

STUDLEY VILLAGE PLAN

2007 – 2011

SUMMARY OVERVIEW

Dear Householder,

The Government wishes to give villages and rural communities a greater say in influencing the way in which their communities develop. To help this process, villages are encouraged to prepare and bring forward a 'Parish Plan' to cover a period of five years into the future.

Studley has now just completed and published its Parish Plan to 2011. We believe this Plan identifies issues which are currently important to the Village, and highlights opportunities that exist for improvement.

We consider it provides a framework for local government – the Parish Council and Stratford District Council – to understand what the residents of Studley would like them to focus on. This leaflet summarises the Plan, and its main recommendations.

Copies of the full Plan, which has now been endorsed by the Parish Council, can be seen and read in the Library and at the Village Hall.

Hazel Wright
Parish Plan Coordinator

'John Smith'
Parish Council

Consultation

Work on the Plan started with an Open day at the Parish Centre to understand and record the issues which most concerned people. This was followed up by a Survey Questionnaire, based upon the issues raised at the Open day, and delivered to every household in the Parish.

The results of the analysis of this questionnaire have formed the basis of the Action Plan, which forms the conclusion of the Parish Plan itself.

Highways and Traffic

Most residents of Studley, 89% of survey respondents, are concerned about traffic through the Village. The decision to cancel the proposed by-pass for the A435 North/South trunk road is a great disappointment. Traffic calming measures; a reduction in the speed limit on certain roads; and overall traffic reduction are considered essential aims of the Action Plan.

Parking

On-street parking is a problem in a number of areas; although off-street parking is considered adequate. The possibility of introducing some Resident Only Parking Zones is to be investigated. There is support for 'limited waiting' periods to be more strictly enforced; but no parking fees, or 'clamping'. The Parish Council is asked to raise with the relevant Highway Authority the sometimes 'unacceptable' attitude of traffic wardens.

Shopping

88% of survey respondents shop in Studley. Nevertheless there is concern that Studley is deteriorating as a retail centre. The community and the Parish Council with the help of SDC are urged to be pro-active to ensure that retail services can compete in the future with other local towns.

Local and Public Services

Footpaths and pavements are felt to be in need of maintenance and improvement.

Many adverse comments were received about the restricted availability of the public library and the possibility of using volunteers to extend the opening hours is to be investigated.

Police and Crime

There was an expressed high-level of concern about crime. Although this crime may only be of a minor

nature, the poor behaviour of a small number of people, which shows itself in anti-social behaviour, vandalism, and graffiti, detracts from the quality of life of very many villagers.

Continued sponsored support for the Community Police Officer; an increase in the coverage of Neighbourhood Watch (just over 100 people stated they would be prepared to join); and requests for further support from the 'Crime and Disorder Reduction Unit', the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer at SDC; and through PACT; are put forward in the Plan as ways to reduce significantly the effects of petty destructive crime on the Studley.

Sports facilities

Facilities for sport in general are considered satisfactory. However many people raised as an issue the high cost and restricted availability of the Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre to individual villagers.

Recommend that this concern to be discussed with Stratford DC.

The requested skate park is now being built.

Youth Provision

Replies to the questions on facilities and activities for the young people of the Village were many and varied. Some people believe that current facilities are under used, or abused; whilst an equal number believe that current facilities are dated and unattractive.

The Plan, therefore, makes no specific recommendations but suggests 'a Youth Council be formed under the umbrella of the Parish Council, and to include young people on it; to survey and analyse current available facilities and opportunities; and to relate these to surveyed young peoples aspirations and needs'.

Transport

Car usage in Studley is high. 83% of people have access to a vehicle during the day.

Slightly more than half the people replying feel that bus services are good or adequate. However services in the evening are almost non-existent;

services to Stratford and Birmingham are considered poor; and bus timetable information is hard to find.

Recommended, that comprehensive bus timetables are displayed at the Village Hall; that discussions take place with the bus company about improvements to services to Birmingham and Stratford; and that application be made to Warwickshire CC for grants towards the 'marginal' routes.

Housing Development

Studley is surrounded by 'Greenbelt', and except for one or two sites, future housing development is bound to be restricted, as long as current greenbelt rules remain in place. People of Studley value the surrounding countryside, and the fact that the current settlement is significantly contained within the triangle of Alcester Road, Bromsgrove Road, and Station Road/High Street.

The site at Priory Square between Alcester Road, Marble Alley, and High Street provides an opportunity for a significant and attractive development, which as well as being effective in its own right, can also enhance the local environment at the centre of the Village.

Recommended that the Parish Council in its planning representations, stress the need for high quality development; that the current village envelope is not extended; and that Studley remains wholly distinct from Redditch to the north.

Village Environment

The Survey confirmed that the environment of the Village and its surrounding countryside was very important to most (over 91%) of the people of Studley.

There was concern about the excessive traffic, particularly on the A435, litter, and a perceived deterioration of the retail centre. The new Village Hall received high ratings, but there was dissatisfaction with the appearance and condition of the other 'public buildings', the Library, the Health Centre, and the Youth Centre.

All 'Open Spaces' – Allotments, Graveyard, Play Area, Recreation Ground, Other 'Green Spaces' - were highly valued and were thought worthy of protection. A number of comments referred to the need for the children's playground equipment to be upgraded and made easily available to all children.

Opportunities for Regeneration

Studley is surrounded by pleasant countryside. There are some attractive old buildings and good pubs. In recent years there have been a number of pleasant new housing developments; our sports, play areas and open spaces are reasonable; and we have a wonderful new Village Hall.

However there is no doubt that the centre of our Village has a 'tired' look; and has not kept pace with the type of improvements that have happened in towns nearby.

The Youth Centre, Health Centre, and Library occupy a common area fronting onto High Street, next to the new Village Hall; and with the Pool Road car park to the rear. These buildings are of undistinguished 1960's architecture, are not suitable for modern needs, and are approaching the end of their useful lives.

The potential redevelopment of this area containing the Library, Medical Centre, and Youth Centre would

offer the opportunity to provide a Village Centre Square with rebuilt facilities alongside the modern Village Hall.

Ten years ago a consultant's report on the centre of Studley put forward changes to improve the environment of the areas around Alcester Road, High Street, and Marble Alley. Many of the ideas proposed then remain very relevant today.

Together with the current redevelopment of Priory Square the Studley Village Plan believes that a very significant long term improvement to the centre of our village would be achieved if the opportunities which will arise over the next five years can be taken imaginatively and constructively.

The Plan suggests that the Parish Council liaise with the various local government authorities to establish this opportunity for the future of Studley; and that a feasibility study be initiated into the redevelopment .

For the implementation of some of these ideas Studley will need to attract significant funding. Volunteer Groups have already shown that were we can, we are willing to solve problems ourselves; and this demonstrates to outside agencies the community spirit that exists within Studley. Our thanks to the volunteers.

Studley Parish Plan Steering Group 2007