



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 4

Progress continues as members of our focus groups generate much more specific evidence and begin to outline the main subjects which are emerging as the issues that residents would like to see included for incorporation in the future Neighbourhood Plan to serve the five villages for the next 15 years or so.

The main subjects of interest remain traffic speed and danger along the main road, a valley cycleway, affordable housing and a village centre to serve the whole valley population.

Although we do now have a good number of people involved in what are becoming very interesting studies, we would still welcome more of you to come forward and join the discussion at the regular meetings, usually once a month for each group, when they plan actions to be undertaken for the period ahead.

We also have a need for a computer-literate secretary to the main working group for their monthly meetings to help record and distribute notes and information to those involved which helps them plan the work they undertake.

Do get in touch with me if you feel able to help in any of these spheres.

**John Browning
Working Group Chairman**

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Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people led by Malcolm Johnston *mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869*

We have been consulting and meeting with individuals and representatives across the community to gain ideas and support for the Neighbourhood Plan and have now identified various sites in the valley that may be suitable for a variety of uses including :

- low cost housing
- open market housing (or a mixture of the two)
- live/work units
- social facilities for the valley

If you know of a site that you think might be suitable for any of these uses please do get in touch as we need input from as many residents in the valley as possible.

We are currently organising a Housing Needs Survey to try to determine the housing needs for the valley over approximately the next ten years. This will not only look at the need for low cost housing but should indicate what other types of housing are wanted by the valley residents. The survey will be delivered to all households in the valley in the autumn and we would ask that everyone takes the time to look at it and complete and return, so that we can have a true picture of the housing needs.

Business and community needs

led by Ian Messer *elizabeth.ian.messer@gmail.com / 01300 348580*

We have carried out a survey of village businesses, leisure and tourism activities and an assessment of the companies and their work at the Piddlehinton Enterprise Park. The ongoing tenor of opinion we have gathered from the community suggests a range of objectives that need to be addressed :

- small business units and live/work dwellings to enable young local people to set up here in the Valley
- some additional holiday cottage units for growing tourism needs
- a survey of disused or underused workshop and industrial buildings and redundant farm buildings which can be converted, upgraded or replaced to provide accommodation for future workplaces or homes

- a large, covered area, central to the Valley villages to provide a much needed multi-purpose resource for community use, preferably with a green open space and parking nearby to help avoid some of the current expense of marquee hire, eg fetes and craft fairs, Garden Club shows, concerts, film nights, drama productions, dance, art exhibitions, farmers' market, Scouts, Guides, Brownies, dog shows, fitness classes, indoor sports and hiring out for revenue
- complementing the above, a secondary meeting space in each village for smaller groups to assemble such as a parish room

This is a focus group which still needs more help from interested residents, particularly in the next few months, so if you feel able to contribute some time, this will be much appreciated by the rest of the team. Please contact John Browning on 01300 348981.

Community energy generation and low energy design
led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Realising renewable energy generation opportunities in the Valley continues to be the main objective and its energy conservation to reduce running costs. Some progress and recommendations have been achieved but we would welcome help from more members of our community in this important subject for the future. Our objectives :

Hydropower

Potential locations on the River Piddle have been identified and visits to established hydropower projects are arranged to establish viability of our smaller river.

Solar

While the siting of the proposed Bourne Park solar array applications has minimal visual impact in the wider landscape, the capacity of the grid to accommodate further extensive photovoltaic arrays in the Valley is limited.

- include guidance in specifying and siting solar panels for domestic, business and live/work units

Reducing energy costs

- guidance and recommendations for residents on reducing heating and power costs

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Fuel from Woodland

Discussions continue with the Environment Group, the users and owners of woodland, to develop a community policy for fuel for use as logs or chippings within the community. Visits are planned in September to community projects elsewhere in Dorset which are up, running, viable and benefitting their neighbourhoods.

- create, if this proves viable, a management plan for the production of a community energy resource in conjunction with landowners and local employment, perhaps using a Valley co-ordinating body or trust

Wind turbines

It is clear that any large scale wind turbine application would gain little support, though it is recognised that individual owners may opt for a turbine if their siting is appropriate. Those interested in this subject should make contact with Dot Browning .

- include evidence for any small scale operation required in specific locations

Recycling initiatives

The Anaerobic Digester (AD) and Mole Valley Feed Mill take in commercial, organic and animal waste and the photovoltaic arrays will generate power at Bourne Park, leading the way in energy terms. We continue to explore possible community energy and recycling initiatives.

- establish whether any spare capacity can be taken up at Enterprise Park
- provide a collection point for plastic lids from milk and beverage cartons in large quantities for their reuse and reduce the amount of waste to landfill.
- encourage use of horse manure for allotments, gardens or brick production for biofuel stoves managed with woodland fuel.

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

The work of this focus group is well under way and has identified issues we need to set out for the Neighbourhood Plan :

- all future building development should be situated in the Valley bottom, in or adjacent to the existing development forming the five communities

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- protection of specific long distance views from future development areas where development may be appropriate for uses such as private and low-cost housing, business and recreational facilities
- future uses for redundant attractive and historic buildings where they can be protected by conversion for new, sustainable uses
- protection of green open spaces which add to the quality of the environment in which we live
- farming in the Piddle Valley is mainly well-structured in size and scale of enterprise; we need to recognise that additional buildings may be needed to allow expansion of farm activity and facilitate technological development; new buildings should be environmentally sustainable and designed in sympathy with their landscape setting
- prevent as far as possible, farm fragmentation that results in unviable businesses to avoid unnecessary damage to the landscape
- encourage the longer-term management of under-utilised woodland as a potential energy source and a valuable asset in protecting our landscapes
- encourage protection, management and replacement where necessary, of hedgerows as valuable wildlife corridors and important features of the landscape
- require the highest level of management to ensure protection of our 21 sites of Local Nature Interest, some of which are in good condition but others are deteriorating in their range of plant species
- set out ways to protect and enhance public access that increases visitor numbers and encourages business activity
- encourage restoration of fingerpost direction signs where necessary and remove unnecessary signage

Responses to these proposals for priorities and any other aspects you may feel we should address will be much appreciated and help to ensure we have wide acceptance of the Plan as it emerges.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

We are collecting broadband speeds for comparison so we would be glad if you can check and report your speed to Neil Herbert at sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk. – see the website : <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/superfast-dorset/check-broadband-speed>

Traffic speed, volume and danger to other road users is of great concern to many using the B3143 valley road. A draft report has been prepared using responses from the Parish Plan, the School Travel Plan and comments from village fetes and other events. It includes results of traffic surveys by Dorset County Council at Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide at the end of 2011, a recent survey by a resident of Alton Pancras and accident statistics from Dorset Roadsafte for the whole 15 mile length of the road from 2003-2013. A traffic survey for Rectory Road, Piddlehinton is to be carried out shortly by Dorset County Council.

A significant factor in relieving some of this risk will lie in the achievement of an up-graded bridle / cycleway along the Valley. This was one the most popular subjects mentioned in the Parish Plan attracting 74.9% support. It may not be generally realised that a bridleway shares the same designation as a cycleway and can be used by either mode but in its present state, its use is limited to dry periods and mountain bikes. Upgrading will not mean seeing tarmac or any other impervious material but one suited to ordinary bicycles, pedestrians and disabled scooters but not mechanically-propelled vehicles other than mobility units for disabled use - it would not be a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic). A meeting is scheduled in late August with Dorset County Council to discuss the feasibility of such a cycleway from Piddlehinton to Piddletrenthide with possible extension to Alton Pancras and beyond.

It appears that the main objectives of the Plan will be :

- the upgrading of the present bridleway to be more suitable for ordinary bicycles, not just for children but also for adult users, and disabled people
- Initiate action, with evidence for the Plan, in the mounting of warning speed signs along the road, produced by children living here in the valley, training and initiating other residents in a Speedwatch monitoring campaign in conjunction with police to encourage observation of the 30 mph speed restriction along the B3143

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- generate financial backing for a traffic management study of the B3143 by the traffic engineers responsible for the recent Roads in Dorset Villages Report; the intention being to produce worked evidence for measures to calm traffic at sensitive locations by environmental enhancement
- to bring forward improvement of broadband service speeds to all villages so far as it is technically feasible to do so

Much of the means for managing traffic speeds lies outside the control of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group but it is an issue which many people feel strongly about and we will do whatever we can to see that this is addressed.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan Timeframe

Responses from residents on plan structure described in this issue of PVNV	September / October 2013
Preparation of Draft	October / December 2013
Presentation to residents of Draft Plan	January / February 2014
Feedback incorporated in Plan	March / April 2014
Submission to West Dorset District Council	April 2014
Public Consultation (6 weeks)	May 2014
Further adjustments from public feedback	June 2014
Independent Examination	July / August 2014
Further adjustments after Examination	September 2014
Notification period for Referendum	October 2014
Final Publication and Referendum	November / December 2014