



SHILLINGSTONE PARISH PLAN

Introduction

Shillingstone is located in the valley of the River Stour and lies between the river and the chalk hills. It is a village of ancient origin, dating back to at least Saxon times. The historic centre is near the medieval parish church and over the centuries it has developed into a village of around 500 dwellings with a population of over 1300 residents.

It is a "ribbon development" village strung out along over a mile of the busy A357 main road. The church, village school, village shop and village hall are towards the north end of the village; the pub, post office and store and recreation ground are towards the south end. Over the last 60 years substantial housing development has concentrated the centre of population at the south end, and this continues with a further 50 dwellings currently under construction. It is estimated that more than 70% of the population will be in the southern part of the village. Only a handful of houses in the parish lie outside the village boundary.

The village is surrounded by farmland, partly designated as Area of Natural Beauty, and throughout the length of the settlement there are a number of green open spaces designated in planning terms as "Important Open or Wooded Areas". The village is dominated by the main road, which tends to divide the village rather than link it. The volume and speed of heavy traffic together with narrow pavements makes walking or cycling a hazardous and unattractive prospect and so access to village school, hall and church is problematic, compounded by very limited parking. However, there are alternative north/south routes along quiet back lanes and well maintained footpaths.

The population of the village is more varied than in most neighbouring villages, in that the proportion of retired people, although significant, is lower and there are more young families as evidenced by the oversubscribed village school. Employment opportunities within the village and the immediate are limited and so most "working" residents commute to neighbouring towns, mainly by car. Shillingstone benefits from reasonable leisure facilities, particularly the recreation ground, and there are a number of well supported clubs and societies.

For the benefit of the village and its residents, the future of the village, its community and its facilities need to be considered now. The government is encouraging villages to prepare a parish plan so that residents can influence the future of their village.

In the mid 1980's a similar but less comprehensive village appraisal was carried out, "Shillingstone at The Crossroads". The village is much changed since then. In the last 23 years the size of the village, both in population and number of houses, has increased by approximately 50%. Then many villagers worked in and around the village in industry and agriculture; now most commute further afield mainly by car. A smaller proportion of residents were retired, and households were a little larger. Before the arrival of accessible supermarkets more shopping was done locally. Public transport was evidently more frequent but still a source of complaint. The amount of crime and vandalism was less but people worried about it just as much as today.

The greatest anxiety was caused by the prospect of increased development with 85% wanting the Parish to remain an agricultural area. Two other major problems were increasing and speeding traffic on the main road, and the continuing viability of the village school. So despite the growth of the village and the influx of new residents, villagers are still concerned about the same things!

Local people need a plan because:

- It enables them to shape the future of their village.
- It gives them a chance to say what services and facilities they need.
- It gives them the opportunity to contribute.
- It helps obtain funding.

All levels of government (including Parish Councils) need a plan because:

- It helps them know what the community wants.
- It shows them what is missing.
- It helps them understand that parishes have different needs.
- It helps them decide where to spend money.

Health, transport, police and other service providers need a plan because:

- It shows who lives where.
- It shows up any problems.
- It helps them to deliver services to villages.
- It improves their efficiency.

Background

The Parish Council of Shillingstone decided to initiate a Parish Plan. This has been undertaken by seven people, all of whom have different experiences of Shillingstone, different interests, and in some ways represent various sections of the community.

They are

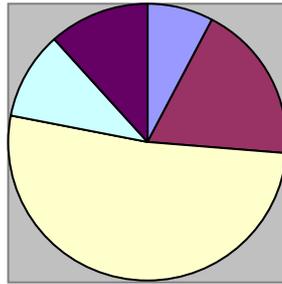
- Lesley Gasson co-ordinator and interested in transport and crime and policing.
- Francis Graeser – sport leisure and health
- Helen Graeser - employment
- Louise Hull – education, services, village facilities and community buildings
- Graham Rains – footpaths and bridleways
- Brenda Watts} Housing and village design
- Bob Yorath} – Housing and village design

445 questionnaires were circulated to all the households in the village. 292 questionnaires were returned which is 66%. This is a good return because this is a linear village without a natural centre and communication between each end of the village is difficult. There were 96 questions in the questionnaire, which meant that it took some time to answer. Many people took time to provide written comments besides ticking the boxes. Three quarters of those who replied were over 30 years old

Households in Shillingstone

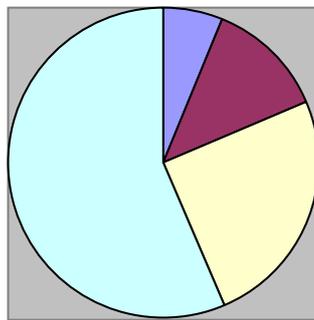
The first few questions were about the household and then the rest were answered individually. Of those who replied 75% live in one or two person households. People were asked why they lived in Shillingstone. Over half lived here through choice; only 10% have been born here, other reasons were retirement, work, housing and parental care.

Reasons for living in Shillingstone



Length of residence

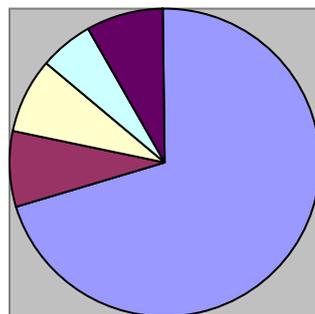
Well over half the population has lived here for over ten years. The village population may look static but people gradually come and go. The chart below illustrates this.



People were asked if they would need more room in the next 5 years to get some idea of housing need. 6% said they would need more room and would look to extend or adapt their property.

School Attendance

We asked where children went to school both at primary and secondary school age. Of those who answered the questionnaire 35 said they went to Shillingstone School. At present the school roll is 106 children of whom 65, or nearly 70% live here.

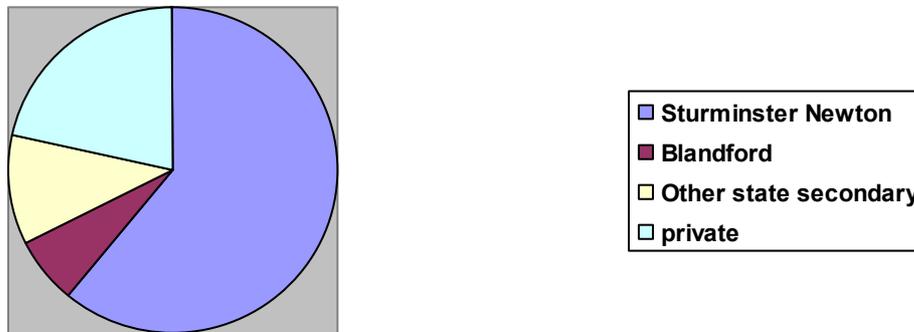


Primary school attendance

As you can see the responses to the questionnaire do reflect the reality. Shillingstone School is a very popular school with children from outside the village keen to attend. Four children in the village could not immediately secure a place in the village school when they arrived in the village.

Secondary school Attendance

The majority of secondary school children attend Sturminster Newton High School. This has historical reasons because children leave primary school at 11+ years and Sturminster Newton High School was almost the only choice. Blandford was part of a first school, middle school and upper school arrangement. This has now changed and children leaving primary school in Shillingstone can choose to go to either Blandford or Sturminster Newton.

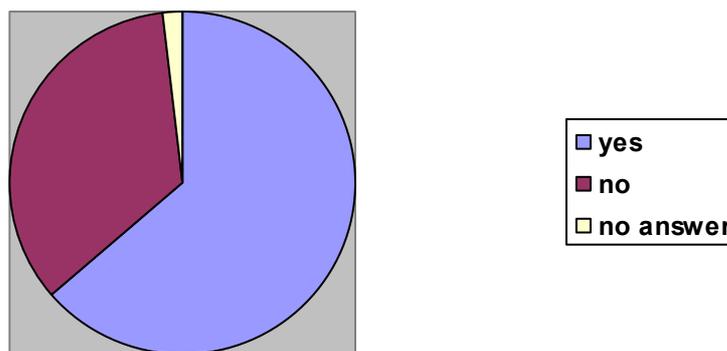


Work and living in Shillingstone

The questionnaire asked whether Shillingstone’s rural situation made a difference to what work is available, and if this influenced whether people stayed in the village or left. We asked if people knew of any one who had left the village in the last 5 years because they could not find work. Responses indicate that 14 people were known to have left to find work.

Internet connection

Finally, the survey sought to establish to what extent information technology had arrived in the village, so we asked whether households were connected to the internet

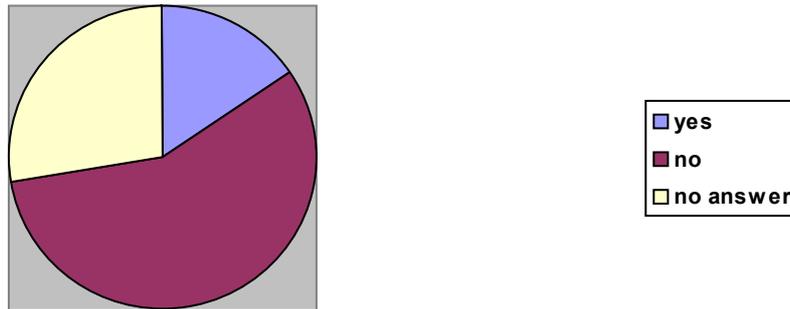


Transport

In rural areas transport can be a major problem for those living in villages to travel to work, for shopping, to attend hospitals and so on. Traffic is also a problem to Shillingstone because goods and services are moved about on roads which were never designed to carry the size, quantity and weight of lorries that go through our village.

The majority of people in the village have access to a car, although about 9% do not. Those households of working age (78%) tend to have two or more cars. The majority (55%) of those who have retired have one car. A few people have problems parking in the village. In the sample indicated by the questionnaire 80 people car share in some way (work, shopping, school run). 17.4% of villagers do not have access to a car and use the NORDCAT buses, bus passes, taxi vouchers or hospital car service to travel when necessary.

Villagers were asked about the bus services through Shillingstone. Even those who use their cars felt there were insufficient buses. The results are indicated on the chart.



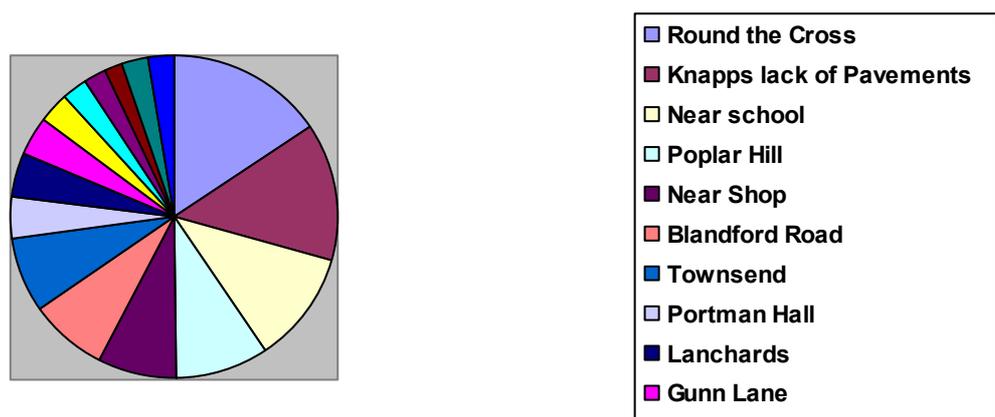
Traffic calming measures

We asked if people thought the electrical 30mph signs were effective at either end of the village. 57.5% though they did make a difference.

Dangerous areas of roads and pavements.

People were asked to comment on where they thought roads or pavements were dangerous in Shillingstone. This question elicited the greatest response. 199 answers mentioned areas where they thought roads or pavements were dangerous. The areas of greatest concern are the areas around the cross, the school and the shop. 50% of comments were concerned about the lack of pavements, inadequate pavements, and poor parking at the school during opening and closing times. The lack of pavements and speed of traffic also affect those at Townsend and Holloway Lane.

Poplar Hill has no pavements and poor sight lines round the bend. Wessex Homes and their massive lorries still presents a hazard. Blandford Road has areas where there are safety concerns. Traffic emerging from the Portman Hall has a poor view of the road. The area round the garage, the exits from Church Road and the pavement opposite Candys Lane, are all dangerous because of heavy lorries and weight of traffic. The lack of pedestrian crossings was seen as part of the problem.



The final question in this section asked people to make any other comments about transport in Shillingstone. There were 118 replies to this question, and they fell into three main headings. 1) Concerns about heavy lorries and how to reduce their impact. 2) General traffic problems. 3) Other suggestions about transport. The following tables illustrates where the emphasis was placed.

Concerns about lorries and heavy transport	Number of comments
Restrict lorries in the village by weight	14
Close Durweston Bridge to lorries	5
Put in pinch points for lorries	1
Restrict Wessex homes transporters	6

General traffic problems	Number of comments
Provide speed cameras and speed signs	20
Traffic calming needed	8
Parking round the school church and hall difficult	6

Other Suggestions	Number of comments
More regular buses needed	14
A bus shelter needed	6
Pedestrian crossing needed on Blandford Road	11
Cycle paths especially on the railway needed	6
A village minibus shared with other villages	3
Improved pavements	12
Bypass round Shillingstone	6
Car sharing list with phone numbers	1
Improved street lighting possibly solar powered	3



Crime and Policing

Crime in the village is fairly low. 21% of people in the village said they had been a victim of crime in the last 5 years. This is about 4% per year. Police responses to these crimes have been varied. 42% of incidents had response between 1 hour and 1 day and 32% not at all or indefinitely. Most people feel safe in the village during the day but 25% do not feel safe at night. Solutions suggested to reduce crime and concerns for safety were:

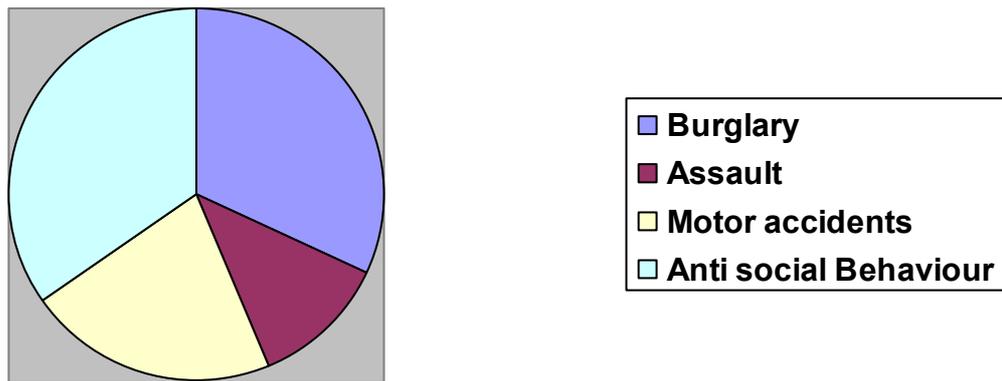
- More local police - 46%
- Better street lighting - 42%.

Neighbourhood Watch was not highlighted as an answer to safety.

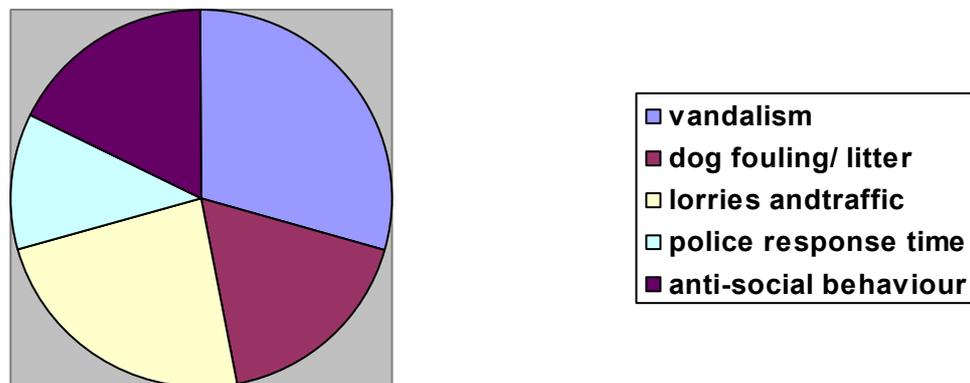
There were 39 comments on public safety. A third were in favour of a community policeman. Comments for and against more street lighting were almost equal. Other suggestions included the need for a youth centre, targeting trouble and vigilantes.

The crimes most people were worried about were:

Crime concerns



Most were worried about anti social behaviour and burglary. Motor accidents and assault were of less concern, which is surprising considering how strongly people feel about the weight of traffic through the village. There were 17 particular comments about crime and policing these were:



Education



Comments regarding a new primary school building on the proposed site behind Townsend and Burton's Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow were generally in favour. Two thirds of those who expressed an opinion thought that the move was long overdue and should go ahead as soon as possible. One respondent noted that, "I think we are well overdue, it has been talked about for over 46 years"; another that, "it is disgraceful that the village is still waiting for a new school which has been needed for over 30 years".

Slightly fewer villagers thought that the school should be designed to take more children. A significant percentage wanted pupil numbers to remain at present levels to keep the 'small village school' atmosphere and to prevent threatening the rolls in neighbouring villages. Some people thought the school should only take children from Shillingstone. There was a feeling expressed by some that the housing development in the village would make more school places necessary. Interestingly, a different view was put forward, that a larger school site might actually encourage further building.

There were a number of specific concerns relating to the new site,

- That adequate provision should be made for parking and the 'dropping off' of children, particularly if the new building were near a residential area, as well as fears that the present site was unsuitable for precisely this reason.
- That a physical move away from the Church might weaken links between the school (which is a Church of England primary school) and the Church.
- That a community based school with facilities available to the whole village might detract from activities in the Portman Hall. (A significant number of villagers thought that if and when the school moved, the existing site would be ideal for a new village hall.)

Following on from this last point, about half the village would like the school to be community based and would support adult education classes, a youth club, events venue, playgroup, a before and after school club and a parent and toddler group. (Since the Parish Plan Questionnaire went out a parent and toddler group has in fact started at the Portman hall).

Of those villagers who expressed an opinion, 80% would like to see adult and further education courses run in Shillingstone. There was a massive and very varied response to the question, "what learning opportunities would you be interested in?" In total 228 ideas were put forward! These were split between interests in educational and practical courses along with classes for recreation and enjoyment.

There were calls for basic skills courses and classes such as those run by WEA and U3A. There were also requests for short courses and one-day workshops.

Of all the subjects for further education the most requested were:

SUBJECT	NO. OF PEOPLE
Computing (including ICT)	40
Languages	32
Craft activities (including pottery/ceramics, jewellery making, needle-work and upholstery)	24
Art (including painting and drawing)	23
Keep fit (including yoga, pilates and tai chi)	10
Local studies/history	6

Fewer numbers of people expressed an interest in cookery, complementary therapies, gardening, DIY, photography, natural history and music.

Services, facilities and community buildings.



The condition of hedges and verges was seen as a particular problem along Hine Town and Blandford Road as previously mentioned. Villagers commented on verges damaged by parking near the Cross and Gospel Hall and along Church Road as well as overgrown hedges along Gunn Lane opposite the Post Office.

Litter does not seem to be considered as a major problem in the village. 28% of those who responded to the question saw it as a minor problem; 7% as a serious problem. Of those who fell between, most erred on the side of minor.

Those people who considered litter to be a problem, were invited to suggest where they thought new litter bins should be placed. Many people responded, indicating where they thought most litter is dropped. Some villagers wanted more bins throughout Shillingstone, for example at all road intersections, bus stops, lay-bys and dog litter bins. Others thought that litter bins would not help as they were not emptied regularly enough at present or were simply not used. Quite a number of people agreed with the comment that “the problem is people not bins” and that “passing traffic throws litter out of the window, no litter bins can combat mobile litter-louts”.

The greatest need for bins was seen to be:

- Near the Londis shop (where a number of people wanted a larger bin with a lid)
- Near the Post Office and along Gunn Lane
- By the garage
- At the recreation ground
- Along the most heavily used footpaths and bridleway
- Around Wessex Avenue, Coombe Road and Schelin Way. (Schelin Way was seen as a particular problem along with the old Wessex Ridgeway path bordering it.) There were also concerns about the route from the Post Office along Wessex Avenue into Schelin Way.

Dog waste was perceived to be a serious problem by 16% of respondents and a minor problem by 23% of respondents. (The others fell somewhere in between). Overall it was considered to be more of a problem than general litter.

There were many comments as to where dog waste bins should be situated if more were to be erected in the village. As with litter bins, this indicates where there is thought to be an issue. Many people felt that, “the waste bins are not a problem it’s the dog owners who don’t monitor their dogs and pick it up”, and “there are enough bins, people need to use them”.

Others thought that the existing bins were not emptied regularly enough or that they were unsightly and should be green rather than red. Several villagers felt that dog waste should be bagged and taken home, thus making further dog waste bins unnecessary, some that more bins were needed throughout the village.

There were calls for dog waste bins along Hine Town, Coombe Road and Everetts Lane. However, the vast majority thought that the worst dog fouling occurred along the footpaths in and around the village. The Old Railway Track was cited as by far the area most in need of bins by a large number of villagers.

There were also calls for bins along the old Wessex Ridgeway adjoining Schelin Way and the entrance to the Church grounds as well as by the stile into Church Field.

Recycling

The residents of Shillingstone are interested in extending the opportunities for recycling within the village. Of those who responded in the questionnaire:

- 89% would support facilities for recycling cardboard
- 81% would support facilities for recycling/swapping books
- 78% would support facilities for recycling/swapping DVDs
- 75% would support facilities for recycling/swapping CDs
- 69% would support facilities for recycling/swapping toys
- 63% would like to see a central village composting scheme

Of those villagers who expressed an opinion, 85% would like to have a list of amenities, organizations and activities available in Shillingstone.

When asked if Shillingstone needed a new village hall 119 people did not know, 232 thought that it did, whilst 190 thought it did not. If a new hall were built and if it were possible, the majority (72%) of those in support would like to see it as part of a new school development.

Of the others, suggestions for an alternative site included, in descending order of popularity:

- The recreation ground or close to it (a number of villagers thought it should be combined with a news sports pavilion)
- The existing school site when the school moves
- A separate building next to the school

Many villagers did not want the hall moved but would like to see it rebuilt on the existing site, or considerably extended. Car parking is seen as a major problem and a number of people would like to see additional car parking built, possibly in the field adjacent to the Portman hall.

Concerning the sports pavilion, of those who expressed an opinion 76% would like to see a new building. Comments included using the field next to the recreation ground as extra car parking, combining it with a new village hall as discussed above and the addition of squash courts.

In the general comments about community facilities and services, the village saw much to be positive about. One villager wrote, “Shillingstone is a lovely place to live, let’s keep it that way”, another, that “Shillingstone enjoys a very good community spirit”. The main fly in the ointment is that there is very little for young people to do within the village.



Planning

Approximately 48% of surveys indicated that there is a need in the village for more affordable housing. 31% of the responses showed a 'no' to this issue. The highest 'yes' response was in the under 60 group, and in the over 60s the 'yes' response was just under 50%. 20% said 'don't know'. This is probably explained by the over 60's having no intentions of moving whilst the younger people are on, or trying to get on, the housing ladder. In reality, high land and building prices preclude any significant increase in affordable housing.

In connection with a question on the need for more social housing, the overall response was approx 3 to 1 against, with the over 60's being slightly more negative. "Don't knows" were at over 20%. This may reflect the existing high proportion of existing social housing, and reflects the lack of interest in the recently available Hastoe housing.

On the issue of a need for more sheltered housing, 30% of the responses were for, and 40% against, with 30% "don't know" . Perhaps surprisingly older respondents were just as opposed.

To the question on whether there is a need for more private housing there was a very strong negative response - just 13% for and 68% against. These responses were quite consistent across all age groups.

A question was posed on whether more housing is required for specific groups. Responses indicated that for families, some 30% were in favour; for the retired, it was 15% in favour; for young couples. 39% approved; and for single persons only 16% agreed. Interestingly the response from the younger age groups for young couples and single housing was much lower than from older age groups. This perhaps indicates that young people do not want to stay in the village.

On whether private and social housing should be mixed or separate, an almost equal return of questionnaires though the 60+ group indicated a 2 to 1 disapproval to mixed development.

Villagers were canvassed on whether there should be building on specific open land within the village. There was an overwhelming negative response as indicated under:

- Recreation ground, 5% for, 90% against.
- Hine Town Lane, 14% for, 79% against.
- Portman Hall Field, 16% for, 77% against.
- Church Field, 14% for, 79% against.

The issue was raised on whether building on large gardens and infill sites would be acceptable. The responses were:

- Large gardens 79% against
- Infill sites 65% against

On a general basis opinion was against further large scale development in the village. If development had to come at all, it should be largely restricted to small sites around the village and should be sympathetic to a village environment.

Housing Design

Most of the people answering the village survey thought of new housing in terms of the Hambledon View development, which caused a great deal of controversy. The following is a summary of opinions.

The majority of people in the village survey felt that the new development from Wyatt Homes was out of character with the rest of the village.



The “Lighthouse/ Watchtower” (3 storey house) on the corner caused the most adverse comment, both on the grounds of its design for the village environment and its aesthetic appearance. Some described it as ugly and out of place, more suited to a town development. Others said that they thought that some of the designs were interesting and exciting.

Many people commented on the density of the new housing, saying that the estate was poorly or inappropriately designed for a village environment with the dwellings lacking sufficient parking and garden spaces. Generally it was thought that the density was too high.

Some villagers felt that the new houses were too expensive for village people to buy. They also felt that the new “affordable” housing was good both in design and build quality, but that there were too few of them.



The development of the houses on the old Seymer Arms site was generally considered to be more in keeping with the locality, and well executed.

New houses on the old Seymer Arms site.



Two replies commented on the missed opportunity of the archaeological site and felt that there should be some reference to its existence in the development, somewhere.

Four responses wondered why consultations with the village and the planning authorities were then apparently ignored and in the case of Hambledon View more houses were added after the plans had gone to the planning department.

Employment

Who are at work

- A third of those who answered the questionnaire are employed full time.
- 29% are retired.
- Of those who answered the question 4% are unemployed.
- Of those in employment 29% are self employed.
- Of the retired or unemployed only 1% are actively looking for work.

Where people work.

- A quarter of people either work from home or in Shillingstone.
- 43% work within a radius of 15miles and the rest 30% work further away.

Travel to work

- 78% travel to work by car, which is why so many families have two cars.
- Those who work locally generally walk to work.
- The majority of those of working age would like more employment opportunities in the village.
- 20% of the total did not want any more employment in the village.



Sport and Leisure

Shillingstone's village hall, the Portman Hall was built in 1956. With the expansion of the village since then the question was asked as to whether the size of the hall is now adequate?

Of those that answered;

YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
37%	36%	27%

The following table shows how well supported some of the more popular events in the hall are:

	Parish Council	Arts Reach	Seniors	W.I.	Sham Dram	Yoga	Band Practise
No. of People	104	137	27	43	87	21	68

The number of people attending the parish council appears to be high when compared with actual attendance. It is to be imagined that this is because people saw this as a question meaning 'have you ever attended a parish meeting?', rather than 'do you do so regularly?'.

The hall seems fairly well used on a regular basis, but out of 487 replies only 11% of the under 30's seem to do so.

Some alternative ideas were tabled to see if there was sufficient interest to form the relevant clubs. The results showed that out of 397 replies, only 12% of the under 30's would support these activities, and most of these were only interested in some form of computer club.

	Bridge	Camera	Computer	Gardening	Bowling
No. of people	26	48	93	157	73

Gardening is the most popular possible club. This is the sort of club which may be run either as a voluntary activity or as a commercial one if there is enough real interest in the community.

A computer club would mean those who joined it would have to supply their own computers or get together and fund the purchase of them. One does not know if those interested are interested in learning about computing or would like to exchange games and programs



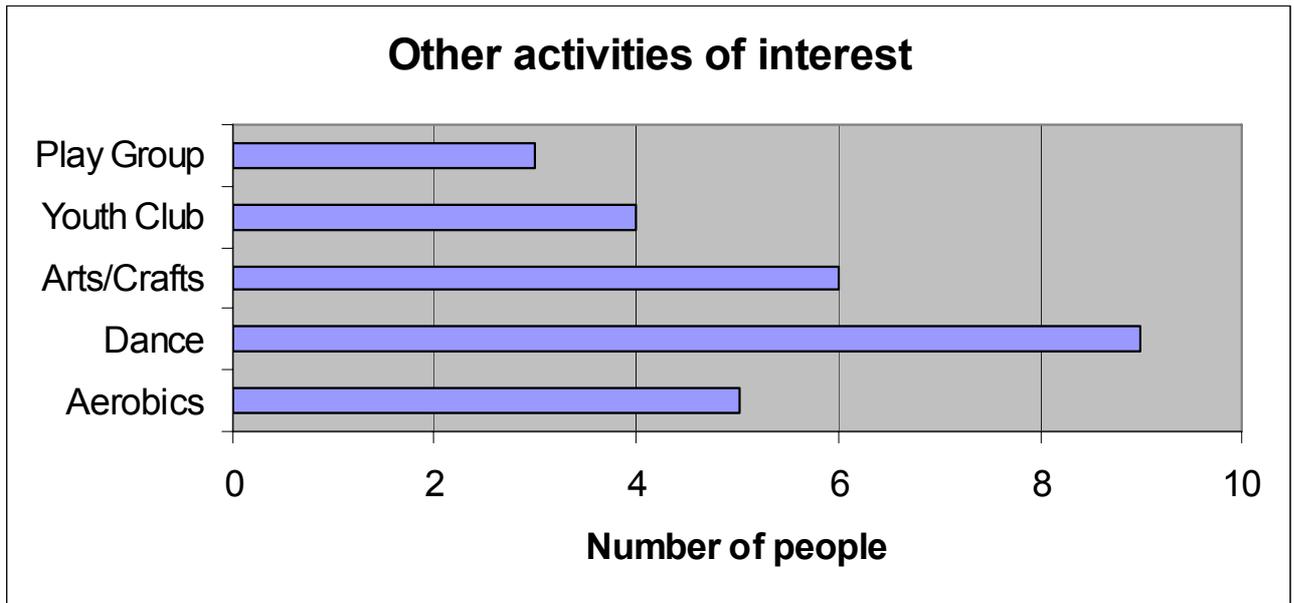
Recreation Ground



MTB course Shillingstone Forest



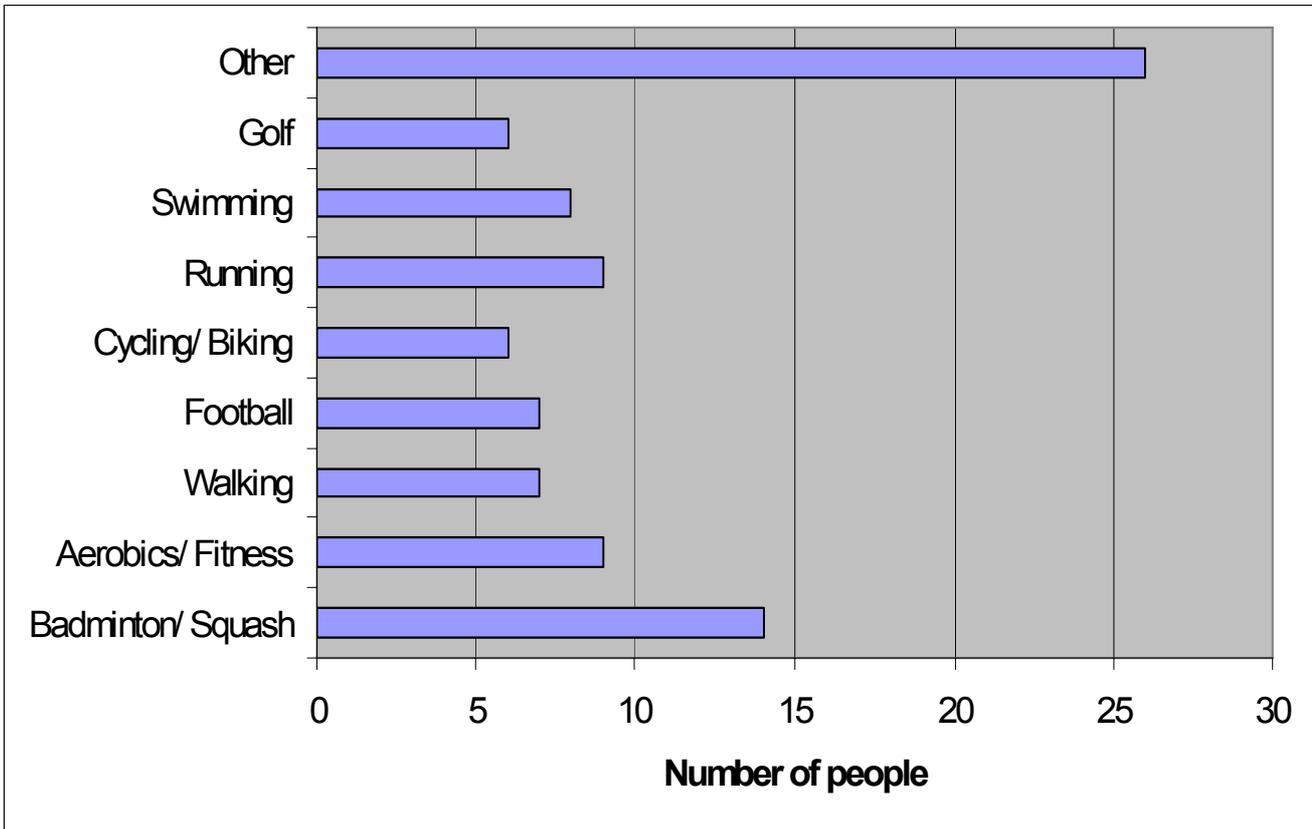
Community Orchard



With the computer and internet being the modern form of learning and information gathering would this facility be of any use in the hall? Surprisingly over the whole age range of the survey, only 20% thought this to be a good idea.

For mainly outdoor sporting activities, Shillingstone is well catered for, we have an excellent recreation ground catering for Cricket, Tennis and Football. Skittles, Tennis and Cricket were by far the most popular, attracting good support from age ten year olds to the over 60's.

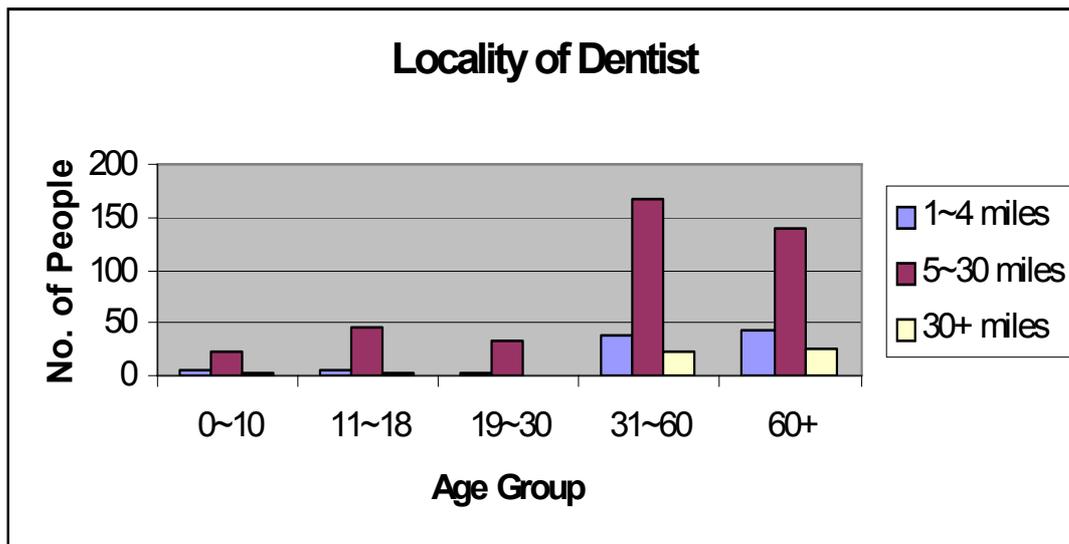




Medical Services

Dental Care

Living in a rural area can be difficult for those wishing to attend the local Health Centre or Dentist, especially for those without own transport. For the dentist, out of a total of 537 replies, 54% were Private patients and 46% NHS.



Considering there is a shortage of NHS Dentists in the area is there a need for a local NHS Dentist?

YES
406 people

NO
121 People

Doctors Surgery

We are fortunate in Shillingstone to have a choice of three relatively close health centres; Blandford, Child Okeford and Sturminster Newton. The following graph shows the number of residents use each centre.

<i>Age</i>	Blandford	Child Okeford	Sturminster Newton	Else Where
0~10	15	18	2	
11~18	24	23	4	6
19~30	16	19	4	4
31~60	100	107	19	15
60+	84	112	20	9
Total	239	279	49	34

Only 9% found any difficulty travelling to these centres. For those with a transport problem, the majority used friends and family, while some use was made of the community car service, especially by those in the 60+ age group. To try and resolve the problem villagers were asked if they would like to see a part-time doctor's surgery in the village.

<i>Age</i>	Yes	No
0~10	22	7
11~18	34	14
19~30	32	11
31~60	145	83
60+	148	65
Total	381	180



RIGHTS OF WAY

The initial survey indicates that the main concern regarding footpaths is the failure of some dog owners to clear up after their animals. The installation of more dog bins may help regarding inner-village paths, but this is not going to stop the inconsiderate person from letting their dog foul footpaths in a wider area.

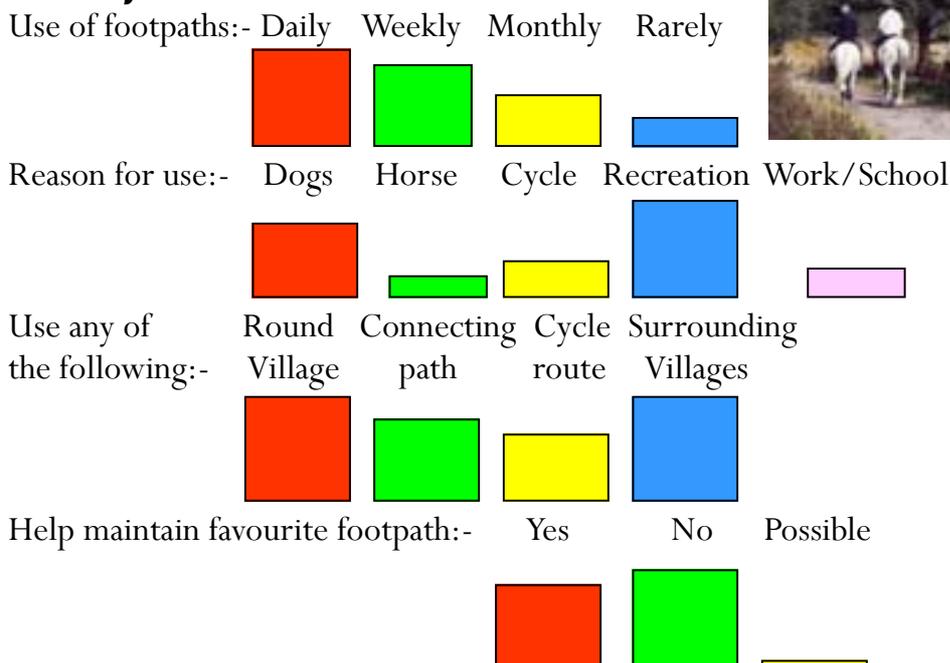
The survey has highlighted a number of requests for benches to be installed on some of the footpaths. Four benches were installed on the Trailway some 18 months ago which are approximately a quarter of a mile apart. The bird hide situated in the wooded area of the Trailway also has a bench in it.

There are a number of benches in the Community Orchard and also at points around the village, however a number of other sites have been suggested. The benches on the Trailway and in the Orchard are of heavy log construction and are virtually maintenance free.



A Round Village Trail project, funded by the Dorset AONB and the Wessex Ridgeway Development Fund, is in operation. The culmination of this project should ensure the replacement of many stiles with self-closing gates. All-weather surfacing will also be installed where necessary. There will be two routes, Red and Blue, the inner Red route will meet disabled specifications.

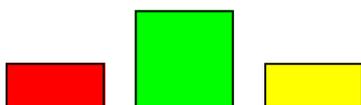
Survey Results:



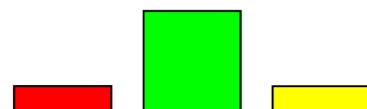
Rights of way

Survey Results continued:

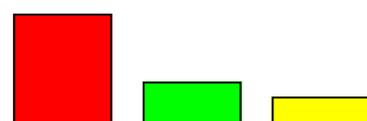
Would extra benches encourage you to use footpaths:- YES NO No answer



Do stiles stop you from using footpaths:- YES NO No answer



Would you use a map of the village footpaths:- YES NO No answer



Support parking at Hayward Bridge:- YES NO No answer



Final Summary

The old railway line is now part of the North Dorset Railway and is a definitive bridleway. As such it is open to Horse Traffic, Cyclists and Pedestrians. Bridleways are depicted by a **blue** arrow, footpaths by a **yellow** arrow and special routes by a customised disc, which will usually display a logo. A number of responses in the survey, seem not to be able to differentiate between footpaths and bridleways. Some special routes are comprised of both.



BRIDLEWAY



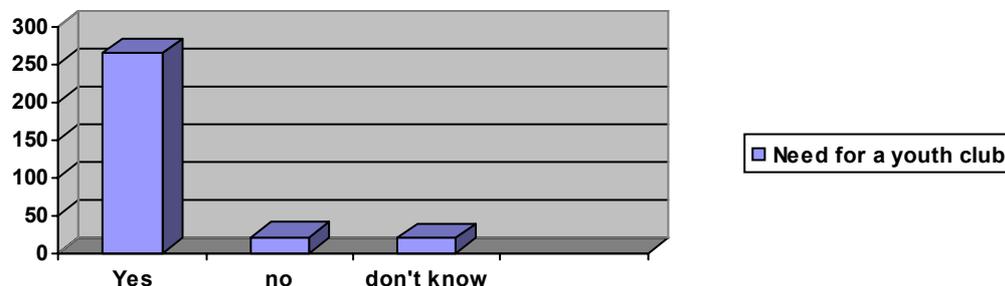
FOOTPATH



The Parish Council is committed to improving the rights of way in the parish and maintaining them to an acceptable standard. Anyone who wishes to help in any way can contact the Rights Of Way Officer on 860 216. Walks books and leaflets featuring the parish and surrounding area can be obtained from the Village Stores, Post Office and the Willows Tea Room.

Youth in the Village

There is a definite need for a youth club because apart from sport there is very little for young people to do in the village. Questionnaires asked for an indication of feeling about establishing a club, and the following graph illustrates the response.

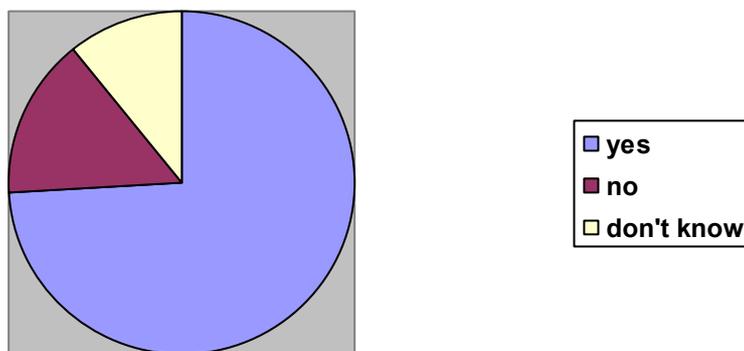


Young people in the village need somewhere they can go occasionally; it does not need to be formally organised but some kind of supervision would be necessary. Responses to the questionnaire revealed the following:

- A skate park for skate boards was favoured by 90% of 11-18 year olds.
- Transport was seen to be a big problem.
- Only a little over half of the 11-18 age group were concerned about their health.

The questionnaire sought confirmation on whether there is a need for a play area for children over 10. The following chart illustrates the response.

Need for a play area



How children get to school

There are almost equal numbers of children who walk, take the bus, or are driven to school.

Young peoples leisure activities

Young people were asked what sport and leisure activities they would like in the village. Of the 36 positive responses suggested a variety of sport related activities, including archery, badminton, rugby, girls football, a new sports pavilion, squash, swimming and a skate park. There was also a positive call for an occasional disco for teenagers and young people.

Conclusions

Shillingstone has changed over the years since the last parish plan was envisaged 20 years ago. It has more inhabitants and more houses; the school is respected and now secure; there are fewer people who work in the village and more people who commute to work; the main road has become busier with heavier traffic and fewer people farm.

The shape of the village itself is changing with more development at the southern end of the village rather than spread along the A357.

There was a good response to the Parish Plan Questionnaire. The majority of people who answered it had lived in the village for more than ten years, were over thirty and had chosen to live here. They felt strongly about the quality of life and the quality of the environment.

Their concerns were in the following order of importance:

1. Road safety round the school the shop and the Cross in particular a reduction of the number of lorries.
2. The need for a new school which would keep the small village school atmosphere.
3. The condition of the foot paths, a round village walk and a village directory about village activities.
4. Prevention of dog waste especially on the recreation ground.
5. Support for the Trailway and its links to Blandford and Sturminster Newton.
6. Need for a youth club and the provision of activities for youth.
7. No more large scale developments but small infilling with affordable housing.
8. A new sports pavilion but not a new hall unless it is attached to the school and is available for community use.
9. A desire for a variety of adult educational opportunities, hobbies and sporting clubs.
10. A regular doctor's surgery in the village and the availability of an NHS dentist in the area.
11. An interest in recycling a variety of things from composting to CDs DVDs books etc.
12. Most concerns about crime are about anti-social behaviour and vandalism.
13. More employment within the village.
14. Lack of transport for youth and those without cars.

These concerns have been translated into an action plan which will involve the Parish Council, the school governors, the Parochial Church Council, North Dorset District Council, Dorset County Council, the Local Health Authority, the Police authority, Bus companies, the Diocesan Board of Education, Wessex Homes and most importantly inhabitants of Shillingstone.

The Action Plan for Shillingstone

A draft action plan was printed in the Parish Magazine which is distributed to every household in the village, a date was set for its discussion and possible amendment by the village. About 50 people attended a meeting on 12th December 2006 to discuss the conclusions and possible actions. There was very little dissent the main concern being that the transport and education needs would not be met for a long time Below are the list of actions needed to carry out the parish plan and the organisations that will be involved in its implementation.

1. Transport People were very concerned about the following:

- Lack of pavements and the dangerous conditions on the roads near the school, the Cross and the Londis shop.
- Heavy lorries and their impact on village life.
- The lack of transport for those without cars and young people.

Actions 1 Ask the County Council to build pavements up the Knapps and widen the pavement where it is too narrow for two people to pass.

The Action Plan for Shillingstone Continued

Action 2 Ask the County Council to put signs South of Blandford and North of Stalbridge to direct heavy goods vehicles away from the A357 and A350

Action 3 Ask the County Council to put a weight, width or length restriction on Durweston Bridge.

Action 4 When repairing the road the DCC should put down a low noise surface. Reduce the speed of traffic through the middle of the village and enforce the speed limit with cameras rather than indicator boards.

Action 5 Ask the police to ensure that Wessex Homes lorries are always escorted. Wessex homes to be asked to move their vehicles only when school children are not vulnerable.

Action 6 Ask bus companies to publish clear timetables in prominent places and approach NORDCAT to help those who need transport on a regular basis

Action 7 Make bus use a pleasant experience rather than a miserable one by approaching the bus companies to rethink their strategies including providing bus shelters and seats at bus stops

2.Education There was a strong demand for a new school that retained the atmosphere of a small village school. The school should also be a community centre which caters for the needs of children before and after school, adult education classes, a play group and youth club

Action 1 Progress the need for a new school with local bodies particularly the School governors and PTA and the type of facilities they should plan for.

Action 2 Progress the need for a new school with the Diocesan Board of Education

Action 3 Progress the need for a new school with Dorset County Council Dept of Education.

3.Footpaths People were very enthusiastic about the foot paths in the village they supported the development of the Trailway to Blandford and Sturminster, and the round village walk. Their main concerns were dog waste on public footpaths and public open spaces.

Action 1 Inform the County Council and Countryside Rangers of the support for the Trailway and round village walk.

Action 2 Ask the County Council to build a car park at the northern end of the village on the land beside the trailway near the ramp up to the trailway so that visitors can use it

Action 3 Remind dog walkers of the anti social nature of dog waste in the wrong place.

Action 4 ask the District Council for more dog waste bins.

4.Sport and Leisure There was majority support for a new sports pavilion hall and support for a hall attached to the school and available for community use. Over half the village were in favour of this arrangement rather than a stand alone hall. Besides the need for a new pavilion people were interested in a variety of leisure activities in particular a garden club, a computer club, dance and aerobics, badminton, bowling and photography.

Action 1 Form a committee of those interested in building a new Sports Pavilion

Action 2 Approach sporting bodies, the County Council, local businesses and Sporting Charities for money to build the pavilion

Action 3 Convene a meeting of all those interested in the variety of clubs mentioned in the report e.g. gardening, computer, aerobics, photography and let them decide what they want to do. Some may need more funding and organisation than others.

Action 4 The Parish Council, village voluntary bodies and businesses liaise to produce a Village Directory.

5.Health There were two main health concerns. The majority felt the need for an NHS dentist in the locality and a part-time doctor's surgery in the village, particularly for those without transport.

Action 1 Approach the Primary Care Trust for North Dorset and ask for more NHS dentists in the area and for a local part-time surgery preferably staffed by the main practices in Blandford and Child Okeford.

6.Development Many people felt that the new development at White Pit was out of keeping with the rest of the village and too densely built. Many people did not want any further development in the village.

The Action Plan for Shillingstone Continued

The only type of housing they were prepared to support was small infilling with affordable housing.

Action 1 Inform the Planning Department of NDDC of the village's attitude to further new housing.

Action 2 Start consultation about a village design statement and set up a committee of interested people.

7. Crime People were mainly concerned about vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Police response times were slow in response to burglaries.

Action 1 Provide evidence of anti social behaviour and keep a log of individuals indulging in vandalism, graffiti or other unacceptable behaviour and hand it to the police.

Action 2 Ask for the community policeman to be available when known trouble makers gather in particular places.

8. Recycling The response to the opportunity to recycle/swap CDs, DVDs, books and children's toys was strong. People were also interested in composting.

Action 1 A time and place to be arranged monthly for those who want to swap various things If the hall is used a small charge to be made for the use of the hall.

Action 2 Composting should be organised with the allotment holders who will advise on the sort of items suitable for compost and an area where it can be stored.

9. Youth There is a strong demand for a youth club for those at secondary school.

Action 1. Find out if any one in the village is prepared to get together with other adults to run a youth club on a regular basis in the hall.

Action 2 If action 1 fails the Parish Council should approach the Youth Service in Sturminster and find out if a monthly or weekly meeting can be arranged in Shillingstone. Young people are very reluctant to go out of the village for youth club activities possibly because of transport difficulties.

Action 3 Install a play area for older children in the 9 to 13 year old age range with suitable equipment either in the recreation ground or beside Burtons' Orchard.



Shillingstone 2006/7

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