

Stokenham Parish Plan



April 2004



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INTRODUCTION

Background

From October 2002 a core group of Parish Councillors, and volunteers, worked on a project to ask both residents and visitors to the parish about their thoughts, concerns and hopes for the future. Funded by the Countryside Agency they held public meetings, involved local groups and organisations and took roadshows to every village and hamlet in the parish to ensure that people in all age groups could have their say.



PLAN PROGRESS REPORT TO
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
APRIL 2003

Throughout this period a number of recurring themes or issues were identified which formed the basis of a questionnaire, hand delivered to all households in August 2003, to be completed by everyone over the age of 11 years. An excellent response resulted in a 61% return representing the views of 1,428 parishioners. It is these views and aspirations that have helped form this plan and the proposed actions to create a vision of the future.

The Parish

The coastal parish of Stokenham, one of the larger parishes in the South Hams of Devon, covers some 21 square kilometres. The area has many special designations, including: Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Area of Great Landscape Value, Coastal Preservation Area, Heritage Coast and Conservation Areas. The village of Stokenham has 165 households, the parish church, a school, parish hall and two public houses. The parish also has a number of other villages, hamlets and settlements the largest being Chillington with 476 households, a post office, general store, health centre, Methodist church and a public house as well as its own smaller community hall. The coastal villages include Torcross with post office/store, Congregational church and 2 public houses and Beesands with a public house and chapel. In total there are over 1,100 homes in the parish with a population of 1,949. There are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) together with part of the National Nature Reserve of Slapton Ley and the adjacent shingle bank known as Slapton Sands, which separates the freshwaters of the ley from the seas of Start bay.

The Vision

- A parish that protects the outstandingly beautiful environment in which it is situated but is brave enough to embrace the best of what the modern world has to offer.
- A lifestyle that benefits from improving the living standards of its people.
- A community that enjoys a safe, secure and healthy way of life.
- A caring community that provides for all its age groups.
- A community that takes every opportunity to help itself.
- In the face of changes to the traditional industries of fishing and agriculture, an outward looking community adopting new activities to sustain the economic viability of the area.

CHILLINGTON VILLAGE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT



Old barn in Chillington centre

DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY

A study sponsored by the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Area Partnership under the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative of the SW Regional Development Agency has been undertaken and is currently receiving detailed consideration by all parties.

"When is something going to happen to the centre of Chillington?"



Remote existing community hall

COMMUNITY HALL AND OTHER

At a Planning For Real © Day in 2001 many of the Chillington residents expressed their views and aspirations for the use of the "Helmer" land in the centre of Chillington. Now included in SHDC Local Plan, these proposals currently being studied, include the provision of a new community hall. Comments by respondents to the questionnaire supported the results of the 2001 Planning For Real © Day.

RECOMMENDATION – Strive to ensure development progresses to satisfactory completion. *Action 1.1.0* See also **Housing** and **Business Units**.

ENVIRONMENT

FOOTPATHS



In addition to some 8 miles of SW Coast Path the parish has many other miles of public rights of way that take the form of footpaths, byways and bridleways.

"If only we could have a path from Stokenham to Torcross – the road is so dangerous to walk on"

Generally the parish, (842 respondents) appears pleased with its rights of way although there are locations needing maintenance and improvement. A need was identified for a footpath from Stokenham to Torcross and a firmer surface to the "Village Link" footpath from Carehouse Cross to Chillington.

RECOMMENDATION – 1.Parish Council, DCC, SHDC and landowners to combine efforts to create a footpath from Stokenham to Torcross. *Action 1.2.1a* 2. Investigate possibility of setting up Parish Footpath Adoption Scheme. *Action 1.2.1b*

DOG FOULING

When asked to rate current standards of maintenance, dog fouling was highlighted as a problem by 46% of respondents and there were many additional references to this problem.

RECOMMENDATION – Stricter enforcement of legislation. *Action 1.2.2*

"Dog fouling is not only unpleasant but has been proved to be a danger to health"

STREET LIGHTING

Although the results of the questionnaire gave no clear indication on desire for street lighting, 708 respondents out of 1,235 expressed the importance of minimising street lighting to preserve the rural character of the parish. There were one or two minority but significant requirements for lighting in localised areas.

RECOMMENDATION – Surveys should be carried out to clearly indicate and justify the areas of need for additional lighting in the parish. *Action 1.2.3*

COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

With the need to reduce land filling and increase recycling it is not surprising that answers to the questionnaire supported the activity of community composting. The latest best practice for this type of recycling is by small groups enabling stricter control of the necessary disciplines.

RECOMMENDATION – Encourage the setting up of local groups using the assistance of available specialists as appropriate. *Action 1.2.4*

HEAVY / LARGE VEHICLES

Obstruction – Congestion – Damage

Many miles of roads in the parish are but lanes with passing places. Even the through route the A379 is reduced to single lane width at a number of places. Ever larger vehicles have increasingly created hold-ups and damage to banks and edges.

RECOMMENDATION - Explore schemes to reduce the adverse effect of large and heavy vehicles on the community. *Action 1.2.5*



TRAFFIC SPEEDS

When given a choice, 67% of respondents opted for a standard 30mph speed limit through all villages on the A379 between Kingsbridge and Torcross. Also 70% would like to see 30mph through all other villages in the parish. Elsewhere on the A379 from Kingsbridge to Torcross 80% favoured 40mph or over.

RECOMMENDATION – Lobby adjacent parish councils and Devon County Council to rationalise speed limits as indicated by results of questionnaire. *Action 1.2.6*

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ACCESS TO

BROADBAND CONNECTION TO THE INTERNET



The parish is served by part of three telephone exchanges for which BT have set target numbers of customers interested to justify providing a broadband connection service. For the Torcross exchange 300 potential customer are required, Frogmore 200 and Chivelstone 100. The availability of broadband is becoming increasingly more important particularly to businesses in the parish.

The questionnaire indicated that at least 612 people had a PC at home with access to the Internet. In answer to the question “would you like broadband access available in the parish?” 490 out of 1,235 said yes.

RECOMMENDATION – Every effort to be made to bring broadband to the parish as quickly as possible. *Action 2.1.1*

PARISH MAGAZINE

Nearly 700 respondents were of the opinion that the parish magazine known officially as 'Stokenham Parish News' was the most effective means of being kept informed of parish affairs.

RECOMMENDATION – Promote increased circulation. *Action 2.1.2*

POLICE

Although the parish is in an area of very low crime rates there is a perception that the police service represents very poor value for money. Long response times, lack of contact with the community and difficulty in being able to make easy access by telephone all contribute to a significant lack of confidence in the service.

RECOMMENDATION – Create more circumstances when public can meet and communicate with the police. *Action 2.1.3*

HOUSING

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The questionnaire confirmed the need for alternative accommodation, mainly starter homes. Responses indicated an immediate need for 21 with over 100 required within the next 10 years. [See Housing Needs Survey]

RECOMMENDATION – Endeavour to ensure that the housing needs of the parish are recognised and addressed. *Action 2.2.1*

LEISURE / SPORTS – AMENITIES AND SERVICES

ADULT EDUCATION / YOUTH AND OTHER GROUPS



A forum of some 60 of the parish youth held with the help of Kingsbridge Community College highlighted a number of matters of concern to the younger generation. These included the problems of transport to / the lack of facilities for the young.



From 1,368 votes, 422 felt the parish would benefit from a youth club, 335 adult education courses and 260 a local history society.

RECOMMENDATION – Encourage formation of groups identified by the plan questionnaire. *Action 2.3.1*

"Somewhere we can meet, a youth club or cyber café perhaps"

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

PARISH GRAVEYARD

Without further action the parish church graveyard will run out of space. The questionnaire indicated that approximately a third of those living in the parish wished to be buried in the parish.

RECOMMENDATION – Endeavour to extend the provision for burial within the parish *Action 3.1.1*

HEALTH PROVISION



Strong loyalties to local services.

The Chillington Health Centre came out top (889 votes) and refuse collection second when the questionnaire invited ranking of services to the community. All other services received a good or reasonable rating except for the police that was rated poor. (See 7.2.3 above)

In relation to health services to the parish, significant concern was expressed about the lack of availability of National Health Dental Services.

RECOMMENDATION – Make relevant authorities aware of concerns in relation to health services to the parish. *Action 3.1.2*

SURVEYS AND GUIDES

Surveys of habitat/wildlife and traffic were considered to be important, as were design guides for new development and alteration to buildings.

RECOMMENDATION - Parish Council to encourage creation of action groups to create design statements for their villages. *Action 3.1.3*

JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

BUSINESS PREMISES



Parish business people met and discussed matters of common interest. Lack of suitable business premises was considered to be one of the most significant factors effecting economic growth in the parish. 850 (69% of respondents) said yes to Industrial Units.



"If there was a business unit available in the parish I would take it tomorrow"

RECOMMENDATION – Provide business units as part of development of Chillington centre. *Actions 3.2.1*

BUSINESS FORUM

Interest was expressed in the formation of a parish business forum for the sharing of matters of common interest with the view to mutual advantage.

RECOMMENDATION – Set up parish business forum. *Action 3.2.2*

TOURISM

Divided opinions were expressed regarding the importance and value of tourism to the parish. Although 424 respondents felt that more should be done to encourage tourists in and around the parish 557 felt otherwise.

RECOMMENDATION - Confirm importance of tourism to the economic sustainability of the Parish and increase understanding of that importance. *Action 3.2.3*

TRANSPORT

PARKING



Parking and parking charges are contentious subjects. Residents believe there should be parking concessions particularly in some locations and that high parking charges adversely affect local businesses.

RECOMMENDATION – Highlight concerns to SHDC with object of influencing future strategy. *Action 4.1.1*

“The high parking charges are discouraging visitors and affecting business”

A379 SLAPTON SANDS



The vulnerability of the A379 at Slapton Sands

Considered by many to be critically important to the economic viability and lifestyles of the local communities this road was severely breached during January storms of 2001. Only after considerable local pressure was a temporary (5 years) reinstatement constructed to enable long term solutions to be sought.

A significant number (88%) of respondents wished to see retention of the A379 at Slapton Sands. It is believed that this is a sufficiently strong feeling to justify a concerted and continual lobby to achieve this objective.

RECOMMENDATION – Parish Council in conjunction with neighbouring parishes and The Slapton Line Defence Group to continue to press for adequate and acceptable defence of this vital communication link. *Action 4.1.2*

“The A379 along the line is critical to our well-being”

ASSOCIATED & SUPPORTING PUBLICATIONS

Stokenham Parish Plan Questionnaire - August 2003
Stokenham Parish Plan Questionnaire Results - November 2003
Chillington Village Centre Feasibility Study – Sandover Associates - November 2003
Housing Needs Survey – Community Council of Devon November 2003
Kingsbridge & Salcombe Area Partnership – ACTION 2020 –December 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Countryside Agency
 The Community Council of Devon
 South Hams District Council
 Devon County Council
 Kinasbridae & Salcombe Area Partnership
 All the parish organisations

Together with the dedication and commitment of the Parish Plan Core Group Committee, the many who assisted with the roadshows and the delivery and collection of the questionnaire and not least the people of Stokenham Parish for their marvellous response in contributing to a plan and vision for the future for this very special place.

Stokenham Parish Council
 April 2004



Action Plan

Legend

SPC: Stokenham Parish Council, SHDC: South Hams District Council, DCC: Devon County Council
 PCC: Parochial Church Council. SCOF: Start Circle of Friends, KASAP: Kingsbridge & Salcombe
 Area Partnership, APC: Association of Parish Councils, CCD: Community Council of Devon.

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Ref.	Recommendation	Action	Priority	Partners	Time Scale	Lead	Resource
1.1.0	CHILLINGTON CENTRE DEVELOPMENT Ensure development progresses to satisfactory completion.	SPC to monitor activities to achieve provision of new community hall, affordable housing, business units & open/car parking areas	Medium	SHDC DCC land-owners Housing Association	Now to end 2007	SHDC	s106 Agreement plus Grant Funding.
1.2.0	ENVIRONMENT						
1.2.1	Footpaths						
1.2.1a	Path Stokenham to Torcross Create path	Create footpath from Stokenham to Torcross	High	DCC SHDC Landowners Slapton Field Centre Parishioners	Now to end 2006	SPC	Matched funding
1.2.1b	Footpath Adoption Scheme Consider setting up scheme	Explore possibility of setting up path adoption scheme	High	Parishioners	Now to end 2005	DCC	Parish precept
1.2.2	Dog Fouling Stricter enforcement of legislation	Stronger enforcement	High	SPC, SHDC Parishioners	Now & ongoing	SPC	Precept & Council Tax
1.2.3	Street Lighting Survey to indicate areas and justification	Instigate surveys	High	Parishioners	Now to end 2005	SPC	Parish Precept
1.2.4	Community Composting Encourage local composting groups	Co-ordinate available specialist services to set up local groups	High	SPC, SHDC Parishioners	Now to end 2005	SPC	Voluntary / clerk Council Tax
1.2.5	Heavy / Large Vehicles Explore means of reducing adverse effect of heavy & large vehicles	Set up working party to investigate & progress ways and means.	Medium	DCC Police Adjacent parishes	Now to end 2007	SPC	Voluntary / clerk
1.2.6	Traffic Speeds Rationalise speed limits	Lobby to obtain 30 mph thro villages & 40mph on A379 K'bridge to Torcross	High	DCC Police Adjacent parishes	Now to end 2005	SPC	Voluntary / clerk

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2.1.0	COMMUNITY SERVICES						
2.1.1	Broadband Bring broadband to the parish as quickly as possible	Campaign to reach BT trigger numbers of registered interest	High	SPC /SHDC Adjacent Parishes Local Businesses	Now to end 2004	Local Business Forum	Voluntary
2.1.2	Parish Magazine Endeavour to increase circulation	Work with editorial and publishing team to increase circulation	High	SPC/PCC, Editor Distributor CCD	Ongoing	SPC	Voluntary / clerk
2.1.3	Police Improve degree and frequency of interface with police in the parish	Ensure availability of beat / community police in the parish	High	Devon & Cornwall Police Auth. Neighbourhood Watch, SHDC	Ongoing	Police Authority	Council Tax
2.2.0	HOUSING						
2.2.1	Affordable Housing Endeavour to ensure that the housing needs of the parish are met	Work with partners in lobbying and researching solutions to ensure housing needs of parish are met	High	SPC, SHDC, Housing Assoc.	Ongoing	SHDC	Private Investment Development funding
2.3.0	LEISURE, SPORTS, AMENITIES & SERVICES						
2.3.1	Adult Education / Youth & other groups Encourage formation of groups identified by plan questionnaire	Support creation of groups by bringing together interested parties	Medium	SPC, Youth Tresillian, Schools Parish Hall	End 2006	SPC	Matched Funding

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Ref.	Recommendation	Action	Priority	Partners	Time Scale	Lead	Resource
3.1.0	OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES						
3.1.1	Parish Graveyard Ensure adequate burial provision in the parish	Work with representatives and partners to ensure adequate burial provision in the parish	High	SPC, SHDC, PCC Landowners	Now to end 2005	PCC	Grant / Gift.
3.1.2	Health Provision Make relevant authorities aware of concerns in relation to health services to the parish	Work with partners to ensure awareness of health service needs and concerns particularly NHS dentistry	High	SPC, SCOF, South Hams & W. Devon Primary Health Care Trust, Health Centre	Now to end 2005	SPC	Voluntary / Clerk
3.1.3	Surveys & Guides Encourage setting up of groups to create design statements for their village	Parish Council Planning Committee to investigate interest in villages	Medium	SPC, SHDC Parishioners CCD Countryside Agcy.	Ongoing	SPC	Voluntary / Funding
3.2.0	JOBS & EMPLOYMENT						
3.2.1	Business Units Provide units as part of Chillington Centre Development	Achieve provision of business units proposed	Medium	SPC, SHDC, Landowners,	End 2007	SHDC	European Funding
3.2.2	Business Forum Set up Forum	Encourage setting up of parish business forum	High	Businesses SPC, SHDC	End 2004	SPC	Voluntary
3.2.3	Tourism Investigate / research importance of tourism to economic sustainability of the parish	Parish Council to Highlight and increase awareness to community of growing importance of tourism	High	SPC, Parish Businesses	End 2004	SPC	SHDC / Economic Development Fund

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Ref.	Recommendation	Action	Priority	Partners	Time Scale	Lead	Resource
4.1.0 4.1.1	TRANSPORT Parking Represent growing concern over car parking problems	Highlight to SHDC increasing concerns regarding inadequate provision of parking & excessive charges adversely effecting the community	High	SPC, SHDC Saltstone APC Coleridge APC	Ongoing	SPC	Voluntary / clerk
4.1.2	A379 Slapton Sands Parish Council to press for adequate and acceptable defence of this vital communication link	In conjunction with neighbouring parishes and others press to retain and safeguard this road	High	SPC, Slapton Line Partnership, Slapton Line Defence Group KSAP	Ongoing till satisfactory outcome	SPC	Voluntary / Funding