



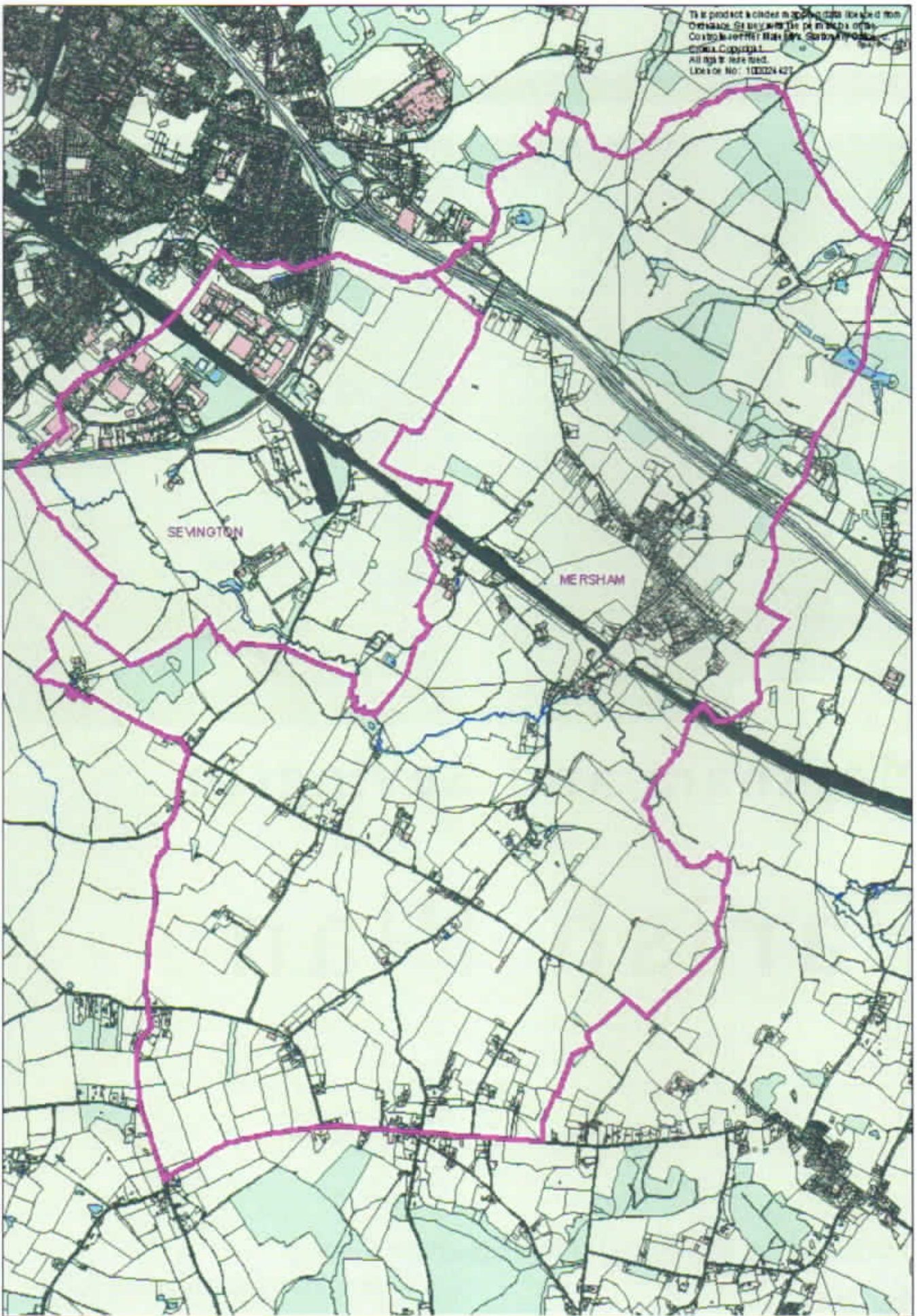
Mersham and Sevington

# Parish Plan

Produced by the Parish Plan Steering Group

May 2006

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## FOREWARD

*Villager comment:  
I love the easy access to open  
countryside and walks from your  
doorstep.*

*Villager comment:  
Sevington still has a village  
atmosphere, even though it has  
been cut in half – a real shame.*

These are two of the many comments made by villagers when asked what is important about the villages in which we live. Many of us very much want things to stay as they are, yet many of us are also pleased to be able to travel easily and quickly to work, to shop where we choose, to spend our leisure time how we like. This affects us all. Every village is an old settlement trying to come to terms with the impact of the modern world upon it.

So what are the key facilities and services in our villages? How would you like see your community develop over the next few years? What needs to be done to preserve its distinctive character? To provide some information to help answer these questions, a questionnaire was sent to every household in Mersham and Sevington. This document, the *Parish Plan for Mersham and Sevington*, presents the findings and contains some recommendations which will be submitted to the Parish Council and other organisations. We hope that you will find your views represented here; we have tried hard to achieve a balance of the many views expressed.

The large-scale development proposed for Ashford over the next 30 years threatens to overwhelm both our communities. It is hoped that this Parish Plan will contribute to preserving and enhancing what is important to us and preventing this from being lost in 'Greater Ashford'.

### **Mersham and Sevington Parish Plan Steering Group**

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## **MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON - A BRIEF HISTORY**

The parishes of Mersham and Sevington are situated 4 to 5 miles to the south-east of central Ashford. To the north of the parishes there is low land on gault clay which rises to a south-west-facing lower greensand escarpment flanking the East Stour valley. To the west lies the Low Weald and to the south the old cliff line adjoining Romney Marsh.

The East Stour valley has long been a focus of settlement. Its farming communities can be traced back to the Bronze Age with archaeological evidence suggesting continuity of occupation throughout the subsequent 4,000 years. The boundaries and identities of Mersham and Sevington as distinct parishes have been established since before Domesday, as attested by early Anglo-Saxon charters. The two settlements and their outlying hamlets have grown slowly over the centuries and, despite recent developmental pressures, Sevington and Mersham have retained much of their historical and rural integrity. There are many listed buildings in the parishes, 82 in all, including the Grade I listed churches of St. John the Baptist, Mersham; St. Mary, Sevington, and the mansion at Mersham-le-Hatch. The ancient deer park at the Hatch is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Moat in Sevington is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Parts of a Roman road which provided an important link between the Maidstone area and the Channel ports at Lympne, Folkestone and Dover still lie under the lane between Cheeseman's Green and Aldington. The East Stour River also provided a means of transport as well as power for the local water-mills.

Prior to the 20th century, the majority of inhabitants were employed in agriculture. The South Eastern Railway works in Ashford also provided jobs for local people.

## **MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON TODAY**

The parishes are divided into 3 Parish Council wards for electoral purposes: Mersham, Sevington North and Sevington South, and are part of two Borough wards: Highfield and Weald East.

The electoral roll shows a total of 529 dwellings in the parishes. The 2002 census gives a population of 1,376 (1,022 in Mersham and 354 in Sevington), 1080 of whom are electors (835 in Mersham and 245 in Sevington). Although 39% of those responding to the questionnaire had been residents for less than 10 years, 23% had lived here for more than 30 years. Time-spans varied from a resident of only 2 weeks to someone who had lived here for over 83 years. Changes in agriculture, commerce and industry mean that many residents now commute over much greater distances to their place of work, while longer life expectancy means that an increasing proportion of the community are retired.

The modern transport corridors of the M20, the A2070 and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link have been imposed upon the agricultural landscape of the parishes in recent years. The frequent congestion at Junction 10 of the M20 results in many problems for residents. Sevington has suffered dramatic changes with the building of the Business and Orbital Parks and has been cut in half by the A2070. The construction phase of the Channel Tunnel and the High Speed Rail Link caused great disruption to both communities.

The villages are in the frontline of the expansion of Ashford and likely to become increasingly urbanised over the next two to three decades.

So in light of these changes, what do the residents of Mersham and Sevington feel about their communities? The response from villagers was very positive.

*Villager comments:  
The public areas of the village are well  
maintained, clean and tidy.*

The most important aspects of life in the villages for respondents were the rural location, the fact that they are friendly, safe and, for the most part, quiet places to live and that there is a good village atmosphere. The village greens, the churches, the facilities, the rural character and surrounding countryside were among the features that were found especially pleasing.

*Villager comments:  
Quiet and I hope it stays that way.*

*The balance of age groups and  
backgrounds.*

Some regret was expressed by Sevington residents about the detrimental impact that the growth of Ashford has had on village life, especially the roads. However there is also a desire to retain and build on the things that villagers value.

Clearly there is a great feeling of wanting to preserve these aspects of the communities and this is reflected in the additional comments that were made in the questionnaires.

## **THE PARISH PLAN PROCESS**

In October, 2003, Ashford Borough Council encouraged its parish councils to undertake a Parish Plan or produce a parish 'wish list' as part of the Local Development Framework process. Since these had to be submitted by the end of 2003, the Parish Council drafted one that included the main

concerns which had been repeatedly expressed by residents at Annual Parish Council Meetings and during day-to-day contact with Councillors. A newsletter was sent to every household in the parishes giving information about the draft wish list, the Parish Plan process and to advertise a public meeting. This was held in the Mountbatten Hall on 8th November, 2003, and was attended by twenty-six parishioners, several members of the Parish Council and Mr. Crispin Davies of the Kent Rural Community Council (now known as Action for Communities in Rural Kent) who gave a talk on how a parish plan can be of benefit to communities. Copies of the draft wish list were given to those attending and subsequently made available at Mersham Stores and from the Parish Clerk. The final version of the wish list was submitted to Ashford Borough Council in December 2003 and a copy is included in this booklet (Appendix 1).

A decision was then taken to go ahead with a Parish Plan. Five parishioners volunteered to be on a Steering Group. The Group was to act independently of the Parish Council, but as the Parish Council would be important in delivering the eventual action plan, it was decided that three Councillors should join the Group, together with the Parish Clerk, who acted as secretary. The first meeting was held on 10th March, 2004.

In order to collect the information on which to base the plan, a questionnaire was needed which would cover all aspects of local life. Before this was written, community groups and some residents were asked to comment on broad headings which had been selected by the Group as a framework for the questionnaire. The headings were:

- Housing
- Education & Employment
- Facilities/Amenities/Recreation
- Crime Prevention
- Senior Citizens & Youth
- Environment
- Transport

The Steering Group and other volunteers then undertook a marathon door-to-door operation to deliver a questionnaire to each of the 529 households and later returned to collect the 279 which had been completed, 226 from Mersham and 53 from Sevington, a return of almost 53 %.

The questionnaire results are listed in full at the end of this booklet. The following sections summarise the findings of the survey. From these results a list of actions designed to enhance and protect village life has been drawn up for the Parish Council to consider. Some of these recommended actions refer to issues which the Parish Council already has in hand. It must be stressed that these are recommendations which the villagers wish the appropriate bodies to consider. Their implementation may have legal and practical limitations. Almost all will require funding and in some cases an extended time frame.

*The approach to Mersham from the A20*



## **CONSULTATION ON THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

In August 2005, the Parish Council, with the assistance of Ashford Borough Council, undertook a postal consultation to establish the views of residents on the Local Development Framework. The Parish Council sought to obtain the support of Parishioners on three key areas of policy.

755 consultation documents were returned to Ashford Borough Council which represented a response rate of 70.39%.

The responses to all three proposals was overwhelmingly in support of the stated aims of the Parish Council and will help them in their objective of retaining the integrity of the Parish for present and future generations.

A copy of the formal notice of response from Ashford Borough Council, with details of the questions asked and responses received is included as Appendix 3.

*Mill pond behind Hancocks Mill*



## HOUSING (Questions 5, 6, 7 & 75)

Villagers were asked whether new building of various types of homes was required and where it should be situated. There were many who were against any further development and 29% of the respondents favoured no further housing development at all in the villages. However the majority felt that additional housing was needed in the communities, especially starter homes and 2/3 bed houses and 18% of respondents supported the provision of some local needs housing.

*(For information:*

*The Rural Housing Trust has asked for sites to be identified for this purpose, but as yet the search has been unsuccessful)*

*Villager comments:*

*What the village badly needs is "real" families who will use the school and the village shop, living in affordable housing to add life to an ageing populace.*

*I chose to live in Mersham because I wanted to live near the countryside. I would hate to see it become just a suburb of Ashford.*

As to location, 41% of respondents favoured integration into the existing village envelope by infilling.

Part of rural Sevington on the eastern side of the A2070 is to be developed. 95% of the 198 respondents thought that the environment of Sevington Church should be protected.

**We recommend that it is recognised we live in an ageing community and that there is a need to maintain a balance in the population by supporting some infill development with smaller properties.**

**We recommend that the search is continued for a suitable site for a small quantity of Local Needs Housing.**

**We recommend that the Parish Council continues its fight against large housing and other developments within the parish, in particular on green field sites, on the flood plain and in the M20/A20 corridor.**

**We recommend that the setting of Sevington Church and its surroundings should be protected from development.**

## ROADS, SPEEDING, PAVEMENTS & PATHS

### Impact of Junction 10A on Local Roads (Question 58)

In response to the question "If junction 10A is constructed at the end of Kingsford Street/Highfield Lane, should both or either roads be closed off or made into one-way systems," there was an almost tripartite split between closing off, a one-way system and no change - a very inconclusive result. Information relating to the response from the residents of Kingsford Street, who would be directly affected, is unfortunately not available.

*Outside Newhouse, Mersham*



*Villager comment:*

*The Mersham Triangle (very similar to the Bermuda Triangle)*

*If you consider the morning peak hour traffic flows, traffic will be leaving Junction 10A along a two lane dual carriageway capacity approximately 3,000 vehicles per hour, equally traffic will be leaving Junction 10 travelling along a two lane dual carriageway capacity approximately 3,000 vehicles per hour. Both of these roads link into a two-lane dual carriageway crossing over the railway capacity approximately 3,000 vehicles per hour. So you are wondering will there be queues? Yes!!*

*How long will those queues be? Difficult to say, unless you know the details of the proposed junction. What happens when the queues reach Junction 10 or Junction 10A? Answer - gridlock.*

*So you see The Mersham Triangle - a place where cars go, never to emerge!*

It may be appropriate to consider some of the new traffic patterns that will be introduced by a possible Junction 10A. There is a concern regarding traffic flow in the triangle of roads formed by the A2070, the A20 between Junction 10 and Junction 10A and the new road which will link Junction 10A and the A2070.

**We recommend that any new M20 motorway junction to replace Junction 10 should include as much mitigation as possible for it and its feeder roads.**

**We recommend that the impact of Junction 10A on local roads is properly considered and that the residents who will be affected are consulted before the Parish Council responds to any consultation.**

#### **Junction of Barrey Road with A2070** (Questions 59 & 60)

There are serious concerns about road safety and congestion at this junction. 86% of the 207 respondents agreed that a roundabout should be built.

**We recommend that pressure should be put on the Highways Agency to build a roundabout or provide other traffic management measures to improve road safety at the junction of Barrey Road with the A2070.**

#### **Speeding (Questions 61a & b, 62a)**

Comments were made by many respondents about traffic speeding and large lorries driving through Mersham.

*Villager comment:*

*Impress on mothers driving children from Ashford not to use roads like a Lancaster on a bombing run.*

On the issue of traffic calming in Mersham this was supported by two thirds with over 60% preferring traffic humps or chicanes.

*(For information,*

*We now have the 30mph traffic calming 'gateways' at the four entrances to the village: Kingsford Street, The Street, Flood Street and Bower Road.)*

**We recommend that the impact of the 4 traffic calming gateways be assessed to see whether they are effective or whether further measures are required.**

#### **Parking (Questions 65, 66, 67, 68, 69)**

In Mersham, the School parking problem was shown to be a major issue; 94% of respondents considered that action should be taken to improve the situation. Various options were considered and 46% supported dedicated off-street parking while 29% wanted incentives for car sharing. In Sevington the need for additional parking was evenly balanced.



*Villager comment:  
Organise a walking bus through the village.*

**We recommend that action should be taken to alleviate the Mersham School parking problem.**

### **Footways**

(Questions 70 & 71)

The growth in both volume and size of traffic has made walking through the villages hazardous in some areas and 72% of respondents supported additional footways. The most popular locations for the provision of footpaths were Bower Road, Church Road and Kingsford Street, and from the Sevington footbridge to J10. Respondents took the opportunity to mention others, to the extent that it was thought desirable for most roads in the villages to have footpaths. Others pointed out that there was insufficient space for their construction.

*Villager comment:  
Mersham would lose its rural atmosphere if there were more footpaths.*

**We recommend that a footpath be built from Newhouse to the M20 bridge.**

**We recommend that the need and feasibility of building other footpaths be considered and prioritised.**

### **Cycle paths (Question 72)**

Given the extensive cycle path network in Ashford, views on a connection between the communities were requested. Over three quarters of respondents supported the proposal for a cycle way from Sevington to Mersham.

**We recommend that the feasibility of a designated cycleway from Sevington to Mersham be investigated.**

### **FACILITIES AND AMENITIES (Questions 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32 & 33)**

One of the important measures of village life and activity is the number and variety of facilities and amenities that are available to residents. Examples abound where first the school closes, then the village shop goes, then the pub shuts. Villages can become little more than dormitory settlements.

The purpose of the questions in this section was to discover how widely residents use the available facilities and amenities and in what ways would they like to see them developed. This brought a large response and many suggestions for ways in which the facilities could better meet the needs of users and customers. The communities of Mersham and Sevington are quite distinct in the provision of amenities. Mersham has a village shop and community hall while Sevington has neither, but has nearby stores such as Tesco's and Homebase which also serve the needs of Ashford and beyond. The questionnaire focussed on local facilities which are located in Mersham. Sevington residents would have to travel to Mersham to make use of them. It would appear from their comments that mostly they do not do so.

In general, it is encouraging that most of the respondents make good use of the existing facilities showing their value to the community.

### **Village Hall**

The Village Hall was used by 158 villagers who responded to the questionnaire and the majority of respondents considered we were fortunate to have it.

It is a multipurpose facility, well used by different groups. With such a variety of groups using the Hall, each having their own particular requirements, it is not surprising to have such a wide range of views on the Hall. Also, the fact that we have only one multi-use Hall is the main reason behind the unsuitability of the building for particular uses and for many of the suggestions being made for its further development. The answer is of course to have in the villages a sports hall, a theatre, a nursery school, a workshop, a billiard hall, an office building etc!

*Villager comments:  
We are fortunate to have the facility.*

Requests for extending the range of facilities available included improvements to the stage area, curtains and dressing rooms; more community facilities for younger people; workshops for pottery, car maintenance etc. Existing parking at the hall was considered by some to be inadequate and under lit.

**We recommend that the Village Hall Committee should be supported in pursuing grants for stage and other improvements.**

There is a clear call from Sevington residents for a village hall facility of their own. They feel there is very little community identity within its boundaries, and this could be promoted by a community centre where people could meet, socialise and develop skills. One suggestion was to explore how Sevington Church might be used for wider community purposes.

**We recommend that the possibilities for more community use of Sevington Church are explored and developed.**

### **Village Shop**

Mersham village shop is a real asset to the community and clearly from the responses is well used with 222 respondents visiting the shop at least occasionally.

*Villager comment:  
The shop provides a much needed service and needs more support from villagers.*

Sevington residents commented that they would like a shop nearer to them even if only a newsagents.

*The Street – Mersham in the early 1900's*



### **Post Office**

The Post Office is also recognised as an important village amenity and is used by 216 respondents.

*Villager comment:  
The post office is a very important village amenity and must be protected.*

The problem with parking was raised with concerns over access to post letters as well as to use the shop.

### **School and childcare** (Questions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13)

The presence of schools in a community is very important and Mersham benefits from having a thriving primary school which provides a service to parents, the majority of whom live outside the village. It is an indication of the age distribution of the village population, tending towards the higher end, that there were only 85 respondents with children, and 40% of these were in the 13-18 age group.

Recognising that transportation and childcare are important issues for parents the questionnaire focussed on these topics. The responses revealed that of children needing transport to school over half travel by car. Nearly a third of primary school children go to schools outside the villages. However, only 17 (20%) respondents mentioned that they had problems getting to school due to traffic congestion and bus times. Ten respondents have problems finding childcare locally, hence there was some support for more childcare provision and after school and holiday clubs.

### **Pubs**

Mersham is fortunate to have two public houses in the village. The survey suggests that while the village pubs do not attract a large number of frequent patrons, many residents make occasional use of them both. Since the questionnaire was issued, both pubs have had a change of owners.

### **The Millennium Green**

Our newest village open space is appreciated and used by many but is considered to need more regular upkeep.

*Villager comment:  
Needs more regular attention and maintenance. Could be beautiful.*

**We recommend that the paths on the Millennium Green should be improved.**

### **Junior Playing Field**

Use of the playing field was less than that of the Millennium Green. It was felt that more modern play equipment was needed and there were other concerns about maintenance.

*Villager comment:  
Should be redesigned to provide a wider range of facilities.*

**We recommend that the play area on the JPF should be redesigned to provide a wider range of facilities and disabled access.**

*(For information:*

*The Parish Council is aware of the need to maintain and update this facility. It has an ongoing agenda and budget for improvements and having obtained a new lease will be working towards these.)*

#### **Cut and Cover (Question 29)**

This is a potential new facility in Mersham. Residents were asked what it might be used for. Suggestions were fairly evenly divided between a recreation area, especially for younger people, and a green open air space for the community. A parking area for the School was also suggested.

*Villager comments:*

*It is appalling that the school does not have a playing field or adequate parking. The field should be utilised to provide these facilities.*

*I should like there to be a real conservation area for posterity – small trees, native shrubs, wildflower meadow. Definitely not a car park.*

**We recommend that the options for public access use of the cut and cover should be investigated.**

#### **Recycling (Questions 43 and 44)**

While 167 respondents use the blue box system (31%) and over 90 use other local recycling facilities, 187 respondents (35%) still put recyclable waste in the weekly refuse collection.

*Villager comment:*

*More recycling opportunities are needed.*

Many people called for facilities for the disposal of cardboard, plastics and garden rubbish with most of those individuals supporting the need for a local garden rubbish disposal facility. The frequency of collection was not a big issue.

**We recommend that the possibilities for the recycling of green waste be investigated and publicised.**

#### **Street Lighting (Questions 48, 49, 50 & 51)**

Individual residents commented on the lack of street lighting in various locations around the villages.

*Villager comment:*

*Mersham is one of the few areas where the stars in the sky can be seen.*

There are three aspects to the street lighting question – crime prevention, safety and light pollution. As far as fear of crime goes, Church Road, Sevington and The Street, Mersham especially are identified as needing additional lighting. Over 90% of respondents do not suffer from lighting nuisance in the village.

On the question of additional lighting, 23 thought it unnecessary against the 79 respondents who considered it advantageous, mainly in Church Road, Kingsford Street and Rectory Lane in Mersham and Church Road in Sevington.

**We recommend that the need for more street lighting is investigated where it is justified on safety grounds.**

**Public Transport** (Questions 63 and 64)

Generally, people were not satisfied with the current level of public transport service to the village - 226 responded and 59 of these were dissatisfied. Given options to enhance public transport, 48% favoured an improved bus service.

**We recommend that improvements to the bus service and introduction of a senior citizens dial-a-ride service or other form of community transport be sought, possibly in conjunction with other parishes.**

**ENVIRONMENT**

The natural environment is very important to many people. Our activities can have either a beneficial or detrimental effect on it. Issues of noise and light pollution generated the biggest response, while questions about litter and dog-fouling drew fewer responses. The street lighting issues are dealt with in the facilities section.

**Noise** (Questions 45, 46 & 47)

While half of the 262 respondents do not consider noise a problem, the other half do, so this is clearly a significant issue. Road and rail traffic are cited as the principle causes of noise nuisance and most of the suggestions for dealing with the problem related to these two factors.

*Villager comments:  
Neighbours should be more considerate of others.*

*Remove the church bells or cover with hessian.*

Most of the remaining comments relate to neighbour noise and places where people congregate in the villages (pubs, village hall) but these are relatively few in number.

**Litter** (Questions 52 and 53)

Litter is not regarded as a significant problem in general, though one or two hot spots are identified by more than one respondent – Millennium Green, Church Lane, Highfield Lane lay-by, Sevington play park.

*Villager comment:  
No problem. Mr. Davey keeps the village very clean and tidy.*

Suggestions for improvement mainly related to more facilities (street cleaning, bins and more frequent emptying), better enforcement and community clean up days.

**We recommend that the locations where litter and fly-tipping are a particular problem should be monitored.**

**We recommend that the situation regarding litter and glass at Sevington play area be monitored and improved.**

**We recommend that the Aylesford Stream in Sevington is kept clear of rubbish and debris.**

**Dog Fouling** (Questions 54 and 55)

Dog fouling drew twice the response to litter, 75% citing the Millennium Green as a problem area in Mersham and 11% the footbridge area in Sevington. Suggestions for improvement related mainly to more facilities (bins and frequent emptying) and better enforcement.

*(For information:*

*Since the survey, two new dog waste bins have been installed in Sevington.)*

**We recommend that the use of the dog waste bin at the Millennium Green be monitored and increased in size if necessary and that more publicity should be given about its use.**

### **Wildlife** (Questions 56 & 57)

162 respondents thought that action was needed to protect improve and increase awareness of wildlife habitats (against 35 who did not).

*Villager comment:  
Stop building houses on green field sites  
and floodplain.*

Only a quarter of these had any suggestions how this might be achieved, mostly relating to better availability of information on local habitats, protection against development and better management and maintenance of hedgerows, verges and riverbanks.

**We recommend that the wildlife habitats in the parish and East Stour valley generally be protected and improved.**

### **EMPLOYMENT** (Questions 20 & 21)

In Mersham, opportunities on traditional sites such as Howland's yard and Hancocks Mill have been reduced, but there will be new opportunities at Mersham-le-Hatch, part of which is to be used as offices, shops and a restaurant, similar to the nearby Evegate Centre.

*Villager comment:  
More employment would bring more  
cars, noise and disruption.*

Of those responding to the questions on employment, 58% felt that no more opportunities were needed in Mersham and Sevington.

### **LEISURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS**

#### **Sports Facilities** (Questions 32 & 33)

Locally available sports facilities can provide an opportunity to develop real community spirit. Residents were asked whether existing ones were adequate and how things might be improved

*Villager comment:  
More facilities are needed for older  
children and teenagers.*

This generated requests for facilities from all kinds of interest groups who require facilities to carry out their sports – tennis courts, badminton, golf and bowls. However the bulk of comments were directed towards provision of youth facilities, dealt with under the section on Youth. The lack of any kind of facility in Sevington was raised.

#### **Adult Education** (Questions 14, 15 & 16)

The response to question 14, showed 56% of respondents wanting to use Adult Education facilities if provided in the villages. 128 people expressed an interest in a wide range of subjects.

*Villager comment:  
Sevington Church would be interested in  
exploring how it could be used for  
community purposes.*

The most popular venues would be Mersham Village Hall or Mersham School. With at least 188 households having access to a home computer, this may be an opportunity to work with the School as an appropriate venue for ICT classes.

**We recommend that use of the facilities at Mersham Primary School for adult education classes be investigated.**

## **FACILITIES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS, YOUTH AND DISABLED RESIDENTS**

Care for these specific groups in our community brings benefit to the community as a whole. The questionnaire identified key issues affecting these groups.

### **Youth (Questions 34, 35 & 36)**

The provision of something to do for young people in the villages was seen as an important issue. From the sample who replied, 13-18 year olds make up 40 % of the under 18 population in the villages.

*Villager comment:  
More opportunities are needed for children to try different sports.*

The comments can be broadly categorised into provision of facilities and the need for organisations to run them. It all comes down to resources – money and people. More imaginative use could be made of existing play areas in the JPF and Sevington play park. There were calls for youth clubs, brownies, cubs, football clubs and discos, which will all depend upon the willingness of people to come forward and run them.

**We recommend that a Youth Forum be set up to assess the needs of teenage residents.**

### **Senior Citizens (Questions 40, 41 & 42)**

Healthcare is an important issue and the lack of any GP facility was raised. Prescription delivery services already exist. The need for transport to be able to reach facilities outside the villages is an issue to be tackled. The responses to the main three questions were as follows:

*Villager comment:  
Senior Citizens provided for except for shopping and transport.*

60% of respondents felt that the needs of senior citizens were adequately provided for in the villages.

94% of people considered that senior citizens could benefit from a village prescription service. Many people already use the existing service provided by the local chemists.

There was an encouraging response to the question, "Do you consider that, from the viewpoint of a senior citizen there is a problem with crime?" 72% of people felt there was not.

### **Disabled residents**

There are problems for disabled members of our communities in accessing the facilities available in the villages. The particular areas highlighted were the village shop doorway, Mersham school, pub toilets, and dropped kerbs on pedestrian footways.

**We recommend that the condition of roads and pavements should be monitored with disabled users in mind.**

**We recommend that pavements are surveyed to assess where dropped kerbs should be installed.**

### **CRIME PREVENTION (Questions 37, 38 and 39)**

Crime is not regarded as a serious problem in the villages.

*Villager comment:  
Senior Citizens have requested removal of the bushy growth near Wickes.*

Mersham and Sevington both have a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and coordinators use the Parish Magazine to bring to the attention of villagers any problems in the area. Possibly in consequence, crime was not a particular area of concern with a minimum of 50% of

respondents reporting no concern. It seems that a lack of police presence and casual vandalism were particular areas of concern for remaining respondents. Parishes are fortunate in having Neighbourhood Watch schemes operating and people would like to see this even more publicised and supported. A number of people were interested in getting involved in this worthwhile scheme and they are asked to contact their co-ordinator (Mr. Ron Butler in Mersham, tel. 502655, and Mr. John Donovan in Sevington, tel. 502440).

*Villager comment  
Neighbourhood Watch does a good job.*

The identified problems were burglary and anti-social behaviour, especially in Sevington where youth vandalism and drunken behaviour is an issue. The question of speeding crime is dealt with under the Traffic section.

53% of respondents consider there to be a problem with casual vandalism. The other concerns were with under-age drinking, speeding, burglary and a lack of police presence in the villages.

Sevington residents had concerns about cars meeting in Homebase car park, although the Police have now dealt with this matter it still re-occurred occasionally. Sevington residents also commented that 13-17 year olds drink alcohol, smash bottles, abuse the facilities in the park, swings etc, damage parked cars and are a general nuisance.

Question 38 prompted people to ask for more of a Police presence and the services of a Community Warden. Many respondents wanted to see Police back on foot patrol communicating with local residents and being more in touch with the community.

*(For information:*

*Since the summer of 2005, we have been pleased to have the services of a Community Warden, Paul Linstead, who we share with Aldington, Smeeth and Brabourne. He visits the parish regularly and can be approached by anyone who has a crime or anti-social related concern. We recommend that any incidents, crimes and suspicious behaviour are reported to the Police but Paul can be contacted direct on 07813 712805. The Ashford Community Safety Unit will also give help or advice on anti-social behaviour; their number is 660747, e-mail [csu@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:csu@ashford.gov.uk).)*

**We recommend that efforts be made to prevent under-age drinking and anti-social behaviour at Sevington play area.**

*St Mary - Sevington*





**PARISH COUNCIL** (Questions 22, 23 and 24)

Comments were invited on the activities of the Parish Council because its actions have an impact on our lives as a result of the decisions they make and actions they take. Specifically villagers were asked how well the Parish Council publicises its activities. The vast majority (87%) of respondents believe that this is done averagely, reasonably or very well. Councillors were commended for their hard work, accessibility and organising ability. Any criticism was mainly directed at the low profile of Councillors in the villages, a feeling expressed by Sevington residents that they are not adequately represented by the Parish Council, and some despair at the lack of powers available to affect local planning issues.

**We recommend that the Parish Council give its activities wider publicity.**

*(For information:*

*Agendas and minutes of Parish Council meetings are now available on the village website.)*

**VILLAGE WEBSITE** (Questions 17, 18 & 19)

70% of respondents had access to a home computer with an internet connection and 66% said they would access a village website if one was set up.

*(For Information: A website has now been set up through KCC.*

**[www.mershamwithsevingtonpc@kentparishes.gov.uk](mailto:www.mershamwithsevingtonpc@kentparishes.gov.uk)**

**CONCLUSIONS**

A wealth of comment accompanied the responses to the village questionnaire and centred on six major issues:

- The need for low-cost housing in the villages.
- The need for some form of Police presence in the villages.
- The importance of addressing the leisure needs of the younger members of the community.
- The speed and intensity of the traffic and the inadequate facilities for pedestrians in the villages
- The desire to be more informed about village activities.

*St John the Baptist - Mersham*





The Street, Mersham C.M. Chapman

***The Street, Mersham***

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The complete list of recommendations follows in the form of an Action Plan. The recommendations vary both in terms of the time that they will require for implementation and whether they will need funding.

### **IDEAS FOR ACTION**

The Steering Group has put forward suggestions as to how the recommendations could be implemented. The Parish Council and other organisations concerned may have alternative and additional ideas for attaining these aims.

### **TARGET DATE FOR ACTION**

An indication is given of how soon it is hoped at least initial action can be taken, but this does not indicate that the recommendation is likely to be fully complied with by this date.

### **INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION**

Many of the recommendations are for consideration and action by the Parish Council. However, other organisations are also mentioned and any decisions are solely theirs to make.

### **FUNDING POSSIBILITIES**

These are only initial suggestions and on investigation, more sources may become apparent.

It is the intention of the steering group to reconvene approximately one year after the publication of this Parish Plan to evaluate the progress made with the recommendations.

| <b>MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>  | <b>IDEAS FOR ACTION</b>  |
|--|--|
| 1. That it is recognised we live in an ageing community and that there is a need to maintain a balance in the population by supporting some infill development of smaller properties.                  | Parish Council to make appropriate comments when planning applications are received for consultation.  |
| 2. That the search is continued for a suitable site for a small quantity of Local Needs Housing.   | Parish Council to alert the Rural Housing Trust when possible sites are suggested.   |
| 3. That the Parish Council continues its fight against large housing and other developments within the parish, in particular on green field sites, on the flood plain and in the M20/A20 corridor.     | Parish Council to continue making objections through the Local Development Framework consultation process to the inclusion of such sites. Parish Council to encourage residents to respond similarly by additional communication, e.g. newsletters.                    |
| 4. That the setting of Sevington Church and its surroundings should be protected from development.   | Parish Council to fight for this through the LDF consultation process and in responding to relevant planning applications. Parish Council to encourage residents to respond during public consultation.  |
| 5. That a new M20 motorway junction (10A) to replace J10 includes as much mitigation as possible for it and its feeder roads.  | Parish Council to participate vigorously when consulted by the Highway Agency, KCC or ABC. Parish Council to encourage residents to respond during public consultation periods through additional communication, e.g. newsletters, public meeting.                     |
| 6. That the impact of J10A on local roads is properly considered and that residents who will be affected are consulted before the Parish Council responds to any consultation.                         | Parish Council to carry out an opinion survey of affected residents before responding to public consultation. Parish Council to consider nominating a Cllr or co-opting a resident to coordinate collation and dissemination of information about this.                |
| 7. We recommend that pressure should be put on the Highways Agency to consider a roundabout or other traffic management measures to improve road safety at the junction of Barrey Road with the A2070. | Parish Council to make representations to the Highways Agency and ask Ashford Borough Council and KCC to do the same. Parish Council to press for this when consulted about relevant planning applications and LDF. Local residents to be asked to back this campaign. |

| <b>TARGET DATE FOR ACTION</b>  | <b>INDIVIDUAL(S) OR GROUP(s) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION</b>          | <b>FUNDING POSSIBILITIES</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| As and when applications are received.   | Parish Council   | N/A  |
| Continuously   | Parish Council<br>Rural Housing Trust<br>Ashford Borough Council | N/A  |
| During public consultation periods for the LDF and at any other consultation events, e.g. workshops. | Parish Council   | PC to fund extra communication with residents about this, i.e. newsletters |
| During public consultation periods for the LDF and in responding to planning applications.           | Parish Council   | PC to fund extra communication with residents.                             |
| During the public consultation periods.  | Parish Council   | PC to fund extra communication with residents.                             |
| Before making comments in response to public consultation.   | Parish Council   | PC to fund any costs arising from communication with residents.            |
| Whenever possible  | Parish Council (ABC, KCC)<br>Local residents                     | PC to fund any costs arising from communication with residents.            |

| <b>MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>  | <b>IDEAS FOR ACTION</b>  |
|--|--|
| 8. That the impact of the 4 traffic calming gateways be assessed to see whether they are effective or whether further measures are required. | This needs to be monitored.  |
| 9. That action is taken to alleviate the Mersham School parking problem.   | Parish Council School Governor to investigate current School policy and discuss possible action with Head Teacher and Governors.   |
| 10. That a footpath be built from Newhouse to the M20 bridge.  | Kent Highways have agreed to build this footpath, but are awaiting permission from landowners. Parish Council to keep in touch with Kent Highways.                                       |
| 11. That the need and feasibility of building other footpaths be considered and prioritised.   | Parish Council to consider residents' suggestions and assess feasibility. Parish Council to ask Kent Highways to include suggestions for new footpaths in their investigation programme. |
| 12. That the possibility of creating a PROW through the East Stour Valley be investigated.   | Parish Council to discuss this possibility with relevant bodies and landowners.  |
| 13. That the feasibility of a designated cycleway from Sevington to Mersham be investigated.   | Parish Council to discuss this with ABC and other relevant bodies  |
| 14. That the Village Hall Committee should be supported in pursuing grants for stage and other improvements.                                 | Parish Council, user clubs and societies to pursue through their Village Hall Committee representatives.   |

| <b>TARGET DATE FOR ACTION</b> | <b>INDIVIDUAL(S) OR GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION</b>   | <b>FUNDING POSSIBILITIES</b>          |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| One year after installation?  | Parish Council<br>Neighbourhood Watch?<br>Community Warden?   | N/A                                   |
| As soon as possible.          | Parish Council<br>Mersham Primary School  | N/A                                   |
| As soon as possible.          | Kent Highways<br>Parish Council   | Kent Highways funding.                |
| Assess within a year          | Parish Council<br>Kent Highways   | Kent Highways if any scheme approved. |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council<br>KCC PROW Officer<br>Kentish Stour Countryside Project<br>ABC Green Corridor Officer | KCC grants                            |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council<br>ABC<br>KCC<br>Sustrans  |                                       |
| As soon as possible           | Village Hall Committee<br>Parish Council and user-group representatives on VHC                        |                                       |

| <b>MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>  | <b>IDEAS FOR ACTION</b>  |
|--|--|
| 15. That the possibilities for more community use of Sevington Church are explored and developed.                  | Parish Council to contact Sevington PCC to discuss.  |
| 16. That the paths on the Millennium Green should be improved.   | Millennium Green Trustees to review maintenance contracts.   |
| 17. That the play area on the JPF should be redesigned to provide a wider range of facilities and disabled access. | Parish Council to consider re-design of play area, obtain estimates from suppliers for various types of equipment and investigate grant-funding possibilities.     |
| 18. That the options for public access use of the cut & cover should be investigated.                              | Parish Council pursuing possible lease with agents for Union Property. Options for future use to be investigated.  |
| 19. That the possibilities for the recycling of green waste be investigated and publicised.                        | Parish Council to promote use of Chart Leacon recycling depot through publicity. Parish Council to urge ABC to adopt home collection green waste recycling scheme. |
| 20. That the need for more street lighting is investigated where it is justified on safety grounds.                | Parish Council to investigate possibility of improvements with Ashford Borough Council.  |



| <b>TARGET DATE FOR ACTION</b> | <b>INDIVIDUAL(S) OR GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION</b>    | <b>FUNDING POSSIBILITIES</b>                                   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| As soon as possible           | Sevington PCC<br>Parish Council                            |  |
| Within next 6 months          | Millennium Green Trustees                                  | To be investigated   |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council   | Grant-funding bodies<br>and Parish Council                     |
| On-going                      | Parish Council   | Parish Council<br>Grant-funding bodies                         |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council<br>Ashford Borough Council                  | Ashford Borough<br>Council                                     |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council<br>Ashford Borough Council<br>Kent Highways | Parish Council?<br>Ashford Borough<br>Council<br>Kent Highways |

| <b>MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>   | <b>IDEAS FOR ACTION</b>  |
|---|--|
| 21. That improvements to the bus service and introduction of a senior citizens dial-a-ride service or other form of community transport be sought, possibly in conjunction with other parishes. | Parish Council to liaise with other parishes on bus route to explore possible cooperation in improving, initiating or extending bus services and other forms of community transport.               |
| 22. That the locations where litter and fly-tipping are a particular problem should be monitored.   | Parish Council to monitor and take action as appropriate. Parish Council to monitor Highfield Lane and inform ABC if fly-tipping needs collection.   |
| 23. That the situation regarding litter and glass at Sevington play area be monitored and improved.   | Parish Council to monitor state of Sevington Play Park regularly and inform ABC if glass, etc. needs clearance.  |
| 24. That the Aylesford Stream in Sevington is kept clear of rubbish and debris.   | Parish Council to investigate who is responsible for the stream and request that rubbish is cleared regularly.   |
| 25. That the use of the dog waste bin at the Millennium Green be monitored and increased in size if necessary and that more publicity should be given about its use.                            | Parish Council to monitor and consider purchasing a new bin if necessary   |
| 26. That the wildlife habitats in the parishes and East Stour valley generally be protected and improved.   | Parish Council to be proactive about this during Local Development Plan consultation. Parish Council to liaise with relevant environmental groups to highlight the value of the area for wildlife. |

| <b>TARGET DATE FOR ACTION</b>   | <b>INDIVIDUAL(S) OR GROUP(s) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION</b>   | <b>FUNDING POSSIBILITIES</b> |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| As soon as possible   | Parish Council  |                              |
| On-going  | Parish Council<br>Ashford Borough Council   | N/A                          |
| On a regular basis  | Parish Council<br>Ashford Borough Council   | Parish Council               |
| On a regular basis  | Parish Council<br>Environment Agency?<br>ABC Green Corridors Officer?   | N/A                          |
| On a regular basis  | Parish Council<br>Ashford Borough Council   | Parish Council               |
| As of now and particularly during the Local Development Plan consultation periods | Parish Council<br>Ashford Borough Council<br>Kentish Stour Countryside Project<br>ABC Green Corridors Officer<br>Kent Trust for Nature Conservation |                              |

| <b>MERSHAM AND SEVINGTON PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>   | <b>IDEAS FOR ACTION</b>   |
|---|---|
| 27. That the use of the facilities at Mersham Primary School for adult education classes be investigated. | Parish Council to discuss feasibility with Head Teacher and Governors. Get advice from KCC Adult Education.   |
| 28. That a Youth Forum be set up to assess the needs of teenage residents                                 | Parish Council to discuss with other village organisations and residents.   |
| 29. That the condition of roads and pavements should be monitored with disabled users in mind.            | Parish Council and residents to monitor and Clerk to inform Highways of any potholes, etc. that need repair.  |
| 30. That pavements are surveyed to assess where dropped kerbs should be installed.                        | Parish Council to make an initial survey of places where dropped kerbs would be helpful for wheel-chair users then ask Kent Highways if these can be installed.   |
| 31. That efforts be made to prevent under-age drinking and anti-social behaviour at Sevington play area.  | Parish Council to monitor; residents to inform Parish Council when problems arise; Parish Council to liaise with Community Warden and Ashford Community Safety Partnership  |
| 32. That the Parish Council gives its activities wider publicity.   | Parish Council to consider issuing a newsletter in addition to reports in The Village, Kentish Express and on website ( <a href="http://www.mershamwithsevingtonpc.kentparishes.gov.uk">www.mershamwithsevingtonpc.kentparishes.gov.uk</a> ). |

| <b>TARGET DATE FOR ACTION</b> | <b>INDIVIDUAL(S) OR GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION</b>                            | <b>FUNDING POSSIBILITIES</b> |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Within a year                 | Parish Council<br>Mersham School Head Teacher<br>KCC Adult Education               |                              |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council<br>Village organisations<br>Residents<br>Ashford North Youth Centre |                              |
| On a regular basis            | Parish Council<br>Parish Clerk<br>Residents  | N/A                          |
| As soon as possible           | Parish Council<br>Kent Highways<br>Ashford Access (for advice)                     | Kent Highways                |
| On a regular basis            | Parish Council<br>Residents<br>Community Warden<br>Ashford Community Safety Team   | N/A                          |
| On a regular basis            | Parish Council   | Parish Council               |



## Mersham & Sevington - Parish Wish List

| Mersham and Sevington wish:   | Why  | Where  | When                               | How   |
|---|--|--|------------------------------------|---|
| To prevent further development on greenfield sites, with the exception of the already-agreed East Stour Village and a small amount of Local Needs Housing | To preserve the integrity of the Parish and the rural village way of life for future generations   | Throughout Mersham & Sevington Parish and specifically east of Highfield Lane, Church Rd/Sevington Lane and south of Roman Rd/Bank Rd. | In the short, medium and long term | Not to be identified in the Ashford LDF as developable land                                   |
| To protect the open countryside in the M20/A20 corridor towards Folkestone from built development   | To protect the character of the countryside  | East of Ashford  | In the short, medium and long term | Through policies in the Kent & Medway Structure Plan and the Ashford LDF                      |
| To prevent any development on the flood plain of the East Stour   | To prevent exacerbation of flooding in the Parish and further downstream.  | Throughout Mersham & Sevington Parish  | In the short, medium and long term | Through policies in the Kent & Medway Structure Plan and the Ashford LDF                      |
| To see a replacement for J10 of the M20 built to include as much mitigation as possible for it and its feeder roads                                       | To protect residents living nearest the new junction from noise and disturbance and to protect the rural aspect of the Parish  | Site yet to be announced   | In the medium term                 | Through consultation with the Highways Agency and through policies in the LDF                 |
| To provide a small quantity of Local Needs Housing in Mersham   | To provide affordable local housing to meet the need identified in the 2002 survey   | A site still to be identified that will be subject to public consultation  | In the medium term                 | Co-operation between the Rural Housing Trust, the Parish Council & ABC                        |
| To encourage localised, small-scale, commercial development appropriate to the rural character of the Parish  | To encourage local employment and sustain and improve the economic health and vitality of the community  | Within the Mersham village envelope and on existing employment sites   | In the short, medium and long term | Through the LDF, planning process & liaison with organisations such as Ashford Business Point |
| To promote residential and mixed development, rather than only industrial or commercial development on existing brownfield sites.                         | To reduce the impact that commercial/industrial development would have on the rural nature of Sevington South; to make better and more imaginative use of a brownfield site. | Waterbrook   | In the medium and long term        | Through the Local Dev. Framework and planning process   |

| Mersham and Sevington wish:  | Why   | Where   | When                               | How  |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|--|
| To restore the Sevington railhead to non-rail use  | Because it is noisy, intrusive and detrimental to rural life. The site does not enhance this approach to Ashford  | Sevington South ward  | In the short term                  | Through the Local Development Framework  |
| To remove the Truckstop lorry park   | To reduce congestion, pollution and illegal parking   | Waterbrook  | In the short term                  | Through Local Development Framework  |
| To establish a well-defined boundary between urban extensions on the eastern side of the A2070 and rural Mersham and Sevington     | To protect the rural character of the Parish from urban sprawl; to prevent further greenfield development; to define clearly the edge of the urban area   | Using the ancient, rural roads ie Highfield Lane, Church Rd/Sevington Lane, Roman Rd/Bank Rd. | In the medium and long term        | Through policies in the Kent & Medway Structure Plan and the Ashford LDF to establish a rural buffer zone/strategic gap                                  |
| To prevent traffic from urban extensions on the eastern side of the A2070 from having direct access onto rural roads in the Parish | To protect ancient, narrow lanes from high volumes of unsuitable traffic; for the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders wishing to enjoy the countryside                                       | Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook development sites  | In the medium and long term        | Through policies in the Ashford LDF and the planning process   |
| To maintain and enhance Sevington's remaining landscape features and character   | To protect the settings of the Grade I listed Church, other listed buildings and rural residences; to enhance the entry to Ashford from major routes  | Land north of Sevington Church & elsewhere in Sevington South                                 | In the short, medium and long term | Through the Local Dev. Framework and planning process  |
| To protect and improve the rural, environmental and scenic aspects of the Parish and the East Stour valley generally               | To preserve the rural character of the Parish and to provide recreational and cultural access to the countryside and protect its wildlife, bearing in mind that all the land involved is privately owned. | Throughout Mersham and Sevington Parish   | Medium and long term               | By not including greenfield land in the LDF; strong planning controls; liaison & co-operation with local landowners, AMCT and other environmental groups |
| To preserve and enhance Captains Wood for nature conservation and educational purposes   | It is currently neglected and threatened by the construction of East Stour village  | Captain's Wood  | In the short, medium and long term | Through the planning process and co-operation with the landowners  |
| To maintain and enhance the buffer zones between existing commercial and non-commercial sites.                                     | To protect residential areas from noise and light pollution; to reduce their visual impact and intrusiveness on the community   | All industrial and commercial areas   | In the short, medium and long term | Through the Local Dev. Framework and planning process  |
| To control showroom and factory advertising and security lighting  | To reduce light pollution   | All industrial and commercial areas   | In the short, medium and long term | Through the planning process   |



| Mersham and Sevington wish:  | Why  | Where                                    | When                               | How  |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|--|
| To ensure that current and future generations will benefit from public and open green spaces within the Mersham village envelope | To provide a safe and pleasant environment for the long-term benefit of the community  | Junior Playing Field and Eurostar Meadow | Short and medium term              | By negotiation with landowners, PC & KCC; through the LDF & planning process   |
| To act positively on the results of the present speed investigation  | To increase road safety and create a more pleasant environment for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders  | Throughout the Parish                    | Short term                         | Through KCC Highways and Parish Council  |
| To install a footpath from Old Rectory Close to the M20 bridge   | To ensure pedestrian safety  | Old Rectory Close to M20 bridge          | Short term                         | KCC Highways and local landowners  |
| To improve disabled access   | Disability Discrimination Act  | Footpath AE366 and Junior Playing Field  | Short term                         | KCC, Parish Council & grant-giving bodies  |
| To retain the village shop and post office and develop its range of services   | To provide local services and information to residents; to reduce the need to travel outside the Parish for day-to-day needs.                      | The Street, Mersham                      | In the short, medium and long term | Through co-operation and consultation with the shop owners and management, KRCC and any relevant grant-giving bodies           |
| To extend the Mountbatten Hall   | To increase its flexibility; to provide a room for small meetings and facilities for changing facilities for staging drama and other entertainment | Mountbatten Hall, The Forstal            | In the medium term                 | Through seeking grants and fund-raising.   |
| Improve existing public transport links  | Present level of service is insufficient   | Throughout Mersham & Sevington Parish    | Short and medium term              | Through KCC & bus operators. By investigating the possibility of a community minibus in co-operation with other local villages |
| To continue to support and promote the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme  | To improve community safety  | Throughout Mersham & Sevington Parish    | Short, medium and long term        | Through co-operation between NW Co-ordinators, Police, Parish Council & residents.   |
| To engage, with other Parishes, the services of a Rural Community Warden   | To reduce crime & anti-social behaviour, provide local resources and information for the community   | Throughout Mersham & Sevington Parish    | Short term                         | Through KCC Rural Community Warden Scheme  |

| Mersham and Sevington wish:  | Why  | Where                            | When              | How  |
|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| To set up a website for Mersham and Sevington                                      | To improve communications and foster a closer sense of community; to provide information on the Parish, its activities and cultural heritage | Throughout Mersham and Sevington | Short term        | Through Parish Council                                       |
| To retrieve and reinstate the Ashford boundary stone                               | To create a feature of historical interest on an approach to Ashford   | Between the river and three oaks | In the short term | Through cooperation between the Parish Council and landowner |
| <b>Key:</b> Short term - 2003-2005 Medium term - 2006-2016 Long term - 2017 onward |  |                                  |                   |  |

## Mersham and Sevington Parish Plan Questionnaire Results

The Mersham and Sevington Parish Plan Questionnaire was issued to 529 households in the Parish of Mersham and Sevington and returned by 280 households (a 53% response). Some respondents did not answer all of the questions.

Unless stated otherwise, percentages are based on the total number of responses to each question. In some questions, respondents may make more than one comment or choice. Because of rounding, the percentages may not add up to 100%.

**Q1** Please indicate whether you live in Mersham or Sevington.

|           | No. | %   |
|-----------|-----|-----|
| Mersham   | 226 | 81% |
| Sevington | 53  | 19% |

**Number of Respondents: 279**

**Q2** How many years have you lived in Mersham/Sevington?

| Years | No. | %   |
|-------|-----|-----|
| <10   | 98  | 39% |
| 11-20 | 56  | 22% |
| 21-30 | 40  | 16% |
| >30   | 59  | 23% |

**Number of Respondents: 253**

**Q3** What is most important to you about Mersham/Sevington?

| General Category*                   | No. | %   |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Rural location                      | 111 | 34% |
| Friendly, safe, quiet               | 92  | 28% |
| Close to amenities, transport links | 26  | 8%  |
| Village atmosphere, events          | 69  | 21% |
| School and local facilities         | 31  | 9%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into five broad groups.

**Q4** Are there any features of the villages, as they are now, that are important or especially pleasing to you?

| General Category*                  | No. | %   |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Conservation area, architecture    | 11  | 4%  |
| Village greens                     | 57  | 20% |
| Rural character, small population  | 39  | 14% |
| Surrounding countryside, footpaths | 45  | 16% |
| Well maintained                    | 12  | 4%  |
| Church                             | 43  | 15% |
| Community spirit                   | 23  | 8%  |
| Facilities                         | 52  | 18% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into eight broad groups.

**Q5** Does Mersham/Sevington need more housing for the following groups?

| Type of Development      | No. | %   |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| Starter homes            | 97  | 26% |
| 2/3 bedroom houses       | 46  | 13% |
| 4/5 bedroom houses       | 6   | 2%  |
| Elderly/disabled housing | 45  | 13% |
| Local needs housing      | 65  | 18% |
| No further homes needed  | 108 | 29% |

**Q6** Where would you like to see this accommodation situated?

| General Category*      | No. | %   |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| Infilling              | 49  | 41% |
| Edge of village        | 21  | 16% |
| Behind village hall    | 2   | 2%  |
| Brownfield sites       | 10  | 8%  |
| Railhead               | 1   | 1%  |
| Other                  | 9   | 8%  |
| No further development | 27  | 23% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into seven broad groups.

**Q7** Any further comments on housing within Mersham/Sevington.

| General Category*                           | No. | %   |
|---|-----|-----|
| No further development                      | 35  | 42% |
| No development on greenfield or flood plain | 5   | 6%  |
| No more large houses                        | 4   | 5%  |
| No cramming on small sites                  | 2   | 2%  |
| Small mixed developments                    | 4   | 5%  |
| Retain identity and green spaces            | 16  | 19% |
| Need affordable housing                     | 10  | 12% |
| Retain greenbelt                            | 7   | 8%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into eight broad groups.

**Q8** Where do your children attend school?

| Location                        | No. | %   |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Nursery school in villages      | 5   | 4%  |
| Nursery school outside villages | 9   | 8%  |
| Primary school in villages      | 20  | 17% |
| Primary school outside villages | 13  | 11% |
| Secondary school                | 48  | 40% |
| College                         | 16  | 13% |
| Other                           | 8   | 7%  |

**Q9** How do your children get to their place of education?

| Method | No. | %   |
|--------|-----|-----|
| Walk   | 24  | 21% |
| Bus    | 24  | 21% |
| Car    | 46  | 40% |
| Train  | 13  | 11% |
| Other  | 7   | 6%  |

**Q10** Do your children have problems getting to their place of education?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 17  | 20% |
| No  | 68  | 80% |

**Number of Respondents: 85**

**Q11** What problems do you have getting your children to school?

|                    | No. | %   |
|--------------------|-----|-----|
| Traffic congestion | 8   | 53% |
| Bus times          | 7   | 47% |

**Q12** Do you have problems in finding childcare locally?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 10  | 22% |
| No  | 36  | 78% |

**Number of Respondents: 46**

**Q13** What facilities are needed to solve these childcare problems?

|                              | No. | %   |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|
| After school / holiday clubs | 6   | 30% |
| More nursery places          | 6   | 30% |
| More child minders           | 7   | 35% |
| Other                        | 1   | 5%  |

**Q14** Would you use Adult Education facilities if provided in the village?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 128 | 56% |
| No  | 102 | 44% |

**Number of Respondents: 230**

**Q15** What type of adult education class would you like to see provided?

| General Category* | No. | %   |
|-------------------|-----|-----|
| Literature        | 5   | 2%  |
| Languages         | 44  | 21% |
| IT                | 44  | 21% |
| Arts              | 32  | 15% |
| Craft             | 30  | 14% |
| Fitness           | 31  | 15% |
| Practical skills  | 9   | 4%  |
| History           | 12  | 6%  |
| Amateur dramatics | 1   |     |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into nine broad groups.

**Q16** Where would you like to see these adult education facilities provided?

|                     | No. | %   |
|---------------------|-----|-----|
| Village Hall        | 101 | 47% |
| School              | 60  | 28% |
| Church room         | 29  | 14% |
| New community rooms | 22  | 10% |
| Other               | 2   | 1%  |

**Q17** Do you have access to a home computer with internet connection?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 188 | 70% |
| No  | 82  | 30% |

**Number of Respondents: 270**

**Q18** Would you access a village website if one was set up?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 166 | 66% |
| No  | 86  | 34% |

**Number of Respondents: 252**

**Q19** Could you help create and maintain a website for the villages?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 18  | 8%  |
| No  | 218 | 92% |

**Number of Respondents: 236**

**Q20** Are any more employment opportunities needed within Mersham/Sevington?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 35  | 42% |
| No  | 49  | 58% |

**Number of Respondents: 84**

**Q21** Have you any further comments about employment locally?

| General Category*               | No. | %   |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| No additional needed            | 14  | 58% |
| Need to commute                 | 3   | 13% |
| Nothing for young people        | 2   | 8%  |
| Nothing within walking distance | 2   | 8%  |
| More local centres needed       | 3   | 13% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into five broad groups.

**Q22** How well do you feel that Mersham and Sevington Parish Council publicises its activities and decisions?

| Category        | No. | %   |
|-----------------|-----|-----|
| Very well       | 39  | 15% |
| Reasonably well | 124 | 46% |
| Average         | 51  | 19% |
| Poorly          | 35  | 13% |
| Do not know     | 18  | 7%  |

**Number of Respondents: 267**

**Q23** Do you think Mersham and Sevington residents would benefit if the Parish Council publicised its activities on a villages website?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 179 | 77% |
| No  | 52  | 23% |

**Number of Respondents: 231**

**Q24** Are there any other comments you wish to make regarding the Parish Council?

| General Category*          | No. | %   |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Need to communicate better | 17  | 41% |
| Insufficient powers        | 5   | 12% |
| Very active and positive   | 15  | 37% |
| Needs website              | 1   | 2%  |
| Footpath committee needed  | 3   | 7%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into five broad groups

**Q25** How often do you or your family use the following?

|                      | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|----------------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Village Hall         | 28    | 158       | 67    |
| Junior Playing Field | 22    | 60        | 141   |
| Millennium Green     | 35    | 132       | 73    |
| Village Shop         | 105   | 117       | 41    |
| Post Office          | 107   | 109       | 42    |
| The Royal Oak        | 38    | 139       | 81    |
| The Farriers Arms    | 13    | 111       | 123   |

**Q26** Do you think the above facilities could be improved?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 92  | 55% |
| No  | 76  | 45% |

**Number of Respondents: 168**

**Q27** Do you think that the village hall is adequate for the needs of Mersham?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 193 | 90% |
| No  | 21  | 10% |

**Number of Respondents: 214**

**Q28** Would you use a community hall in Sevington if there was one available?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 44  | 23% |
| No  | 150 | 77% |

**Number of Respondents: 194**

**Q29** If funding was available, what would you like to see the land above the cut and cover used for?

| General Category*  | No. | %   |
|--------------------|-----|-----|
| Leave as it is     | 6   | 2%  |
| School car park    | 66  | 27% |
| School sports area | 83  | 34% |
| Public access      | 46  | 19% |
| Tennis courts      | 8   | 3%  |
| Play area          | 34  | 14% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into six broad groups

**Q30** Do you, or does a member of your family, have a disability that prevents use of any facilities in the villages? If so, what improvements, in your opinion, could be made?

| General Category*           | No. | %   |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Better maintained footpaths | 4   | 36% |
| Car service for visits      | 1   | 9%  |
| Disabled facilities         | 5   | 45% |
| Improved bus service        | 1   | 9%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into four broad groups

**Q31** Would you like to see any of the following in the villages?

|                             | No. | %   |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Gas supply                  | 142 | 48% |
| Free newspaper distribution | 132 | 45% |
| Other                       | 20  | 7%  |

**Q32** Are there adequate sports/leisure facilities in Mersham and Sevington for the following groups of people?

|                | No. | %   |
|----------------|-----|-----|
| Disabled       | 11  | 6%  |
| Pre-school     | 32  | 16% |
| Teenagers      | 31  | 16% |
| Young Families | 25  | 13% |
| Couples        | 26  | 13% |
| Single people  | 21  | 11% |
| Retired people | 51  | 26% |

**Q33** Are there any other recreation/leisure facilities you would like to see made available in Mersham and Sevington if funds were available?

| General Category*                  | No. | %   |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| None                               | 6   | 8%  |
| Facilities for 7-12 year olds      | 10  | 13% |
| Gym facilities in the village hall | 6   | 8%  |
| Tennis/netball/basketball courts   | 25  | 33% |
| Multi-use games area               | 2   | 3%  |
| Youth club                         | 15  | 20% |
| Allotments                         | 2   | 3%  |
| Bowling green                      | 10  | 13% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into six broad groups

**Q34** How many children under 18 are there in your household?

|             | No. | %   |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| 0-5 years   | 37  | 26% |
| 6-12 years  | 48  | 34% |
| 13-18 years | 56  | 40% |

**Q35** If it was possible to provide any of the following youth facilities is it likely that your children would participate in them?

|                   | Yes | No |
|-------------------|-----|----|
| Youth club        | 56  | 14 |
| Holiday club      | 36  | 24 |
| After school club | 26  | 28 |

**Q36** Is there any other provision you would like to see made available in Mersham and Sevington for children?

| General Category*        | No. | %   |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| Playing field for school | 2   | 8%  |
| After school club        | 3   | 13% |
| Cubs                     | 3   | 13% |
| Skatepark                | 4   | 17% |
| Youth club               | 5   | 21% |
| Play area                | 5   | 21% |
| Nursery                  | 2   | 8%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into seven broad groups

**Q37** Do you have any particular concerns with regard to crime in Mersham and Sevington?

| General Category*                | No. | %   |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| None                             | 69  | 53% |
| Casual vandalism                 | 16  | 12% |
| Underage drinking                | 4   | 3%  |
| Speeding                         | 7   | 5%  |
| Burglary                         | 9   | 7%  |
| Lack of police presence          | 23  | 18% |
| Awareness of neighbourhood watch | 3   | 2%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into seven broad groups

**Q38** What do you think could be done to make your community feel safer?

| General Category*                | No. | %   |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| More police presence             | 70  | 56% |
| Community warden                 | 9   | 7%  |
| Extension of neighbourhood watch | 3   | 2%  |
| Speed limits                     | 9   | 7%  |
| Footpath extension               | 4   | 3%  |
| Stop parking at shop             | 1   | 1%  |
| More street lighting             | 30  | 24% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into seven broad groups

**Q39** Would you like to be more involved in Neighbourhood Watch?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 68  | 28% |
| No  | 172 | 72% |

**Number of Respondents:240**

**Q40** Do you feel that the needs of senior citizens are adequately provided for in the villages, e.g. health care, social opportunities?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 74  | 40% |
| No  | 112 | 60% |

**Number of Respondents:240**

**Q41** Do you consider that senior citizens could benefit from a village prescription collection service?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 212 | 94% |
| No  | 13  | 6%  |

**Number of Respondents:225**

**Q42** Do you consider that, from the viewpoint of a senior citizen, there is a problem with crime?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 55  | 28% |
| No  | 144 | 72% |

**Number of Respondents:199**

**Q43** How do you currently dispose of recyclable household waste?

|                          | No. | %   |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| Weekly refuse collection | 187 | 35% |
| Blue box collection      | 167 | 31% |
| Village hall banks       | 90  | 17% |
| Other                    | 93  | 17% |

**Q44** If you use recycling facilities, in what ways could they be improved?

|                | No. | %   |
|----------------|-----|-----|
| Frequency      | 39  | 8%  |
| Cardboard      | 133 | 28% |
| Plastics       | 155 | 32% |
| Garden rubbish | 135 | 28% |
| Other          | 17  | 4%  |

**Q45** Do you suffer disturbance from noise in the villages?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 134 | 51% |
| No  | 128 | 49% |

**Number of Respondents:262**

**Q46** If yes, what is the source of the noise?

|            | No. | %   |
|------------|-----|-----|
| Traffic    | 92  | 43% |
| Railway    | 69  | 32% |
| Neighbours | 18  | 8%  |
| Machinery  | 12  | 6%  |
| Other      | 23  | 10% |

**Q47** By what means could the noise be reduced?

| General Category*            | No. | %   |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|
| ASBO / law enforcement       | 9   | 12% |
| Traffic calming              | 23  | 30% |
| Railway tunnel / more trees  | 32  | 42% |
| Enforce firework regulations | 6   | 8%  |
| Re-site lorry park           | 6   | 8%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into seven broad groups

**Q48** Are you adversely affected by lighting in the villages?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 23  | 9%  |
| No  | 236 | 91% |

**Number of Respondents:259**

**Q49** If yes, what is the source of the light?

| General Category*              | No. | %   |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Security lighting at Sevington | 4   | 21% |
| Old Hancock site               | 1   | 5%  |
| Neighbours security lighting   | 10  | 53% |
| Lorry park                     | 3   | 16% |
| Royal Oak signs                | 1   | 5%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into five broad groups



**Q50** By what means could the lighting nuisance be reduced?

| General Category*         | No. | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|
| Lighting angle adjustment | 3   | 27% |
| Re-siting                 | 1   | 9%  |
| Reduce wattage            | 5   | 45% |
| Timers                    | 2   | 18% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into four broad groups

**Q51** Are there areas in the villages where additional street lighting would be advantageous?

| General Category*         | No. | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|
| Not necessary             | 23  | 23% |
| Church Road Mersham       | 18  | 18% |
| Church Road Sevington     | 11  | 11% |
| Kingsford Street          | 16  | 16% |
| Forstal/Flood Street      | 1   | 1%  |
| Millennium Green footpath | 8   | 8%  |
| Bower Road                | 9   | 9%  |
| From The Street to A20    | 16  | 16% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into eight broad groups

**Q52** Where in the villages is litter a problem?

| General Category*     | No. | %   |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| Near / outside school | 6   | 20% |
| Playing field         | 8   | 27% |
| Church Lane           | 5   | 17% |
| Overflowing bins      | 4   | 13% |
| Industrial units      | 3   | 10% |
| McDonalds             | 1   | 3%  |
| Fields                | 3   | 10% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into eight broad groups

**Q53** In what ways can the situation be improved?

| General Category*           | No. | %   |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Education                   | 10  | 23% |
| Litter warden               | 3   | 7%  |
| More bins/signs             | 19  | 43% |
| Street cleaning             | 8   | 18% |
| Businesses clean their area | 4   | 9%  |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into four broad groups

**Q54** Where in the villages is dog fouling a problem?

| General Category*                     | No. | %   |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Millennium Green / footpath           | 52  | 74% |
| Footpath parallel to Kingsford Street | 3   | 4%  |
| Verges                                | 6   | 9%  |
| Sevington greens and footpaths        | 8   | 11% |
| Stream                                | 1   |     |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into five broad groups

**Q55** In what ways can the situation be improved?

| General Category*               | No. | %   |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Pooper scoop bags from the shop | 8   | 12% |
| More dog bins                   | 19  | 29% |
| More responsible owners / fines | 27  | 42% |
| Publicity                       | 11  | 17% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into four broad groups

**Q56** Should more be done to protect, improve and increase awareness of wildlife habitats in the parish?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 162 | 82% |
| No  | 35  | 18% |

**Number of Respondents:197**

**Q57** Do you have any suggestions how this can be achieved?

| General Category*                  | No. | %   |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| More information, signs, education | 28  | 68% |
| Local wildlife group               | 8   | 20% |
| Improve wildlife management        | 5   | 12% |

\* Respondents comments have been categorised into three broad groups

**Q58** If Junction 10A is constructed at the end of Kingsford Street/Highfield Lane, should both or either of these roads be closed off or made into one-way systems?

|                 | No. | %   |
|-----------------|-----|-----|
| Closed off      | 72  | 35% |
| One-way systems | 66  | 32% |
| No change       | 67  | 33% |

**Number of Respondents: 205**

**Q59** Do you agree that there should be a roundabout on the A2070 at the Junction with Barrey Road?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 179 | 86% |
| No  | 28  | 14% |

**Number of Respondents: 207**

**Q60** If no, what traffic management measures would you suggest instead?

|                                      | No. | %   |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Traffic lights                       | 10  | 91% |
| Right turn from Barrey Rd onto A2070 | 1   | 9%  |

**Q61a** Do you agree that traffic calming should be introduced into Mersham?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 153 | 67% |
| No  | 76  | 33% |

**Number of Respondents: 229**

**Q61b** Do you agree that traffic calming should be introduced into Sevington?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 56  | 51% |
| No  | 53  | 49% |

**Number of Respondents: 109**

**Q62a** If feasible, what kind of traffic calming would you like to see introduced in Mersham and Sevington?

|  | No. | %   |
|--|-----|-----|
| HGV width restrictions                   | 12  | 13% |
| Speed bumps, chicanes                    | 59  | 62% |
| 20 mph speed limit                       | 22  | 23% |
| 40 mph speed limit from McDonalds to J10 | 2   | 2%  |

**Q63** Are you satisfied with the level of public transport to and from the parish?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 92  | 41% |
| No  | 134 | 59% |

**Number of Respondents: 226**

**Q64** If no, would you support any of the following?

|   | No. | %   |
|---|-----|-----|
| An improved bus service   | 92  | 48% |
| A dial-and-ride service   | 38  | 20% |
| A dedicated minibus able to deliver people to specific locations in Ashford | 62  | 32% |

**Q65** Do you consider that any action should be taken to improve the parking arrangements outside Mersham School?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 205 | 94% |
| No  | 13  | 6%  |

**Number of Respondents: 218**

**Q66** If yes, would you support one or more of the following?

|   | No. | %   |
|---|-----|-----|
| An dedicated off street parking facility  | 148 | 46% |
| Parking restrictions to keep the area adjacent to the school entrance and the bridge clear of all parking | 82  | 25% |
| Greater incentives for parents to use a car-sharing scheme  | 95  | 29% |

**Q67** Do you think that a parking area should be introduced for the Sevington recreation area?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 35  | 49% |
| No  | 37  | 51% |

**Number of Respondents: 72**

**Q68** Do you feel that there are sufficient parking areas in Sevington?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 29  | 51% |
| No  | 28  | 49% |

**Number of Respondents: 57**

**Q69** If not, where do you suggest parking should be provided?

**Number of Respondents: 0**

**Q70** Do you think that additional footpaths should be provided?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 150 | 72% |
| No  | 59  | 28% |

**Number of Respondents: 209**

**Q71** If yes, would you support proposals for footpaths at any of the following locations?

|  | No. | %   |
|--|-----|-----|
| Bower Road   | 94  | 28% |
| Church Road  | 106 | 32% |
| Kingsford Street                                     | 64  | 19% |
| Linking the east side of Sevington footbridge to J10 | 53  | 16% |
| Other  | 15  | 5%  |

**Q72** Would you support a proposal for a cycleway from Sevington Mill to Mersham?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 160 | 76% |
| No  | 50  | 24% |

**Number of Respondents: 210**

**Q73** Do you agree that new signs should be introduced for Sevington showing that it is a Domesday village?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 131 | 74% |
| No  | 46  | 26% |

**Number of Respondents: 177**

**Q74** Do you think that Sevington should have a "gateway sign" on entering the village?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 106 | 68% |
| No  | 49  | 32% |

**Number of Respondents: 155**

**Q75** Do you think that the integrity of Sevington Church and its surroundings should be protected from development?

|     | No. | %   |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 188 | 95% |
| No  | 10  | 5%  |

**Number of Respondents: 198**

**MERSHAM & SEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**RESULT OF CONSULTATION ON**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the number of responses received to the questions included in the above consultation were as follows:

1. It is our intention **to retain the natural boundaries around Sevington and Mersham, by opposing any development to the east of the lane from Sevington Railway Bridge to Cheeseman's Green, and any development to the east of Highfield Lane**, to preserve the existing rural environment for the residents in this vicinity.

Number of respondees replying Yes **737**

Number of respondees replying No **18**

2. It is our intention **to protect Sevington South and Mersham Village**, from the **increased traffic** flow which will result from the construction of Junction 10a, and **from any new development to the west of Highfield Lane and Kingsford Street**, and to preserve the rural roads and lanes for the enjoyment of all pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

Number of respondees replying Yes **717**

Number of respondees replying No **38**

3. It is our intention to retain, or seek to enhance, the existing flood plain area, without compromising the current flood mitigation measures, **by opposing further development on the East Stour Flood Plain.**

Number of respondees replying Yes **737**

Number of respondees replying No **18**

There were **755** consultation documents returned which represent a response rate of **70.39%**

There was **1** incomplete consultation document returned which is not included in the above totals.

**Trevor Robertson**  
Administrative Services Manager

Dated this **9<sup>th</sup>** day of August 2005

Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL



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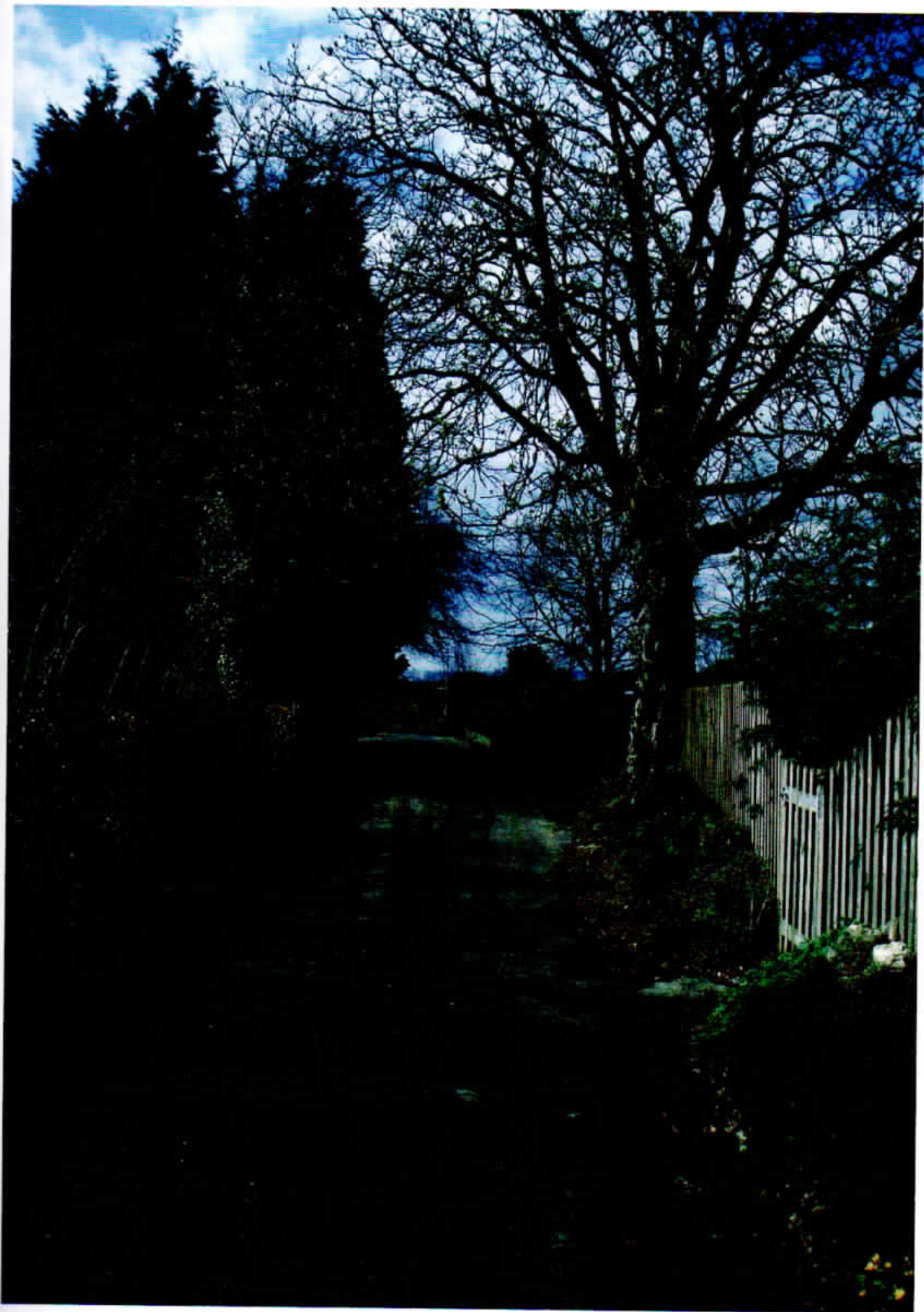
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Mersham and Sevington Parish Plan Steering Group

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