

Milborne Port Parish Plan

Summary Report and Action Plan

Produced by Parish Plan Steering Group
July 2010



View from Wheathill Lane

Published by the Milborne Port Parish Council,
Town Hall, Milborne Port DT9 5DF

Printed by Remous Ltd, Wyvern Buildings, North Street,
Milborne Port, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 5EP

Foreword

We are very pleased to present this summary of the Milborne Port Parish Plan. The plan is the result of widespread consultation with local people, who have identified the issues affecting their lives and it sets out the priorities for action in the next few years. In producing the plan we have also drawn on a huge amount of information and research undertaken by the Parish Council, South Somerset District Council and others, to give it a factual basis.

Parish Plans are about the future of the area and the quality of life which future generations will want to have. They help us to show what we would like to change, defend what we want to keep and fend off what we would rather not have. They provide the evidence of local opinion, and may be used by other authorities to take into account when forming policy, such as in the consideration of development control (planning) matters. They also help to influence authorities and other organisations, when they decide how to use their resources locally.

This Summary Plan includes an Action Plan which sets out the ideas and suggestions that were collected from the village. Working together in partnership, the Parish Council, the village community, volunteers, private businesses, and other public sector authorities can use their combined strengths to address the challenging and complex issues that face the Parish.

Some actions in the plan will be easier to achieve than others and can be tackled more quickly. Not everything in the plan will be achieved. Change will happen, with or without local influence, but without a comprehensive record of local views,

the Parish is in a much weaker position to defend itself against externally imposed changes.

We would like to thank all the residents and businesses of Milborne Port who have contributed their time and views to this Parish Plan, and to thank the Steering Group for their hard work in organising the research and consultation that has resulted in such a useful document. This gives the Parish Council a comprehensive record of the views of its residents which we can use in conjunction with others, to influence the future quality of life in the Parish.

The Parish Council is happy to adopt the Milborne Port Parish Plan and hopes to work with its partners and local village residents to help implement the Action Plan.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ernie Davis".

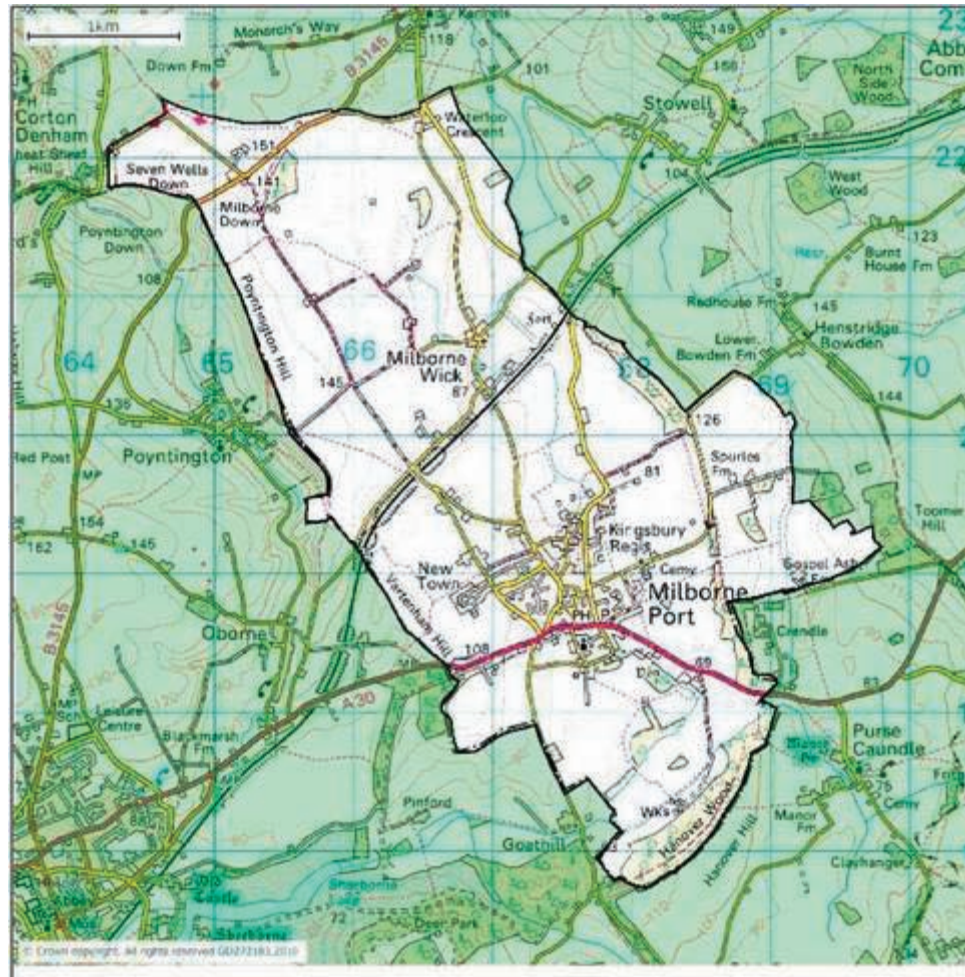
Ernie Davis (Chairman, Milborne Port Parish Council)



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hilary Ritchie".

Hilary Ritchie (Chair, Parish Plan Steering Group)

Milborne Port Parish Area



© Crown Copyright Reserved GD272183.2010

Milborne Port in Brief

Milborne Port is a mainly residential village with a population of just over 2600 people. It has convenient road connections to a number of larger centres providing employment and services. Twelve of these are within a 10-15 minute travel time. There are also four railway stations within this travel time, giving access to east/west and north/south services.

A scheduled bus service provides regular transport to Sherborne and Yeovil to the west, and Wincanton, Stalbridge and Shaftesbury to the east. National Express bus services also link the village directly to London.

The streets and lanes in Milborne Port are set largely on a Saxon street plan. Many are narrow and not suitable for use by large articulated vehicles, modern day agricultural machinery and the volume and speed of current traffic.

There is a thriving service industry currently with 70 small businesses operating in the village, most with fewer than 5 employees. The total work force (economically active residents) of the village is around 1300 of which 90% work away from the village. The retail sector has dwindled to only a few shops.

There continues to be considerable infill housing development, although the last major increase in housing was from the late 1970's to the 1980's. Some of the resident village families have lived in the Milborne Port for generations, but there is also a significant number of newcomers who join the community and maintain a good mix and balance.



View of the church from Wheathill Lane

Milborne Port Plan Process

Work on the Parish Plan began in spring of 2008, but had its roots in an earlier Village Design Statement and a subsequent shopping survey. The following table indicates key milestones that have led to the current plan. Before and following each of the key steps, the Steering Group team were engaged in research, analysis and planning to guide the further work and make sure that as many people as possible had a chance to contribute.

Inaugural meeting	February 2008
Initial questionnaire	May 2008
Business Survey	March 2009
Economy Focus Group Meeting	27 March 2009
Clubs and Societies Questionnaire	May 2009
Discussions with Faith Leaders	June 2009
Community and Environment Focus Group Meeting	16 July 2009
Milborne Port Primary School Art Competition Presentation	16 October 2009
Main Public Consultation Event	16/17 October 2009
Draft Plan Presented to Milborne Port Parish Council and Adopted	16 March 2010
Adopted Plan Presented to South Somerset District Council and Endorsed	August 2010

Key Findings and Actions

The Parish Plan work was quite a large undertaking. To ensure that all aspects of village life and the needs of all

village residents were considered involved many volunteers. To make it more manageable, the work was split into three headings of economy, community, environment and transport as set out in this Summary Report. It is however, inevitable that there is an element of overlap and some actions in the plan address more than one heading.

Many individual points were raised during the public consultation and all of these have been retained and will be available to the Action Forum. Some more detailed responses are incorporated under general headings.

The full detail of all the work that has taken place is available online at www.milborneport.com and paper copies of the full report and the background evidence document are available for reference at the Parish Council and the library. It is, however, a large document and hence the key findings and actions have been summarised here.

It is intended that the plan will be reviewed periodically and all suggestions and ideas are welcomed at any time. It is a plan for the Parish and all those who live in Milborne Port and Milborne Wick. If it is to be productive it needs to be brought to life through the Action Forum and it is hoped that volunteers will come forward to work on particular actions.

Volunteers will be needed for various working groups and for the Action Forum. Anyone who wishes to contribute should contact the Parish Council.



General Actions

The following sections of this summary contain the proposed list of actions taken from the evidence and the public consultation. They have been set out under three headings in the report – economy, environment and community, which are also the main themes. However, in order to achieve these actions the whole plan needs to be coordinated and driven forward.

Therefore the following table sets out what needs to be done to ensure that this is followed through. In addition, it is intended that an Action Forum is formed by the Parish Council to include some Parish Councillors plus other members of the community, to steer the implementation process. This Action Forum will then form specific Action

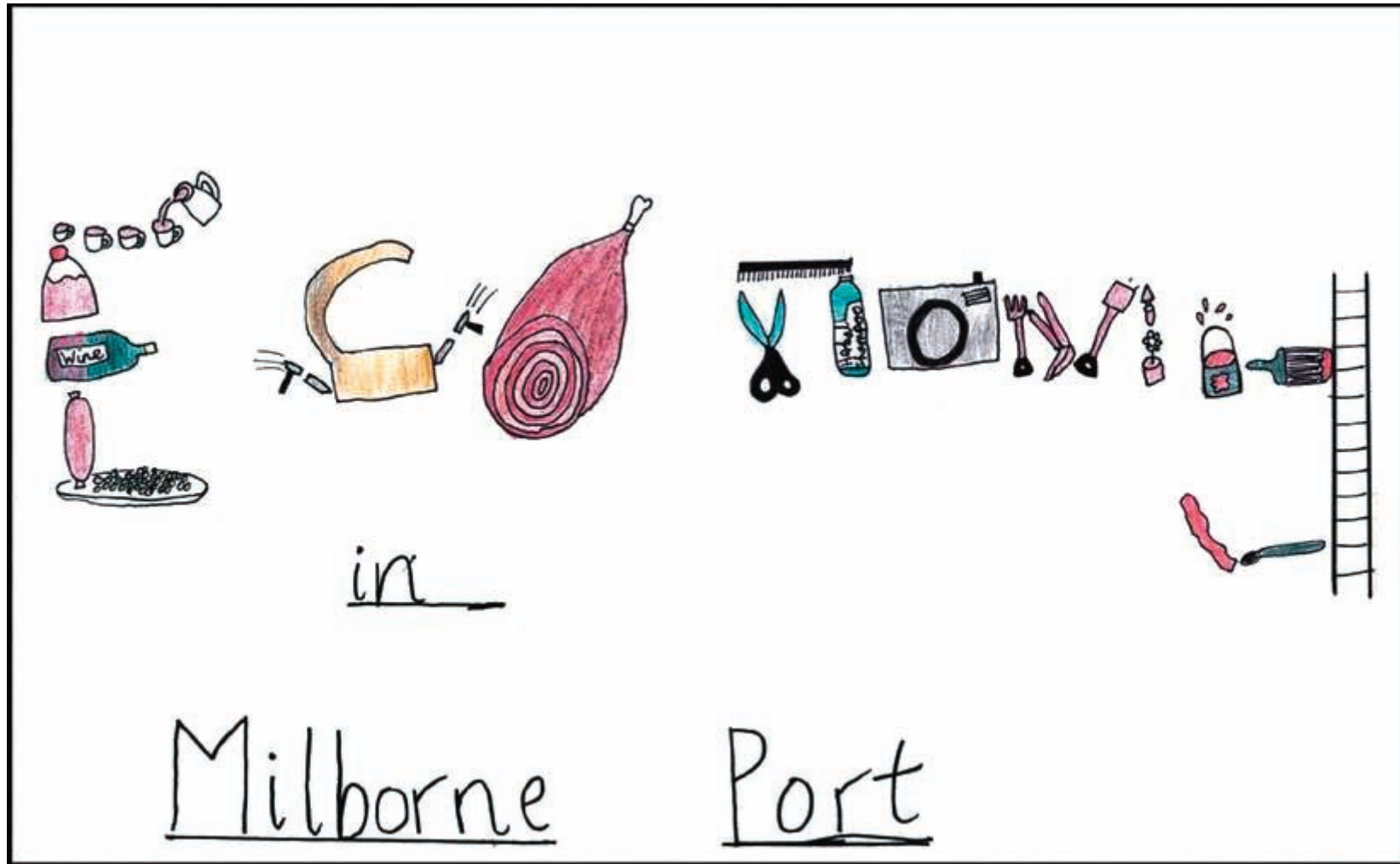
Groups to tackle individual actions or issues set out in the action plans at the end of each section.

The time frame in the table below refers to the implementation of the Parish Plan and what needs to be done to maintain momentum and review progress and relevance.

Action	Time frame
Create an Action Forum of interested parties to take aspects of the plan forward	Within a month of the publication of the plan
Review status of action plan	Six months
Update Parish Plan to reflect the review of Parish needs	Three years

In the Action Plan tables in the sections below, short term identifies actions that can be progressed quickly, medium term is intended to cover a flexible range, depending on the particular action being addressed, during the three year cycle of the plan, before it is reviewed and ongoing refers to recurrent actions.

ECONOMY



Picture by Thomas Blake, Milborne Port Primary School

Economy

Increased opportunities for shopping in the village are uppermost in the wishes of many of the villagers and specific types of shops have been mentioned by many. Given that some of these (e.g. bakers, greengrocers) have died out in recent years, there seems little likelihood that they will return. However there are specialist shops, such as the butcher, which attract shoppers from outside the village.

The proposed new supermarket could provide for most of these needs. However, there are several voices opposed to this development, either because of the impact on transport in the village or on other existing shops. It may also provide an opportunity to include some of the services or facilities identified by the village and could be encouraged to promote local businesses and use local suppliers. This new development should therefore be carried out with sensitivity to address local concerns and opportunities for the village.

The lack of a local universal cash machine is noted as problematic, hence the provision should be investigated with the local banks. It may be that the coming of the supermarket in future would provide an ideal location for such a facility. The possibility of a farmers market should be investigated. Although there is already one in Sherborne, it is only held once per month so there may be scope for having a local farmers market in Milborne Port without it being competitive.

There is continuing concern about the possible loss of the Post Office. There is much evidence elsewhere, that the loss of such key facilities can be the tipping point in the decline of a rural community. However it may be possible to include some of the Post Office services within another facility in the

village if the Post Office were to be lost. This might help another outlet to be more viable.

The best way to retain local facilities and services within the village is of course, to make sure that they are used frequently by as many residents as possible, and promoted to the wider area. Clearly this is an action for everyone. The value and importance of a thriving local economy is not always recognised and can be taken for granted until services or shops are lost. In the public consultation only a few evidenced the value of promoting local spending to be important.

The village is well served with trade services and professional services, but limitations of storage space are a concern for some service providers. Many would wish to promote local spending, and would welcome more opportunity to do so.

An adequate and reliable broadband speed and mobile phone coverage is needed to ensure that local businesses are competitive and those working from home are served.

An action for the Parish Council and Action Forum, therefore, may be to improve local understanding of the importance of the local economy by increasing promotion of what we have.

Economic Issues	Possible Actions	Timeframe	Co-ordinated by	Interested parties/those who can help
Availability of Local Produce	Investigate possibility of selling local produce at monthly WI cake sale	Short	Action Forum	Parish Council, WI, local producers
Availability of Local Produce	Introduce Farmers Market	Medium	Action Forum	Sherborne Farmers Market FARMA
Retention of Post Office	Prepare advanced case to resist any future closure proposal. Consider possible alternative locations to host the service or a 'Post Office Local' service	Short	Action Forum	Post Office Counters Ltd, Local retail outlets
Retention of Business Premises	Create register of empty premises, promote and market these	Short/ongoing	Action Forum	South Somerset District Council (SSDC)
Retention of Business Premises	Identify lock up space to let in the village	Short	Action Forum	Parish Council
Retention of Business Premises	Use SSDC planning policy MC1 to resist planning applications for change of use from retail/commercial to residential	Ongoing	Action Forum	SSDC, Parish Council
Retention of Business Premises	Find opportunities to influence Local Development Framework to find, allocate and retain space for small businesses	Ongoing	Action Forum	SSDC, Parish Council
Retention of Business Premises	Retain Council ownership of land with potential for future employment uses	Ongoing	Parish Council	SSDC
Poor mobile phone coverage	Work with mobile phone network companies	Medium	Action Forum	Mobile phone companies SSDC, Parish Council
Encouraging tourism	Provide better information within the village on local nature and heritage	Short	Action Forum	Local hospitality businesses, SSDC, Parish Council
Encouraging High Street footfall	Review opportunities for a café/restaurant in the village centre	Medium	Action Forum	Parish Council, SSDC, village residents
Employment	Post village job vacancies on notice boards, in village magazine and on website	Ongoing	Parish Council	Village magazine editors, local businesses, website editor

ENVIRONMENT



Picture by Joseph Bond, Milborne Port Primary School

Environment and Transport

Sherborne is the nearest town, with a fuller range of services and is only three miles away. There is a strong desire for a cycle path to Sherborne to enable safe and pollution free trips. It was felt that further emphasis and support should be given to try and achieve this. It is not safe to cycle through Crackmore Rocks and whilst discussions and negotiations on an alternative route have been going on for many years this has not yet produced a positive result. Further input from local residents might assist.

With the recent increase in the size of the village following several housing developments, there are many calls for the roads in the village to be made safer and more pedestrian friendly. It is complex to get this right, and hence a specific holistic study should be undertaken. This should take into account such things as parking and parking restrictions, traffic calming, and the creation of home zones, traffic lights and pedestrian crossings.

There is a significant interest in encouraging Milborne Port to become a 'transition village' or creating a transition community, to increase local sustainability. Further information on how to go about this is needed and a local transition group could be established to work with groups in other towns to progress the project. Being more self sufficient in using the facilities which already exist, such as village goods and services, extending the possibility of self sufficiency by increasing say, the acreage for allotments, would all be positive steps, as would the development of a cycle route as noted above.

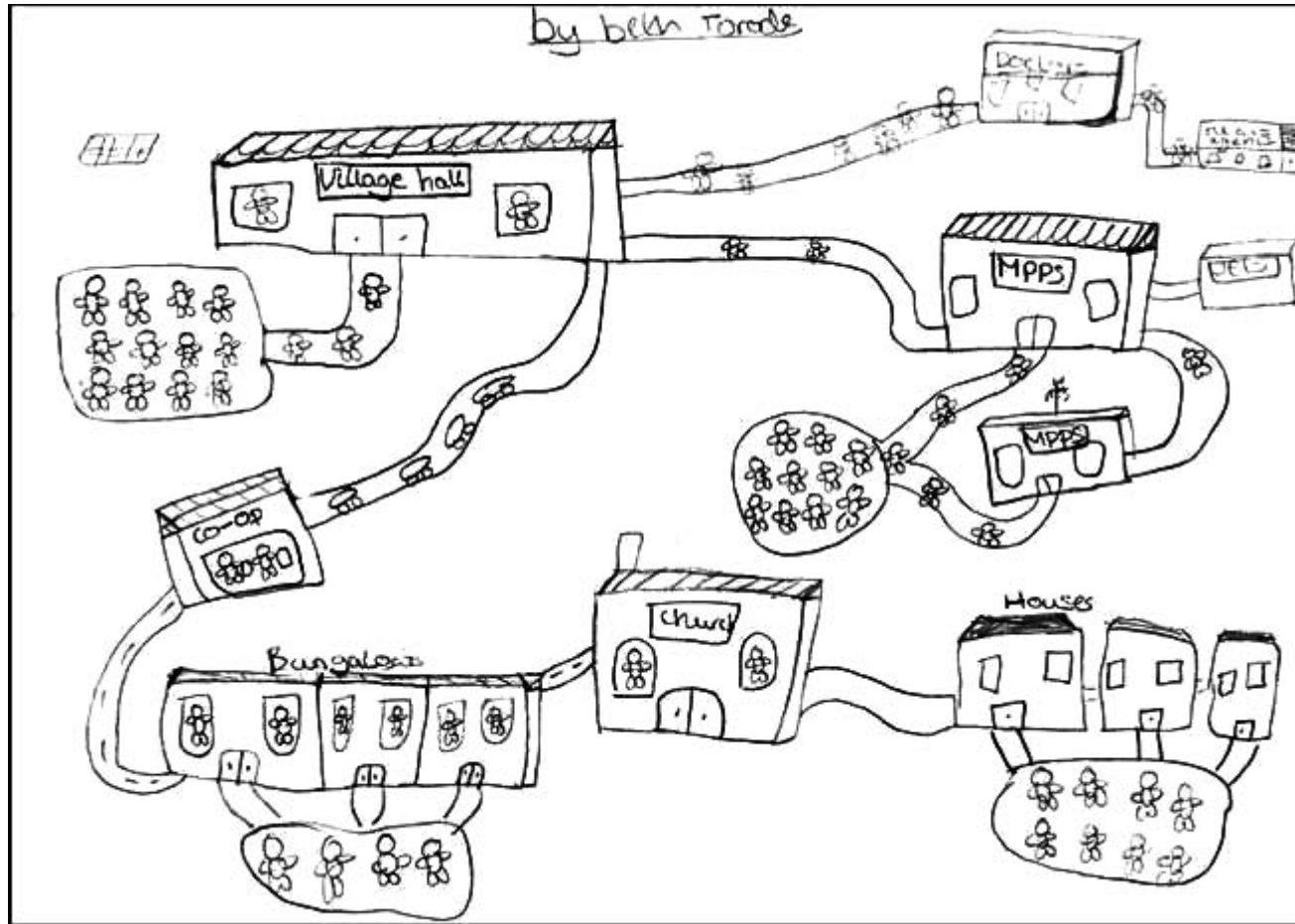


Being self sufficient, does not, however, mean “pulling up the drawbridge”. As communities themselves change, it is important to maintain the balance of providing employment, shopping, services, and facilities, to support increased residential development, for example. This is one way of increasing the potential for self sufficiency.



Environment and Transport Issues	Action	Timeframe	Co-ordinated by	Interested parties/those who can help
Car Parking	Improve visibility and location of signage on A30	Short	Parish Council	Somerset Highways,
Car Parking	Improve East Street Car Park lighting	Short	Parish Council	Somerset Highways,
Traffic Management and the deteriorating state of the village lanes	Develop plan for all roads and lanes in the village to determine a repair and maintenance policy and designate home zones and quiet lanes	Long term	Parish Council	Somerset Highways, Charitable Organisations Primary School, residents and local businesses
Development of safe cycle routes	Contact Government and charitable organisations to assist in route planning	Medium term	Action Forum to include Parish Council Sub-committee	SUSTRANS, local interest groups, private sector
Lack of safe pedestrian access throughout the village	Introduce traffic calming measures and limit heavy vehicle access to some areas. Consider pedestrian routes through the village	Medium term	Parish Council Footpath Committee with extended remit	Somerset Highways, charitable organisations and the private sector
Cost and frequency of public transport	Consider car share schemes. Set up volunteer driver organisation, encourage demand responsive bus services	Medium term	Action Forum	SSDC, SCC, students, older people, non-drivers, non car owners, village volunteers Local bus companies Sherborne Transport Action Group
Lack of community involvement in sustainable practices	Set up transition village initiative	Short/medium term	Action Forum	Transition village support groups

COMMUNITY



Picture by Beth Torode, Milborne Port Primary School

Community

A sense of community is a vital part of rural village life and the evidence supports the notion that there is a wide range of opportunities for residents of the village, with many differing clubs and societies, as well as several public houses and a social club.

There are many opportunities for Christian worship in the village with Anglican and Catholic services as well as a Community Church. Declining numbers have led to the closure of the Methodist Church and the closest such Church is now in Sherborne. Yeovil is the nearest centre for the followers of some other faiths.



The primary school within the village supports the growing population and there is a toddlers' group which meets weekly and a pre-school group operating within the primary school.

Older children are less well catered for although there are playing fields and a skate park, there is currently no organised social group, such as a youth club for those of secondary school age. Hence young villagers must travel to other local centres for such activities which is an expensive proposition if done on a regular basis.

One central theme that was raised frequently during the consultation with local residents is the need for improved communication. There is a website maintained free of charge by a local company, a Parish Magazine and some notice boards in the village. However, these efforts are not integrated. Villagers feel that they could be better informed about events and opportunities in the village for social activities, as well as employment opportunities.

New residents moving to the village might also appreciate being given a welcome pack to showcase all the facilities, services, groups, clubs and events available to them.

Improving communication is one of the prime targets of the action plan and will help to promote all the other work that will be needed to implement the various actions in the plan.

Community Issues	Action	Timeframe	Co-ordinated by	Interested parties/those who can help
Communication	Improve village communication by integrating information flow across all channels (web, notice boards, magazine etc).	Short	Action Forum	Local website provider, Magazine Editors, Parish Council
Social Facilities	Investigate premises suitable for a social meeting place for 11-16 year olds	Short	Action Forum	Young residents, Parish Council
Social Facilities	Refurbish cricket hut and provide public toilets	Short	Cricket Club	Parish Council, Playing Fields Committee
Social Facilities	Investigate the possibility for the Library to expand its opening hours	Medium	Action Forum	Library manager and staff Parish Council SCC
Communication	Identify and form a group of volunteers to develop a village welcome pack and keep it up to date	Short	Action Forum	Parish Council
Communication	Identify and form a group of volunteers to develop the website and keep it up to date	Short	Action Forum	Local website provider
Communication	Examine the future needs for the website and develop it to meet those needs	Medium	Action Forum and local website group to be created	Local website provider
Communication	Encourage the provision of super high speed broadband and investigate with BT local loop unbundling in the exchange	Medium	Action Forum	Parish Council, BT
Social Groups	Encourage wider knowledge of social groups by updating data on website and in local parish or community magazine	Short ongoing	Action Forum	Parish Council, Local website provider Magazine Editors Local groups
Social Groups	Encourage more community events by forming an events/social committee	Medium	Action Forum	Parish Council



High Street Shops



English Organ School and Museum



Village Hall



The Weighbridge

Please retain this document for future reference. If you no longer need it please return it to the Town Hall for others to use.

**The Action Forum may be contacted through the Parish Council
01963 251268
clerk@milborneportpc.org.uk**



Milborne Port Tannery