

The Nesses Parish Plan & Community Strategy

2004

Sponsored and funded by the Countryside Agency



Supported by The Community Council of Shropshire



Executive Summary

Objectives of the questionnaire

The Nesses Parishes are situated in the north of Shropshire between the towns of Oswestry and Shrewsbury. The Parish Plan is a Countryside Agency initiative with the principal objective of developing an action plan designed to ensure the future vibrancy and well-being of the parishes.

The data on which the plan is based was generated from two questionnaires submitted to 1) every household and 2) every occupant of the parishes. Data were analysed for three different areas of the parishes, 1) Nesscliffe 2) West of the A5 and 3) the Nesses.

Main Findings of the survey

Household questionnaire

- There are 383 households on the electoral register and 85% responded
- The average household size is 2.49 members
- A higher proportion of householders aged over 60 live in Nesscliffe (31%) than West of the A5 (21%) or The Nesses (26%)
- Car ownership is high with 94% of households having at least one car
- About one third of households report at least one member has attended a school in the parishes, with a significantly higher proportion (50%) from Nesscliffe
- 58% of households already have access to e-mail and the internet and desire access to Broadband internet
- 90% of households are registered with a GP in either Prescott (50%) or Knockin (40%)

Individual questionnaire

- 72% of individuals over the age of 10 responded

Transport

- The most used forms of transport are car (79%), bus (15%) and bicycle (11%)
- Respondents in Nesscliffe are twice as likely to use the bus as those in other areas reflecting the route of the bus through Nesscliffe village
- People in the 11 – 17 age group are most likely to use the bus. Those in the highest age group (85+) frequently rely on lifts
- 30% of individuals expressed interest in a taxi voucher or community car scheme

- Questions relating to the local bus service generated a very high degree of interest with 74% of respondents stating the service should be improved with more frequent and later buses

Traffic

- Over 95% responded to questions concerning speed limits and traffic calming measures in Nesscliffe village, with 50% of those living in Nesscliffe in favour of additional measures such as speed cameras, pedestrian crossing and speed bumps
- A high level of interest (58%) was expressed for the Quiet Lanes Initiative with this figure rising to 70% for respondents from the Nesses

Community Service

- 75% of respondents appear to be satisfied with the facilities at the local primary school in Nesscliffe. A small number favour the introduction of pre-school facilities
- The questions about local education provision attracted a high response rate (95%) but nearly half had 'no opinion' on the subject! Those who did express an opinion were generally satisfied with the existing provision
- A high level of interest (60%) was expressed for the provision of additional community facilities. Adult day and evening classes were most popular with computing, art, fitness and languages the most favoured
- There are a number of retail facilities available in the area of which the most used are the Nesscliffe Store/Garage (88%) and the milk delivery service (45%)
- The Nesscliffe Store is used for a variety of purposes with the most common being for food purchases followed by Post Office services, use of the cash machine, the purchase of non-food items and the purchase of fuel. The notice board in the store is widely read for village news
- Although the majority of respondents (60%) never use the Mobile Library or don't know of its existence, those who do are satisfied with the service
- *The Three Parishes Newsletter* is widely read (by 88% of respondents), with nearly all finding it informative and useful

Health

- Although the majority of residents are able to visit their doctor's surgery without problem a small number (10%) do have difficulty travelling to doctor, dentist or hospital appointments. The use of one of the village halls as a part-time branch surgery was suggested

Employment

- 44% of respondents are in full-time employment and 25% are retired with the rest studying, working part-time or unemployed
- Of those who are working, 21% work from home and 19% work within 5 miles of home

- Working respondents are employed in a wide variety of sectors
- A number of respondents (35%) would like to see more jobs available in the parishes although a higher number (45%) had no opinion on the subject
- A low level (5%) of respondents are currently seeking work
- A high proportion of respondents (75%) would like to see more voluntary village hall and leisure activities

Parish Development

- Asked what types of new housing respondents would like to see in the future, the option with most support is small family homes designed for both young and elderly people. Large family homes and flats/apartments are the least favoured. There is some support for no further development at all in the parishes.
- Generally respondents favour the development of owner occupied properties over rented properties
- Asked if they find the development of new housing acceptable, most respondents (70%) favour the conversion of redundant buildings; 50% support the building of single dwellings in controlled locations and 40% support the building of small estates of less than 10 houses
- The majority gave a firm 'No' to larger estates of 10 to 20 dwellings or over 20 dwellings
- The building styles considered most appropriate for the area are cottages and bungalows followed by detached and semi-detached houses. The least favoured are town and terraced housing and flats/maisonettes
- There is an overall consensus against the development of new large factory or commercial units although there is some support for small factory units or extensions to existing facilities, particularly if these involve the conversion of redundant or empty buildings
- The development of leisure facilities scored the highest response

Sport, Recreation and Leisure

- 76% of respondents said it was important to take part in sports/leisure activities
- Among this group of respondents the most popular activities are walking/hiking (80%), cycling (45%), swimming (40%), horse riding (23%) and tennis (17%). Participation, as expected, is a function of age.
- 24% of respondents use the Leisure Centres in Shrewsbury, Oswestry or other centres with the majority using cars to travel there
- Only 9% of respondents regularly use the Nesscliffe Playing Fields however 46% would support a campaign to improve the changing room and storage facilities there
- When asked which social activities respondents already attend or would consider attending, many either did not answer or answered negatively suggesting that for many people taking part in these activities is not important. However, the social activities with most

support are village hall events followed by church activities, Adcote School events and drama groups

- Of those who expressed an opinion most respondents feel that the social and recreational facilities on offer in the parishes are poor

Local Environment

- A high level of respondents (89%) visit the Nesscliffe Country Park at some time, with 41% visiting weekly or more
- The park is used by all age groups and by people from all areas although respondents from west of the A5 visit the park less frequently than those from the other two areas, and the majority of respondents who stated they never visit the park are aged 75 and over
- The responses indicate that the most popular use of the park is for walking/hiking followed by dog-walking, cycling, horse riding and jogging/running
- 40% of those who visit the park use a vehicle to get there
- 90% of country path users record the routes as being good or adequate. About 10% find the routes to be in poor condition
- A high proportion of respondents (60%) believe the park should be used primarily for wildlife conservation, 26% for leisure and 15% for both
- 75% of respondents use the rights of way with the parishes, with the most popular use being for walking/hiking and dog walking
- The majority (56%) find the conditions of the paths are adequate
- 17% of respondents use a vehicle to get there
- Only 55% of respondents expressed an opinion with regard to circular route Rights of Way. However of these the majority (79%) were in favour of creating such footpaths

Comments

- 29% of respondents chose to add their own comments on the back page of the questionnaire. The number of comments made were broadly categorised as follows:

Parish Development – 63
Transport – 44
Local Environment – 53
Community Services – 54
Horses – 20
Country Park – 16

Conclusions

- There was a high level of interest in the formulation of a Parish Plan judging by the response rates of 85% (household responses) and 72% (individual responses)
- This is a very car dependent community

- A large number of households have access to internet and e-mail facilities
- Although the car is the preferred mode of transport there is considerable interest in improving the local bus service and developing alternative public transport systems (e.g. taxi vouchers, community car scheme)
- There is a degree of support for further traffic calming measures, including the introduction of the Quiet Lanes Initiative
- Respondents are generally satisfied with local education provision and there is a high level of interest in the provision of additional adult classes/courses
- The Nesscliffe Store/Garage provides an important service to all the residents of the parishes (not just Nesscliffe) and is widely used for a variety of purposes by local people
- Most people do not use the Mobile Library service
- *The Three Parishes Newsletter* is widely read and can be considered a useful source of information
- Carefully controlled development of owner occupied small family houses, cottages and bungalows and conversion of redundant / empty buildings are generally acceptable to respondents. Further large houses and estates of over 10 houses are generally not considered acceptable
- New commercial or industrial developments of any kind are generally unacceptable
- The residents of the parishes enjoy walking/hiking and make good use of their local facilities to do this
- Although the Nesscliffe playing fields are used by only a minority of residents there is considerable support for developing the facilities there
- Residents would like to see more organised events in the village halls
- The free comments section of the questionnaire reveals parish development to be a major cause for concern with many residents anxious that it should be carefully controlled to maintain the existing character of the area
- The free comments section also reveals concerns over speed control and vehicles using the narrow lanes

Actions

- The results of the Parish Plan Survey have highlighted a number of areas of interest to the general community as well as a number of concerns. Several departments of Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council have been contacted already and are now aware of many of the findings of this exercise. They should take into account residents' views and concerns when considering, for example, future development within the parishes
- Arising from this exercise there are a number of new initiatives which the local community has considered and is actively developing:
 - to develop child-care and recreational facilities

- to determine which adult education classes would have most support and follow up with local colleges or individuals willing to run them
- to improve awareness and use of the Mobile Library service
- to fully utilise *The Three Parishes Newsletter* as a source of local knowledge and information
- to improve youth facilities for the parishes by meeting with the Shropshire Youth Association and to consider using Nesscliffe Village Hall as a potential base for a club
- BT has announced that Broadband internet access will be available locally from September 2004

Regular contact with parishioners will be made to update them on the progress of the Parish Plan. Also, the Parish Council will review progress annually and carry out a much broader review every three years.

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The Nesses Parishes

Location

The Nesses Parishes are two parishes situated in the north of Shropshire. These two combined parishes under the one parish council are Little Ness and Great Ness, and are one of the 31 parish councils in the Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council. The area is bordered by seven other parishes, one of these being in the North Shropshire District, while three in Oswestry District. The area is divided by the main A5 road which takes traffic north to Oswestry and on to Holyhead, and south to Shrewsbury and eventually London, some 174 miles away.

History - The Nesses – an introduction

The largest inland county in Great Britain is Shropshire. Though there are hills south of the River Severn such as the Stiperstones and the Long Mynd, to the north of the Severn it is different: impressive sandstone ridges project into the vast Shropshire plain like promontories into the sea, hence the name *naes* which means 'promontory' in old english.

At the time of the Domesday Book there were four villages of Ness which are thought to have been Kinton, Wilcott, Hopton and Weston Lullingfield. Roger de Montgomery, a kinsman of William the Conqueror, held the Nesses after the Conquest and then in 1157-8 the land was given to John le Strange.

Great Ness was also known as King's Ness, since Henry II took it over as is a manor of royal demesne. It is also known as Ness Strange for the le Strange family held it for many years.

Little Ness lies nestled within the bend of a tributary of the River Severn called the River Pevery. Through the centuries the pronunciation changed and this was followed by a change in spelling. The river is now known as the River Perry.

The land of the Nesses is steeped in history, mystery and legend:

There is the story of the murder of Sir Morys Fitz Roger-de-Powys by Sir Fouke Le Fitz Waryn in the reign of King John. This took place opposite the site of The Three Pigeons Inn on the old A5, 'the Pass of Ness.'

The stories of Wild Humphrey Kynaston, the highwayman of Nesscliffe, may be found in many books, and his cave at Nesscliffe is worth a visit.

Where is the Nesscliffe Maze, last seen in 1897? It might have been connected with the pagan temple on which site the Chapel of St Mary de Rocherio was built. The original Nesscliffe School building now occupies this site on the old A5.

At Little Ness there is a mysterious little mound. Archaeologists believe that it is probably the remains of a Norman motte, and the church of Little Ness may have originally been a chapel within its bailey. Such early castles would have been made from wood, and soon fallen into decay or been destroyed in battles with no trace being left of their structure. What were found within this little mound were quantities of animal bones and burnt wood. The wooden castle may have been burned down during one of the many Welsh border raids.

In the times of the border clashes between the English and the Welsh, the Nesses will have been crossed many times by troops of soldiers. There is a romantic legend that the mound is the grave of the Welsh Prince Cynddylan who was slain by the Saxons in the sixth century, but no archaeological evidence has been uncovered to substantiate this story.

It has been said that the stone for building Shrewsbury Castle, the Abbey and the walls of the town came from Nesscliffe.

Nesscliffe Hill has probably been inhabited for millennia as attested by the Romano-British Camp, the remains of which can still be seen. Very little is known of this site and further investigation is made impossible by the numerous tree roots present. The mystery remains.

In 1670 the Manor of Great Ness was purchased by the Bridgemans, and about 1697-8 the Hopton Estate in the Nesses was sold to Sir Orlando Bridgeman. The Bridgemans later became the Earls of Bradford who were the Lords of Ness, descendants of two ancient families: the Newports (of Newport in Shropshire) and the Bridgemans, descendants of Einion Efell who died in 1196.

Thomas Telford's contribution to the Nesses was the improvement of the old Holyhead road passing The Three Pigeons Inn at Nesscliffe, and The Nesscliffe Hotel which was a staging post for the Holyhead road.

In 1823 the greatest landowners in Great Ness Parish were the Earl of Bradford, John Edwards and Lord Clive. The family seat of the Edwards was a small country house called Ness Strange which is near Great Ness Church. The house has been dated to 1778.

Adcote Hall, Little Ness, was built in 1876-7 for Rebecca Darby, a descendant of the famous ironfounder Abraham Darby of Coalbrookdale (1677-1717.)

Many villages have played their part in the history of the Nesses, such as Wilcott, Milford, Felton Butler, Kinton and the Hoptons but Nesscliffe Hill itself stands out, literally, as its heart!

David Fairfax
2004.

For further information you may wish to consult:

The Nesses website: www.thenesses.co.uk
The Nesses Past and Present. Great Ness and Little Ness Millennium Committee (2002)
The Story of Great Ness. BRIGHTON, REV. F. (1933)
Documents Concerning the Parishes of Great Ness & Little Ness. (Local Studies Library, Shrewsbury)
Six Views of the Scenery at Nesscliffe. HULLMANDEL. C. (1824)
Excavations on Nesscliffe Hill. In 'Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society' vol LVI (1957-60)
Shropshire Place Names. BOWCOCK, E.W. (1923)
The Shropshire Landscape ROWLEY, TREVOR. (1972)
Department of the Environment List of Buildings – Borough of Shrewsbury & Atcham. Book 2.
Victoria County History of Shropshire. Vol 8.
Old Stories. (1822) SPENCE, E.I. (for information on Kynaston, the highwayman.)

Demography

The age distribution of households responding to The Parish Plan Survey corresponds to that of Shropshire as a whole. However, there are some differences between the three areas *within* the parishes.

In Nesscliffe, for instance, 31% of members from responding households are 60 or over compared with only 21% west of the A5, and 26% in the Nesses. The figure for all respondents is 26%. This compares to a figure of 24% for the over sixties population for Shropshire as a whole (census data 2001). Just under a fifth (18%) of the responding households in the parishes have at least one member under the age of 18. This is very similar to the rest of Shropshire.

Car ownership is one area in which the survey indicates that our parishes differ from both the county as a whole, and from the Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council (SABC) area. Of the households responding to our Parish Plan survey, 94% have at least one car, 62% have at least two cars, and 16 % have 3 or more. This is considerably higher than the car ownership per household from the SABC area where 80% of households have at least one car, 34% have at least two cars, and only 7% have three or more (census data 2001).

Car ownership is not evenly distributed within the parishes; 12 of the 19 responding households without cars live in Nesscliffe. When the size of the population is taken into account, households in the Nesscliffe area are five times more likely not to have a car than those living West of the A5, and twice as likely not to have one as those in The Nesses.

Geology of the area

The parishes lie in the North Shropshire Plain, an area formed of bright red, reddish brown and light brown sandstones laid down in the Permian and Triassic periods between 290 and 205 million years ago. These are desert rocks forged in a Saharan environment. For this was a time when Britain formed part of a continental land mass and lay close to the Equator.

The distinctive outcrop of Nesscliffe Hill is part of a series of conspicuous low sandstone hills dating from the Triassic period. The rocks dip gently northwards into the North Shropshire syncline, creating south and south-west facing escarpments with exceptional

views. The red sandstone of Nesscliffe was quarried in times gone by for use as a local building stone.

More recently in geological time, in the Quaternary Ice Age, the landscape of Nesscliffe was shaped by the movement of ice sheets down the Severn Valley from the Welsh hills. The action of the ice and the glacial deposits it left combined to create the rolling pastoral country with rocky outcrops that we see today.

Project Scope

From the outset the Parish Plan Project had the objective of producing an action plan that was to help ensure:

“the vibrancy and well-being of the parishes of Little and Great Ness”.

It was seen as an opportunity to understand what issues people in the parishes felt were important, and to see what could be done to either effect a change or to maintain the status quo.

Although it does form a record of people’s views at a point in time it should be considered to be a living document, one that is to be reviewed and used to help shape the future of the Parishes for the next five to ten years.

Great efforts have been taken to engage and involve as large a section of the community as possible. In all the actions taken there was a desire to ensure the integrity of the document. From the outset the committee was clear that the finished document should reflect the views of the whole community and not just those of interested parties. We hope we have been able to produce a document that reflects the hopes, desires and aspirations of the majority.

Methodology

Research design

In the initial stages the Parish Council allowed itself to be guided by the advice and experience of others.

Vital Villages, a Countryside Agency initiative (see annex A) suggested that all parishes should do a Parish Plan. We registered an intention to produce one in April 2003. After an initial meeting set up by the Parish Council, a committee (see annex C) was formed to oversee the creation of the Plan. The minutes of these meetings are in annex D.

Caroline Oakes, of the Community Council of Shropshire, lent her support and expertise.

Neighbouring parishes were at various stages of preparing plans. We asked their advice and studied other completed plans.

Parish organisations were consulted (see annex E), mainly by members of these organisations volunteering to be on the Parish Plan Committee. Many of these people were members of more than one organisation. Unfortunately this left sections of the population un-represented. The obvious method of reaching everyone was a questionnaire delivered to every household.

A questionnaire is only as good as the questions it contains. Much effort was put into deciding on the questions. Committees were formed; they consulted and deliberated. The whole thing was shaped and polished over many meetings. The questions we wanted answered were infinite; and given an infinite amount of time we could have made the questionnaire infinitely perfect. We did not have an infinite amount of time so instead of perfection we settled for something that was very good.

Data collection

The personal approach is always the best. Every householder was asked to help us by filling in a questionnaire. They were asked by a friendly neighbour knocking on their door and politely asking 'please will you help us by filling in this questionnaire?' (big smile) There was a questionnaire for every household (see annex F) and one for every occupant who wanted to fill one in (see annex G). The deliverers also collected the questionnaires ten days later; this maintained the focus.

The return

There are 383 households on the electoral register for the parish of Great Ness and Little Ness, of which 325 households responded to the Parish Plan survey, representing a household response rate of 85%. Responding households represent approximately 808 people, of whom 522 (72% of those over the age of 10) completed an individual questionnaire. The average size of responding households is 2.49 members.

For analysis purposes the results were compared by dividing them into three areas. The areas are defined in the table below, which also shows total responses and size of responding households:

Area	Comprising villages of:-	Household response (green form)	Individual response (white form)	Total household members	Mean household size
Nesscliffe	Nesscliffe, Hopton	109	181	267	2.45
West of A5	Wilcot, Kinton, Alderton, Felton Butler	114	153	286	2.51
The Nesses	Little Ness, Great Ness, Valeswood, Milford, Adcote	102	188	255	2.50
	TOTAL SURVEY	325	522	808	2.49

Data entry and analysis

White forms (individual respondents) were kept together with the appropriate green form (household response). Both individual respondents and households were allocated unique identifiers which were written onto each form. Individual (white) forms were marked with both the household and the individual ID.

Apart from the open text comments from the last page of the questionnaire, all data were entered onto a relational Access database with separate tables for Individuals and Households. Individuals were linked to their household through a many-to-one relationship.

Tables were created for each section of the questionnaire with the Individual ID as a primary key. The relational database has enabled cross-referencing of results by household characteristics (e.g. car ownership), and by area of residence.

Quality control checks to ensure accuracy were performed at regular intervals throughout the data entry period. Where patterns of error and discrepancies were identified, they were explored until resolved.

Simple quantitative analysis was done with Access queries within the database. More detailed statistical analysis was performed in Excel spreadsheets and in SPSS. Some results are included in this document (see annex B). The full database and spreadsheets are

available (at a small charge) on CD Rom by request to the Parish Clerk.

The open text comments from the last page were coded and subject to thematic analysis. A summary is included later in this document. (See annex B). A copy of the full text comments is available by request, again from the Parish Clerk.

Review process going forward and the distribution of the Plan

The plan is owned by the Parish Council on behalf of all the parishioners.

It is the Council's intention to review progress of the objectives every year and to carry out a much broader review every three years.

In the annual review the objectives will be checked to see if they are still valid, how far has they have progressed towards completion and what further actions are required. A report on this review will be published in *The Three Parishes Newsletter*.

Every three years the whole plan will be reviewed and assumptions checked. New objectives in line with the aims of the Parish Plan might be added at this point. Again, a report on this review will be published in *The Three Parishes Newsletter*.

The finished plan in its entirety will have a limited distribution. Key functionaries within the local community will receive a copy of the complete document. It is expected that there will be about 20 copies of this large document (see Annex H for the proposed distribution list). An abridged version containing the objective and the "how they are to be achieved" sections will be distributed to every household in the parishes. It is anticipated that this will be an eight page document, of which 400 will be produced.

Achievements so far

In the process of creating the Parish Plan there are several things that have been done already.

The consultative nature of creating the plan itself has brought many sections of the community together who may not otherwise have met.

The distribution of *The Three Parishes Newsletter* has been reviewed and steps have been put in place to increase the circulation and ensure deliveries to every household in the parishes.

Through the interest in the Parish Plan the volunteer group for Nesscliffe Hill has reformed. The Country Park Warden and the County Council are now actively involved and are taking positive steps in the management of the country park.

Several departments in the Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council have been contacted and are now aware of the findings of the consultation exercise and what we are trying to do. We have been assured that the conclusions will be taken into consideration in the future.

A Parish website is being developed by Adcote School and will launch soon (July 04). The address is www.thenesses.co.uk. It is hoped that this site will help communications for the people in the parishes; local businesses can use it to gain a higher profile, it will have links to useful sites, events taking place and information on the progress of the Plan.

A local directory of useful phone numbers has been put together and will be issued in *The Three Parishes Newsletter*.

The Action Plan

There is over-riding evidence that the majority of the people living in the parishes do not want any major change to the area in which they live. It was stated several times that people live here because of the way it is.

However there are some things that can be done to improve or ensure the status quo is maintained.

What follows are specific objectives which are grouped under the seven headings used in the questionnaire.

Community Services

This section of the plan focuses on the activities in and around the parishes that help to make our community what it is.

C1. OBJECTIVE:

To provide pre-school facilities, an after school care club, and a holiday play scheme.

WHY?

The Parish Plan Questionnaire results showed a good level of support from households with young children in the Nesscliffe area for childcare facilities within the local community.

HOW?

Arrange a public meeting to call for volunteers within the local community who could provide the necessary support for the existing Ness Kids pre-school facility, and who could liaise with the SCC Early Years and Childcare Development Partnership. Help would also be sought from the Nesscliffe School Governors concerning after-school and holiday club provision, as well as working with the Nesscliffe Playing Fields Committee to provide a suitable building close to the playing fields and the school.

C2. OBJECTIVE:

To provide a suitable building close to, or attached to, St Andrew's Primary School for childcare etc. in association with a possible scheme to provide a building for recreational facilities.

WHY?

Whilst there was no specifically identified demand for a building, 46% of respondents said they would support a campaign to provide sport changing facilities. The provision of such requested services and facilities as pre-school care, an after school care club, a holiday play scheme, and playing field changing facilities can only be achieved by the provision of a dedicated building.

HOW?

Set up a fund-raising and planning committee to manage the project.

C3. OBJECTIVE:

To provide facilities for and information on adult evening and day classes for computing, art, fitness, languages, and other studies as required.

WHY?

The Parish Plan Questionnaire responses identified a substantial requirement for adult classes with 223 evening requests and 125 day requests with Computing, Art and Fitness being the most popular.

HOW?

Find, by consultation, which subjects would have sufficient support for a local class using local instructors or in association with local colleges, and promote classes in neighbouring parishes.

C4. OBJECTIVE:

To promote the existing mobile library service.

WHY?

To attract wider usage and awareness of the service, because the Questionnaire showed a significant proportion of residents were unaware of its existence.

HOW?

Contact the SCC Library Service to inform them of the Parish Plan Questionnaire results and recommend that they advertise their

services locally on notice boards and in *The Three Parishes Newsletter*, and also encourage the SCC to introduce more "user friendly" visiting times.

C5. OBJECTIVE:

To ensure *The Three Parishes Newsletter* is available to everyone in the community.

WHY?

The newsletter is a valuable means of communicating with the community with over 90% of those who read it considering it to be useful, and is a useful medium for advertising local services such as the village shop, mobile grocery services etc, post offices and other local facilities and events.

HOW?

By delivering it to every household, and publicise it as the official method of communicating with the community. Plan, in time, for an electronic version to be produced on the Parishes website.

C6. OBJECTIVE:

To form a youth club to provide a meeting point for the youth of the parishes.

WHY?

The Questionnaire responses identified a need by a section of the community and produced a substantial number of prospective volunteer helpers, so there is a good prospect for the success of this initiative.

HOW?

Call a public meeting with Shropshire Youth Association and the local community to determine interest from volunteer helpers and organisers, with a view to asking them to help form a club based at Nesscliffe Village Hall.

C7. OBJECTIVE:

To promote greater use of the village halls by providing some of the services and events requested in the questionnaire.

WHY?

The responses to the Questionnaire suggested various events and activities that could take place in the village halls. These would make best use of local community facilities and help to ensure their continuing financial viability.

HOW?

Encourage members of the community to approach the village hall committees with ideas and proposals for the use of the halls. Encourage the village hall committees to advertise the hall facilities, availability, and hire rates in *The Three Parishes Newsletter*.

Health

There were no clear actions indicated by the consultation on Health. There were several comments made in the suggestions section; these will be passed on to relevant organisations. Three questions were posed in this section of the questionnaire:

- "How do you get to the doctor's surgery?"
- "Do you regularly have difficulty travelling to appointment?"
- "Are there any other medical services needed in the Parish?"

The conclusions drawn from these are reflected in other sections; namely there is a high degree of dependency on cars used to access health care. The challenge faced is for those people who do not have access to a car; 58 people have to rely only on lifts from friends, taxis, neighbours or relations. These people are greatly disadvantaged when it comes to accessing health care.

H1. OBJECTIVE:

To provide The Primary Health Care Trust with the data and with them investigate the options to address the areas of concern. It is also important to monitor the position as future changes to the demography of the population could make the situation worse.

WHY?

Of those who responded, 87% get to the surgery in their own car, and 15% use lifts from friends, neighbours or relations. Fifty eight people (11%) are totally reliant on lifts and taxis. A significant minority 8% (40 respondents) say they have difficulty getting to health care provision. As for other medical services needed in the Parish, 83 respondents made 90 suggestions for additional health care provision in the parishes.

HOW?

Bring the findings of the consultation to the attention of the Primary Health Care Trust. In particular, raise with them the following:

1. Discuss improved patient health care availability with Prescott Surgery.
2. Explore the possibility of having a medical facility such as a clinic in Nesscliffe.
3. Consult with other parishes on the viability of setting up a community car scheme.

4. Enquire whether a repeat prescription service could be set up for delivery to Nesscliffe.

Employment

The questions asked in the questionnaire regarding employment concentrated on finding out how people in the Parishes earned their living, to see if there was any desire to increase job availability in the local area, and if so, what types of employment would be required.

E1. OBJECTIVE:

With regard to employment we would like to:

Reduce commuting by car: more people working from home or close to home in the parishes.

Increase availability of premises suitable for local small businesses (not industrial) by use of redundant or empty buildings.

WHY?

One of the biggest problems revealed by the Parish Plan is traffic on unsuitable roads. Much of this is commuter traffic. With the inevitable growth of housing, especially in Nesscliffe, commuting will increase unless more jobs become available locally.

Very few respondents to the survey were looking for work, but, of those in work, most were working more than five miles from home. Respondents to the survey were strongly against any new commercial or industrial development, but were in favour of renovating redundant buildings.

HOW?

Encourage planning permission which produces local jobs e.g. small businesses, by converting existing buildings.

Improve communication infrastructure, particularly provision of Broadband, to enable business communications and effective working from home. (Responsibility: current campaign to bring Broadband to Nesscliffe, Switch on Shropshire).

A review of public transport to see if it meets the needs of those travelling to work, e.g. is there a need for a bus service via the hospital, later services for those in service industries etc? (See Transport).

Parish Development

Parishioners are passionate about retaining the character of the villages and surrounding areas but recognise the need for selective and progressive changes to maintain the high standard of living and working environment.

The over-riding feedback from the consultation was the need to achieve a way forward in a positive and productive manner.

This means to encourage and accommodate the needs of everyone in all aspects of life and to give people the chance to express opinions about what happens to the area in which they live.

P1. OBJECTIVE:

In the future, houses built in the parishes should be small family homes, preferably controlled in terms of affordability, for the local people.

WHY?

From the outset of the project there was a strong feeling from the parishioners that if only large houses were built in the Parishes then it would lead to an undesirable change in the character of the area, both visually and demographically. This belief was further reinforced by the questionnaire; 289 respondents answered yes in favour of small family homes when asked which types of houses are needed for people in the Parishes.

HOW?

We are to request The Borough Council to favour planning applications for small family homes, preferably controlled in terms of affordability.

P2. OBJECTIVE:

New developments should first use redundant buildings, then the building of single dwellings, lastly developments of fewer than ten houses.

WHY?

Respondents were asked what kinds of houses would be acceptable in the Parishes; 70% said that the most acceptable option is the conversion of redundant buildings. Single dwellings in controlled locations were also acceptable to 53%, and groups of less than ten, again in controlled locations, were acceptable to 49% of respondents.

HOW?

In reviewing the local plan it is recommended that the Borough Council Local Planning Authority develops policies to promote the conversion of redundant buildings to housing, to explore the potential to develop single dwellings in appropriate locations, and on village extensions to develop schemes of less than ten dwellings. The results of the consultation indicate that the parishioners do not favour larger schemes of more than ten dwellings.

P3. OBJECTIVE:

New houses should blend in with existing styles.

WHY?

There is a clear indication that cottages, bungalows, detached and semi-detached developments are more favoured. There was a definite NO for large town houses, terraced houses, flats and maisonettes.

HOW?

In determining detailed planning applications the Parish Plan Committee and the Parish Council will request the local planning authority to promote the construction of semi-detached and detached properties together with bungalows and cottages, though there may be a need for a limited number of terraced units. The Parish Council is to investigate the use of Conservation Areas to control the style of buildings.

P4. OBJECTIVE:

The local planning authority is to engage people in forward planning for the borough and in particular the rural parishes.

WHY?

Only 57 respondents (11%) said that they were aware of the Key Issues document, and of those only 15 said that they thought it covered all the issues relevant to the parishes, 18 said they thought it did not and 24 had "no opinion".

HOW?

Representation is to be made by the Parish Council to the local Borough and County Councils stating that the way they communication is not getting the message across.

Sport, Recreation and Leisure

S1. OBJECTIVE:

The rights of way around the hill should be improved to allow easier access for both pedestrians and horses.

WHY?

Walking is very important to 67% of respondents and 80% said they walk in the country park sometimes.

HOW?

To achieve this it is recognised that finances will be required and a further in depth study carried out. This is to be combined with the voluntary wardens' activities in liason with Shropshire County Council.

S2. OBJECTIVE:

To find out which events would be well supported in the village Halls and to encourage people to attend.

WHY?

Of the respondents, 67% said that they do or might attend social activities in the village halls at Little Ness and Nesscliffe.

HOW?

There needs to be further consultation with the parishioners to determine which events would be popular, and find ways of providing and promoting such events. The village hall chairpersons and committees are to be provided with the feedback from the questionnaire and given support in identifying possible ideas.

Local Environment

L1. OBJECTIVE:

As a result of the answers to the questions in the Environment section of the Parish Plan Questionnaire, it is proposed that a volunteers group be set up.

WHY?

It was found that 61% of respondents to this question thought that wildlife conservation should be the emphasis for the Nesscliffe Country Park, with a higher percentage for Nesscliffe itself, when the area are looked at individually.

It was also found that out of 446 responses, 357 individuals indicated that they used the Country Park for walking or hiking. With 196 responses, the next most important reason was dog walking. Cycling, horse riding, jogging and running together account for 137 responses. The ratio was found to be similar for the Rights of Way in the Parishes.

HOW?

The action plan for the environment will involve the co-operation of the Countryside Rangers for Shropshire County Council, together with volunteer members of the community. Regular meetings will be arranged, details of which will be found on the website.

Transport

T1. OBJECTIVE:

To support, maintain and improve transport for all who require it in the parishes.

WHY?

Although 90% of the households that responded have at least one car a sizeable minority of individuals rely on public transport. Within our parishes, those without a car, face social exclusion. The survey also highlighted these problems with the present bus services. There is no public transport to local doctors surgeries, and no direct transport to hospitals.

HOW?

1. Consult with the bus companies via the councils the possibility of providing
 - Later buses
 - Kneeling buses
 - An improved service to the hamlets
 - A service to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.
2. Consult with other parishes on the viability of setting up a community car scheme.

T2. OBJECTIVE:

To attempt to achieve more sensible use of the roads in the area by adopting an approach toward Quiet Lanes.

WHY?

The majority of individuals surveyed were in favour Quiet Lanes for the parishes. This will reduce noise and atmospheric pollution, limit verge damage and discourage "rat runs". It would enable people to walk and cycle more safely.

HOW?

Press the council to restore the Quiet Lanes Initiative. (On hold at present because of financial constraints). There is the possibility of at least getting signs erected on the key roads to inform motorists

of possible hazards and make them aware of other road users ie horses, bikes and pedestrians.

T3. OBJECTIVE:

To make the parishes a more healthy and a more pleasant place to live by reducing the impact of traffic.

WHY?

To enable and encourage the children to walk to school and enable the elderly to cross to the Post Office in Nesscliffe. The need for this was highlighted in the survey.

HOW?

Through the Parish Council, push for pedestrian operated traffic lights or crossings in Nesscliffe village. Work with the County Council and land owners to improve the quality and usability of local footpaths.

A Big Thank You

The Chairman wishes to publicly express a big “thank you” to all those members of the community who have given up their valuable time to the completion of the project.

In particular I would like to thank Marion and Adrian Kuipers for their dedication and technical expertise on the collation and preparation of the data analysis. Without their help and guidance we would not have been able to achieve what we have.

There was a great display of community service from those helpers who were mobilised to distribute the questionnaires and collect them in again, thank you to you all.

Caroline Oakes from the Community Council has been a great support in this project and has always been there to provide encouragement and ideas.

Thank you to John Suckley for the use of the farm offices for the committee meetings.

Thank you to the Clampits for their contribution of historical information and photographs.

A personal thanks to all the members of the committee who have always risen to the challenge and without whose dedication and community spirit we would not have been able to undertake this task.

We were never sure where we would end up. We were always sure that it was a journey that we had to start. The production of this document is in fact only the beginning. Now that objectives have been identified the real prize can only be realised with their implementation.

Chris Farmer
Chairman -The Nesses Parish Plan Committee
May 04

If once read you have any further comments please contact
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Cruck House, Milford, Bashchurch. SY4 2JU
01939 260935
thenessespc@yarhoo.com

Annex A – The Parish Plan Brief – the Countryside Agency

The following piece is taken from the “Parish Plans – guidance for parish and town councils”, published by the Countryside Agency. It provides the basis on which our Parish Plan has been developed. For a full transcript visit www.countryside.gov.uk.

Introduction The opportunity to shape your future

“There is a revolution going on in local Government and parish councils are at the core of it. The government wants local communities to take more control of their own lives, to say what they want doing in their own neighbourhoods and to engage with other powers to get it done.

“This means an opportunity for everyone in your community to make themselves heard. An opportunity for you to have your say if you want more open spaces, more effective public transport, affordable housing, better access to health care, a chance to buy local food at local shops, and to choose how your community helps everyone in it to relax and make the most of their social and leisure time.

“A Parish Plan will help you find out what your local community wants and work out how to deliver it.

Parish Plans and Vital Villages

“Parish Plans were announced in the 2000 “Rural White Paper” which set out the Government’s plans for the countryside. They are intended to develop previous work such as village appraisals and village design statements and set a framework for communities to plan their own futures.

“Parish Plans are part of the Countryside Agency’s “Vital Villages” initiative. The Agency also provides funding and advice to rural communities through parish transport grants and community services grant schemes.

“The Countryside Agency wants to help 1000 communities produce a Parish Plan by 2004. Advice and grants of up to £5000 are available to cover the costs. Although any parish meeting, parish or town council may apply for a Parish Plan grant, priority will be given to smaller towns and parishes in rural areas. The regional offices of the Countryside Agencies will be able to advise you further on eligibility and availability of grant aid.

"The Countryside Agency has also asked the rural community councils to help with advice and expertise. Full details and grant application forms can be found in the Vital Villages action pack.

"In November 2000 the Government's Rural White Paper *Our countryside – The Future* launched the concept of the parish and town plans whose purpose is to:

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

"Plans should "identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved."

What is a Parish Plan?

"Parish Plans are "holistic" or comprehensive in scope. They should set out a vision for how the community wants to develop, and identify the action needed to achieve it. They can include everything that is relevant to the people who live and work in the community, from employment and playgrounds to design of new buildings and protection of hedges and ponds. They can include any social, environmental or economic issues. **It is up to you, the community to decide, what is important to you.**

"Parish Plans have the potential to influence a wide range of organisations and processes which affect the lives of rural communities. They should complement and help deliver local planning policies and frameworks but they cannot override adopted planning policies. They should influence local housing and land management strategies. They should contribute to the way local services are managed and delivered.

"A parish plan is a statement of how the community sees itself developing over the next few years. It:

- Reflects the views of all sections of the community
- Identifies which features and local characteristics people value
- Identifies local problems and opportunities
- Spells out how residents want the community to develop in the future
- Prepares a plan of action to achieve this vision.

Summary

- Parish plans are local, action-based plans which address a range of problems and opportunities affecting rural communities.
- They can include social, economic and environmental issues.
- The **whole community** should be involved in producing the Parish Plan with the Parish Council taking lead responsibility.
- The Parish Plan must be **consistent** with related policies set out in the local authority's planning documents and local strategic partnerships.
- The plan should be based on information provided through **survey, research, consultation, and community participation.**
- **A grant** to assist with the production of the Parish Plans is available from the Countryside Agency. **Advice** and **help** with producing the plan and involving the community **are available** from rural community councils.
- **Parish Plans should identify actions** which can be taken forward by the parish council, by other individuals and groups within the community or by other service providers and statutory bodies. These should have a clear focus on Who? What? Why? How? When?"

Annex B – Report on Findings

Annex C – The Parish Plan Committee

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Guinevere Sartory	LN	01939 261084	No 7, Sunny Bank, Little Ness SY4 2LQ

Annex D – The Minutes of the Committee Meetings

Annex E – The Wider Community Engagement

Organisation	Position	Contact	Number
Community Council of Shropshire	Community Regeneration Office	Caroline Oakes	01743 237882 c.oakes@collegehill.org.uk
WI	Secretary	Myra Maddocks	01743 741182
PC	Chairman	Edward Davies	01743 741447
YFC	Secretary	Clare Pocock	07816130789
PCC	Member	Sylvia Davies	01743 741447
Football club	Leader	Brian Cooke	01743 741307
Parish Magazine	Editor	Adrian Strewvey	01743 741438
Little Ness Village Hall	Booking secretary	Keith Forrest	01939 260543
Nesscliffe Village Hall	Booking secretary	Jane Giles	01939 260565
Golden Years	Chairman	Cyril Fardoe	01741 741468
Nesscliffe Primary School	Headmistress	Jenny Parr	01743 741331
Post Office & Garage	Manager	Mike Dransfield	01743 741240
The Three Pigeons	Manager	Dillon Brooks	01743 741279
British Legion	Chairman	Peter Sales	01743 741245
Bridleways	Chairman	Zia Robins	01939 261060
Nesskids	Organiser	Helen Smith	01743 741639
The Church	Vicar	Rev Les Thompson	01939 261234
Adcote School for Girls	Headmaster	Brian Case	01939 260202
The Army Camp	OC	Major White	01743 741607
Local Plan		Emma pierce Jenkins	emma.pierce-jenkins@shrewsbury.gov.uk
Community Partnership		Tim Moore	01743 281013

Annex F – The Questionnaire – Household (Green)

Annex G – The Questionnaire – Individual (White)

Annex H – Distribution List

Parish Council	2
SABC	
Policy Officer (Policy & Strategy)	2 (Tim Moore)
Community Development Team	1
Partnership Chair	1 (Valerie Hayllor)
Planning Department	1 (Jeff Harrison)
Primary Health Care Trust	1
Community Council of Shropshire	1
Shropshire CC	
Parish Liaison Officer	2 (Nicola Pugh)
Countryside Agency	2 (Hillary McFadyen)
Northern Shropshire Countryside Service	1 (Frank Tanner)
County records	1
Spare	5

Annex I – Further Sources of Information and Useful Website Links

Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council:	www.shrewsbury.gov.uk
Shropshire County Council:	www.shropshire-cc.gov.uk
Arriva:	www.arriva.co.uk
Department of Transport:	www.dft.gov.uk
Shropshire Wildlife Trust:	www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk
Shropshire Ornithological Society:	www.shropshirebirds.com
The Nesses website	www.thenesses.co.uk

(on the back cover with a picture of the hill)

Nesscliffe Hill

On Nesscliffe Hill the moon shines down
bathing the trees with silver light.
The badgers appear from beneath the roots
and wend their ancient ways.
Owls, watching in silence, screech.

There, a silver-footed rabbit runs
tramping the grass, hedge to hedge.
A squirrel chatters in the night.
In the darkness: a distant bark
and the soft sway and fall of leaves.

This is the music of Nesscliffe Hill.

David Fairfax

First published in SHROPSHIRE UNFOLDED, February
2004.