs, but hand-made clay tiles, stone 'slates', and modern concrete tiles are fairly widespread.

## **2.7. Views into and out of the Conservation Area.**

- 2.7.1. Back Lane and Rouse Lane are possibly the only parts of the Conservation Area where buildings and trees conspire to block views outwards to the surrounding countryside.

Elsewhere, there are constant reminders of the close presence of the agricultural landscape. Indeed the Conservation Area boundary encompasses a great deal of pasture land, which provided the setting for the medieval village and does so now for its modern counterpart. Most of those passing through Oxhill or accessing its side lanes will do so via Main Street and here there are ample opportunities to appreciate the intimate connection between the village and the surrounding fields.

- 2.7.2.** The junction of Main Street and Green Lane at the southern end of the Conservation Area affords extensive views over agricultural land to the south and west, as far as the escarpment of Edge Hill and its lesser known neighbours. At the junction of Main Street and Beech Road, the former opens out and there is a delightful view eastwards down to the meadows and the Manor House. In the opposite direction, the fields close behind No 1 Peacock Cottages confer a feeling of space and light.
- 2.7.3.** Moving a short distance further north, there are views down Gilkes Lane to the fields nearby, and on the opposite side of Main Street, a stile takes those using the public footpath into the fields known as Leys Meadow.
- 2.7.4.** Further north again the undeveloped nature of the fields behind the Village Hall is apparent, and there are views outwards along the two farm accesses off Kineton Road adjacent to White Croft and Brook House. The northern extremity of the Conservation Area on Kineton Road is an integral part of the landscape setting of the village, having open land on all sides.



**Ridge and Furrow**

## **2.8. Open Space:**

- 2.8.1.** Apart from the water meadows which comprise much of the eastern part of the Conservation Area, the most visually important open space within the village is the field adjacent to the Old Chapel on the south-west side of Main Street. It not only provides a contrast to the close-knit, tightly constrained part of Main Street to both north and south where buildings stand close to the roadway, but also a worthy setting for the pleasing group of buildings, comprising the Old Chapel, Oddcot (a Listed Building), Peacock House

and the Peacock Inn. Although not actively farmed, it is an invaluable visual link between the agricultural land to the west and the heart of the village.

### **The Old Chapel Field**



### **Oddcott, Peacock House and Peacock Inn**





**2.9.** Other visually important open spaces are the curtilage of the Village Hall on the corner of Main Street and Whatcote Road and land between Church Lane and Church House, crossed by a well-used public right of way and the setting for several Listed Buildings.

**2.10. Boundaries and trees**

**2.10.1.** A stroll through the Conservation Area confirms the importance of boundary hedges as contributors to its character and appearance. The street scene in the Conservation Area is often characterised by views where there is a strong sense of enclosure, achieved by hedges in conjunction with buildings close to the road. This is most apparent at the southern end of Main Street between the church and Fern Cottage; in Back Lane from Payn's House to Primrose Cottage; in Main Street from Merrilees to Barnside; and throughout Rouse Lane. The high brick wall in front of Gateways is somewhat exceptional, but also creates a sense of enclosure in this part of Main Street.

**2.10.2.** There are many trees in the Conservation Area, and it would be difficult to rank them in order of visual importance, but those around the churchyard create a very distinct setting for this Grade I Listed Building. They, together with those in front of The Old Rectory, are critical to the street scene.

**2.10.3.** Others which are important in relation to the appearance and character of the village include the birch opposite Peacock House; the copper beech, planted in 1935 for King George V's Jubilee, at the junction of Beech Road and Blackford Way; the chestnut at Elmville and the ash at Merrilees, the chestnut in front of Briargate, those on the corner of Kineton Road and Main Street within the curtilage of Oxhill House, and several in front gardens in Back Lane.

**2.11. Green Lane**

**2.11.1.** Green Lane is developed on the north side, the south side being occupied by fields used for grazing, with a newly-planted hedge running along the edge of the carriageway. At present there are ten dwellings, but planning permission has been granted for a further one on a vacant plot between Ripplesdale and Ferndale.

**2.11.2.** All the existing dwellings might legitimately be described as bungalows although most have some form of accommodation in the roofspace. Three of them, situated towards the eastern end of the lane, stand on relatively narrow plots and are of pre-fabricated construction with a pyramidal roof form. (One of these, Ferndale, is the subject of a recent planning permission for its demolition and replacement). All of the others on the lane are on much bigger plots, with frontage widths ranging up to almost 40m. Most of the dwellings have ranch-style fencing in front.

**2.11.3.** The defining characteristics of this part of the village are the very broad highway verge in front of the single-sided development, the low fencing, large fore-gardens and the low profile of the buildings, all combining to produce an expansive street scene, which reflects the open landscape to the south.

**2.12. Kineton Road / Whatcote Rd.**

- 2.12.1.** The south-east side of Kineton Road is within the Conservation Area and has been described in that context. Four dwellings stand on the opposite side of Kineton Road; two are unremarkable modern dwellings and two are much older houses. Brook House was a farmhouse and Aytonholm a row of farm cottages, both on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (1886).
- 2.12.2.** From the junction with Main Street, Whatcote Road is lined on both sides with relatively recent housing. Although none of it could be described as distinguished, there is, nonetheless, a pleasing variety of house types, arising from the piecemeal manner of its development. Nos. 1 and 2 Whatcote Road were built in 1944 by the War Agricultural Committee as housing for agricultural workers, and on the opposite side, four houses known as The Leys were built in the late 1940's. Later development, mainly in the 1960's and 70's, comprises mainly detached houses on the south-east side of the road and bungalows on the opposite side.
- 2.12.3.** The Sett is a somewhat anomalous cul-de-sac of dormer bungalows built over a period of time in the late 90s/early 2000s by a single developer. Its layout and the relative uniformity of the house designs and building materials set it apart from all other forms of development found in Oxhill. Beyond The Sett, a smallholding known as Short Meadow with farm buildings to the rear is part of the countryside setting of the village. Its buildings do however, constitute the visual end-stop to development on Whatcote Road.
- 2.12.4.** All dwellings but one in Whatcote Road, have hedges on their front boundaries, and for the most part these are the hawthorn and blackthorn which would have marked the original field boundaries. These, together with the wide verge on the south-east side and a number of attractive street or garden trees, produce an attractive semi-rural street scene.
- 2.12.5.** There are 12 outlying houses or farms in the Parish, some of them a considerable distance from the village. Many of them date back several centuries; others are more recent establishments, such as Church Farm on Whatcote Road which moved to its present site from Church Farm(house) adjacent to the Church. Some houses have become separated from their land as land holdings have been consolidated. Owing to their location in the open countryside of the Parish, they have no impact on the physical form of the village although their occupants are undoubtedly part of the Parish community.

## **OXHILL DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction:**

1. The Parish Plan must sit within the context of the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) and Stratford District Council's Core Strategy (SDCCS). The overall thrust of the SDCCS conforms to the overriding NPPF objective, which is to achieve a sustainable pattern of development.
2. Moreover, planning law still requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The 'Saved' policies of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review 1996-2011 (DLPR) continue to form part of the Development Plan for these purposes.
3. In drawing up these Development Guidelines, the Steering Group has fully taken into account the national and local planning policy context. In accordance with the localism agenda advocated by the government, and indeed legislated in the Localism Act 2011, the Steering Group has incorporated the requirements of an LSV level 4, as identified in the SDC Core Strategy and identified the prevailing view of the community with regard to future development in the village. The resulting Development Guidelines derive from all these sources which are set out in the table at the end of this section".

### **THE APPROPRIATE QUANTITY OF NEW HOUSING**

4. The picture of Oxhill that emerges from the Household Survey is of a village where some social and leisure needs are met by the church, the pub and the village hall, but all other vital everyday needs involve travelling, sometimes long distances, by private car. Levels of car ownership and usage are very high. Oxhill is categorised as a Category 4 Local Service Village (LSV). Such villages had to score between 2 and 4 points in the scoring system set out in Appendix 2 of the SDCCS. Oxhill scored 2 points, the lowest possible score for inclusion in the LSV list, with a requirement to provide between 10 and 25 additional homes by 2031. In pursuit of a sustainable pattern of development, this development should be gradual and schemes of small numbers of properties preferred over large scale developments.

### **GUIDELINE 1**

In accordance with the designation of LSV level 4, between 10 and 25 new dwellings should be built in the village in the period 2011- 2031

### **THE PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 5 The survey work shows that Oxhill has grown over the centuries step by step in a gradual progression to its present size and form. There have been no large injections of new housing, and this way of growing has produced a varied and attractive townscape and a socially cohesive community. The residents of Oxhill wish to protect the social wellbeing of the community by continuing the historic pattern of organic growth.

## **GUIDELINE 2**

Development should be gradual over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, with several smaller rather than a single large scheme.

## **THE LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 6 The landscape setting of Oxhill is highly prized by the residents, and the close association between the agricultural landscape and the three limbs of the village should be preserved, especially where 'ridge and furrow' testifies to its historic nature and there is public access via the footpath network to or adjacent to the land. These factors also contribute to the rich biodiversity within the village. There remain sites that will enable the village to meet the obligations set out in the Core Strategy.

## **GUIDELINE 3**

No development shall be permitted which would significantly alter the three-limbed linear form of the village, which gives almost all dwellings at least one boundary with the countryside setting of the village

## **GUIDELINE 4**

No development shall be permitted on the 'outer' sides of Green Lane and Whatcote Road where it would be visually prominent and cause significant harm to the landscape setting of the village

## **GUIDELINE 5**

No development shall be permitted which would encroach into the historic heart of the village via the agricultural land enclosed by Main Street, Green Lane and Whatcote Road

## **GUIDELINE 6**

No development shall be permitted which would harm the historic landscape through the loss of 'ridge and furrow'

## **GUIDELINE 7**

New development should respect the appearance and character of the village when viewed from public vantage points, including public rights of way

## **GUIDELINE 8**

Any new development which extends the existing frontage development on either Green lane or Whatcote Road should respect the characteristics of the existing street scene. In Whatcote Road, dwellings should be no more than 2 storeys high and be set well back from the highway with a front boundary hedge. In Green Lane, they should be no more than 1 and a half storeys high and set well back from the highway

## **THE TYPE AND QUALITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT**

- 7 Local residents, in the main, want to see smaller homes, which would cater both for small families and for older people wishing to downsize. There is a consensus in favour of good

design standards and a desire to avoid the high density and regimentation typical of recent estate building elsewhere.

**GUIDELINE 9**

New development proposals should be based primarily on a need for smaller homes, providing flexible accommodation, and should exhibit a high standard of design and layout, with the emphasis on individuality, sympathetic choice of materials, and good quality landscaping.

**GUIDELINE 10**

New development should be designed so as to conserve natural features of the site, including hedgerows, ponds, and trees

**THE CONSERVATION AREA**

8 The Conservation Area comprises the Medieval heart of the village together with its rural setting, comprising low-lying meadows and other areas of undeveloped land that contribute to its character and appearance. Its buildings are a mixture of stone and brick of varying ages, arranged in a haphazard way in relation to Main Street and adjacent lanes.

Local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage asset

**GUIDELINE 11**

Any new development permitted within the Conservation Area should serve to preserve or enhance the appearance and character of the area

**GUIDELINE 12**

No development should be permitted which would harm the setting of a Listed Building

**GUIDELINE 13**

Any new development within the Conservation Area should be limited to single infill plots or conversions of existing buildings, and be subject to appropriate design criteria, including size, form, height, and materials

**GUIDELINE 14**

Boundary hedges, walls and trees within the Conservation Area should be preserved wherever possible and consistent with paragraph 134 of the NPPF

**GUIDELINE 15**

Alterations and extensions to existing buildings within the Conservation Area should reflect and respect the existing form and structure of the building, avoid unsightly or overlarge additions, especially dormers, and retain all features, including doorways, windows, stonework, etc which contribute positively to the appearance and character of the Conservation Area

## POLICY CONTEXT

The following tables set out the national and local planning policies which provide the context for the Development Guidelines.

**National Planning Policy Framework** (whole document with the following paragraphs being especially relevant)

Paras. 6, 7 and 14	Achieving sustainable development
Para. 17	Core planning principles
Paras. 29-41	Promoting sustainable transport
Paras. 56-68	Requiring good design
Paras. 109-125	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Paras. 126-141	Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### Stratford District Council Core Strategy

Policy CS.1	Sustainable development
Policy CS.5	Landscape
Policy CS.6	Natural environment
Policy CS.8	Historic environment
Policy CS.9	Design and distinctiveness
Policy CS.15	Distribution of development
Policy CS.16	Housing development
Policy CS.25	Transport and communications
Policy AS.10	Countryside and villages

### District Local Plan Review 'saved policies'

Policy COM.1	Local Choice
Policy PR.1	Landscape and settlement character
Policy EF.4	Historic Landscapes
Policy EF.7	Wildlife Habitats
Policy EF.7A	Effect of development on wildlife species
Policy EF.10	Trees, woodlands and hedgerows
Policy EF.13	Development in Conservation Areas
Policy EF.14	Listed Buildings
Policy DEV.1	Layout and design of development
Policy DEV.2	Landscaping