

# SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH PLAN

April 2005



# Introduction



**S**hepton Beauchamp is an attractive village lying northeast of Ilminster between the Blackdown Hills and the Somerset Levels, with many of the 315 houses being built from local stone. It has a Saxon name 'sheep settlement' to which was added that of the Beauchamp family (pronounced 'Beecham') who held the manor with the barony of Hatch Beauchamp from the mid 12th century.

It passed to the Seymours in 1361, and Sir John Seymour lived here when Sheriff of Somerset 1515-16, possibly with his young daughter Jane, later third Queen of Henry VIII.

We have a thriving Post Office and Stores, an award winning Butchers shop, a Pub, two farm shops and a specialist clock and watch shop. The fine church of St. Michael dates from the late 13th century. Shepton Beauchamp First School (5 - 9 years) was highly praised in their last OFSTED report. There is an excellent Playgroup, Pre-Threes group and Parents and Toddlers.

Shepton Beauchamp has a good mix of social backgrounds, ages and new and old families. The village is a busy one, with enough people around during the day for our businesses to thrive. There is a real feeling of 'community' and local events are well supported.

## **SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH PLAN**

This Parish Plan represents a completely new approach to planning. Our mission has been to enable everyone within our community of Shepton Beauchamp to have a say on how our Parish should develop, and to produce a Parish Plan from these views which seeks to preserve, enhance and develop our village, aiming for a better quality of life for all.

- The first stage of making this Plan consisted of the well attended village meetings and the Parish Plan Tea Party. Over 200 of us came and provided the leads needed to put together the village Questionnaire.
- The second stage was the questionnaire itself, which went to every household. The response rate of 75% was extraordinary. A booklet

# Introduction

was then distributed to every household which summarised the questionnaire findings, and the full results were made available on the Internet. The results were also presented to over a hundred of us at the fun Bingo sessions.

- The third stage was the creation of several Action Groups to come up with specific plans for different areas of interest.

This booklet represents the fourth and final stage - the pulling together of all that you have told us to create our Parish Plan, for adoption by the Parish Council and presentation to external bodies for future funding and decision making.

**It is very clear that we all feel Shepton Beauchamp has a great deal going for it and our overriding wish is to preserve what we have. There are areas where important improvements can be made, but overall we do not want to see significant change.**

In this booklet, you will find our plans for each of eight areas of interest:

- Leisure, education and culture
- Communications
- Community safety
- Health, disability and age concerns
- Transport and traffic
- Housing
- Youth activities
- Local environment

We set out the objectives, actions and timescales for each of these areas, based on the consultations with everyone in our Community and the work done by the various Action Groups. We have already had some 'quick wins' - things that the Action Groups have been able to implement quickly.

Now we need to make it all happen and turn these plans into reality. Over the coming months, there will be opportunities for everyone to help.



*The Parish Plan Steering Group*

# Leisure, Education & Culture

- 'Retain Shepton's special character'
- 'Without the post office, village life would suffer'
- 'I always use the local shops when I can'
- 'We need a suitable sports hall'
- 'The village hall is over-used'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

- The Parish Plan questionnaire showed that 1 in 4 people have always lived here. The remainder have chosen Shepton, because it has many attractions
- The shops and pub are all well supported. Over a third of the population visit the Post Office/village store on a daily basis
- 90% feel the village school and playgroup are very important to the community
- 4 out of 5 parishioners feel the church is important to the community
- 1 in 3 people already belong to one of the village clubs and there is considerable interest also for other groups and events to be set up
- 45% believe the current sports and leisure facilities are inadequate
- 39% of the village think there is a need for adult education, preferably in the evening
- The village hall is fully utilised and has no room for new classes. It is unsuitable for sports activities

## OBJECTIVES

- To maintain the existing facilities in the village and retain the culture of the village by promoting local groups and by creating awareness of what is already here
- To provide people with space to perform additional activities
- To promote the MUGA (multi use games area) and the existing sports groups in the village and set up new clubs such as tennis and basketball
- To determine the feasibility of building a new sports facility and function room, with adequate parking facilities at an

# Leisure, Education & Culture

approved location within the village. This sports facility would complement the existing village hall situated in the heart of the village

- To develop more sports, leisure and educational activities and support local businesses within the village by organizing events such as:
  - ◆ annual fun run/street party/barn dance
  - ◆ a quarterly Village Produce and Craft Market
  - ◆ a Village Festival, once every two years, with events to include all the village clubs, societies, shops, pub, school and playgroup
  - ◆ an annual Bonfire Party
  - ◆ Bingo evenings and theatre trips
  - ◆ short educational courses such as flower arranging, computing, cake decorating, health and fitness and yoga

## QUICK WINS

As a result of what you told us, we have already:

- Put on a Shepton Bonfire Party (November 2004)
- Held a Shepton Christmas Produce and Craft Market (December 2004)

## ACTION PLAN

- Undertake a more comprehensive study of villagers' needs and aspirations with regard to educational courses, thereafter liaise with the Local Educational Authority, Adult Learning and Leisure, and Yeovil College in order to identify and contact tutors to run short-term courses from September 2005



# Leisure, Education & Culture

- Determine interest for a Fun Run Summer 2005 and also the scope for an organised running club in the parish
- Liaise with the Lethbridge Trust and Local Authority Sports Officers about setting up new sports groups and facilities at the recreation field, subject to a more in depth survey of parishioners' needs
- Set up a committee to oversee the funds and fund allocation of monies raised from all events. Local groups could apply to this committee for grants for specific needs. Money could also go towards the cost of the proposed new sports facility in the village
- Plan a programme of events such as bingo evenings, theatre trips and bonfire night
- Contact producers, organize and advertise the quarterly markets
- Contact village groups and societies about participation in a Village Festival Summer 2006 and contact external bodies for funding
- Hold an annual, or more frequent meeting, to allow all the existing groups in the village to meet together to discuss dates and funding ideas for joint beneficiary events within the village and produce a news sheet of the planned activities

Action	Target date
Plan for new sports groups and events such as Bingo, produce markets, Bonfire Party, encourage volunteers to help	Ongoing
Determine interest for a Fun Run in August 2005 and scope for organised running club	May 2005 / ongoing
Set up committee and account for monies raised	June 2005
Research villagers' needs/interest in educational courses, contact LEA etc. and prospective tutors	June 2005
Contact local groups/funding bodies about joint projects such as Village Festival in Summer 2006	September 2005 / ongoing
Investigate the feasibility of constructing a new sports facility in the parish within the next 10 years	December 2005

# Communications

'A village publication would be useful'

'We could do more with our website'

'I don't find out about things until it's too late'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

- Most people in the village (64%) feel reasonably well informed about what is going on in Shepton
- Shepton Stores window (36%), word of mouth (23%), and The Web magazine (20%) are the most useful sources of information
- 15% of residents however, feel badly informed
- 69% of people support the idea of a Shepton Beauchamp newsletter
- 54% of residents have access to the Internet at home, and an email address
- 48% of residents want a Shepton web site
- 38% of residents would like to be made aware of local activities by email, and 60 residents volunteered their email addresses

## OBJECTIVES

- To further improve communication within the village
- To retain traditional methods (paper through letterboxes), whilst introducing the use of internet/email

## QUICK WINS

As a result, we have already:

- Bought a banner for publicising village events
- Introduced a Shepton newsletter
- Issued the first local directory/what's on guide

# Communications

## ACTION PLAN

- Publish a Shepton newsletter, with 1 or 2 issues each year. In part a report by the Parish Council on their management of village affairs, the newsletter would seek to celebrate achievements, identify and discuss problems and describe plans
- Publish an annual local directory/what's on guide - designed to be pinned up at home, including emergency numbers and other useful information such as recycling centres, shop opening hours and the dates of major village events during the year
- Establish a village email database, starting with the addresses volunteered in the returned Parish Plan questionnaires. Devise an on-going means of recruiting others. A database comprising the officers/committee members of the Parish Council, village societies, clubs and organisations would also be established as a primary contact group within the village
- Develop the role and content of the Shepton web site. The Parish Council minutes and agenda are already included. Encourage regular contributions - for example fixture lists, results, reports and photos of village events
- Form a communications volunteer group to undertake this action plan
- Find a sustainable means of funding the action plan

Action	Target date
Form a volunteer group to undertake the work	Ongoing / March 2005
Publish a Shepton Newsletter	Ongoing / once or twice a year
Develop the role of the Shepton Web site	Ongoing
Agree a sustainable funding plan	Ongoing
Publish a Local Directory	Annually / January
Establish the village email database	March 2005

# Community Safety

'Re-introduce the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme'

'We never see a policeman – we need more police visits'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

- 7 out of 10 people think police coverage in Shepton Beauchamp is poor
- 27% of people are worried by theft within the village, 18% are worried about vandalism and 13% are concerned about car crime
- 36% say their home is within a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme area, but surprisingly 45% didn't know whether their home was covered
- 1 in 5 people already belong to a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and a further 45% would like to do so

## OBJECTIVES

- To improve community safety within the Parish

## ACTION PLAN

- Rejuvenate Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, to improve community safety and community spirit
- Publicise 'local bobby's' details and timetable for 'Bobby Van' visits, to establish a local police contact due to the lack of frequent patrols within the Parish

Action	Target date
Publish list of police contacts	April 2005
Reactivate Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	June 2005

# Health, Disability & Age Concerns

'I have real difficulty getting to the doctors'

'The pavements are dangerous and need repair'

'People look out for each other'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

- 30% of the population is over the age of 60
- 26 people in the village are informal carers
- 61 people in the village find pavements and crossings difficult
- 49 people have health issues that affect their daily life

## OBJECTIVES

- To determine the feasibility of a local health surgery in the village
- To have prescription collection for local surgeries
- To encourage better interaction between the different ages in the village
- To adopt a good neighbour scheme
- To look at more effective transport
- To investigate the feasibility of sharing the Buttle Close laundry facilities

## QUICK WINS

- The playgroup performed its Christmas play at Buttle Close (December 2004)
- The Community room recently hosted a Christening party

# Health, Disability & Age Concerns

## ACTION PLAN

- Liaise with Buttle Close and local doctors to determine the feasibility of holding a local surgery in the Community room
- Ensure the continuation of prescription collection from the medical centre in Ilminster and set up the same for South Petherton
- Liaise with all groups in the village (including the playgroup and school) to promote better interaction with Buttle Close residents and encourage the use of facilities. The residents are keen to host local groups
- Contact other parishes to determine the feasibility of a introducing a good neighbour scheme
- Look long term at issues such as support for carers
- Look at issues affecting those with health concerns and consider the need for long term supports, such as laundry and bus services



Action	Target date
Set up a group to look at issues for carers and those with health concerns	Ongoing
Contact local doctors and chemists about prescription collection service, organise rota of volunteers	April 2005
Contact local groups to look at greater interaction with Buttle Close	June 2005
Establish a working group to look at good neighbour schemes	September 2005
Investigate the feasibility of local surgery within the next two years	December 2005

# Transport & Traffic

'Let's reduce traffic congestion with more off-road parking'

'Speeding cars are dangerous'

'I don't know enough about the bus services'

'... you might be able to get to places ... coming back is another matter!'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

### About Traffic:

- The car is the main mode of transport for 84% of people, although 1 in 10 households do not have a car
- 54% of people think the roads in Shepton Beauchamp are poor
- 71% of car owners park their cars in their own driveways or garage with only 22% parking on the road
- 1 in 5 people have the occasional parking problem
- 32% of residents welcome the idea of more off road parking
- A 20mph speed limit through the village is popular with 1 in 5
- Whilst 53% of people think the pavements are reasonable, 40% think they are poor
- 36% of residents would support a 'walking bus scheme' to the school

### About Public Transport:

- Only 1 person in 6 ever uses the bus
- Only 5 people rely on it for everyday use
- Only 3.5% of people rated the bus routes as being good
- Only 2% of people thought that the frequency of the buses was good with only 6% thinking the service reliable

## OBJECTIVES

- To influence Somerset County Council Highways Department to maintain roads more effectively

# Transport & Traffic

- To lobby Somerset County Council Highways Department to install appropriate traffic calming measures within Shepton Beauchamp
- To reduce traffic congestion within the village especially at peak times by providing teachers with off road parking facilities and encouraging the use of the 'Walking Bus Scheme' to the primary school
- To continue to lobby Somerset County Council for improvements to pavements, structure and surface maintenance with additional pavement facilities to be provided in Lambrook Road
- To publicise current public transport availability and to lobby private and public bodies for the improvement of frequency and destination choice to and from the village
- To lobby South Somerset District Council, Area North's Planning Department and Somerset County Council to apply a planning condition for road improvements and a reduced speed limit to the Shepton Beauchamp link road

## ACTION PLAN

- Set up a stand-alone traffic and roads group, to enhance Parish Council awareness of relevant issues and to gather information and take forward improvement initiatives
- Introduce and advertise an updated bus timetable specific to Shepton Beauchamp, to make the parish more aware of the bus availability to encourage their greater use and to improve service
- Carry out an annual 'pavement survey', to obtain an accurate measure of condition of pavements to amplify requests from Parish Council for repairs
- Carry out and publicise a traffic flow and speed survey around the school area, to obtain evidence to support reduction in the speed limit from the school to The Shambles
- Set up a walking bus scheme to primary school, to create a safe and environmentally friendly way of reducing traffic congestion



# Transport & Traffic

- Submit formal letter to Somerset County Council Highways and South Somerset District Council Planning Departments to insist on S106 agreements with regard to speed restrictions and road improvements on link road to be attached to any further expansion of Branstons. Improvements to be encouraged in stand-alone capacity, also to ensure that the flow of traffic to and from the village is managed in a safer manner with road speed having been reduced
- Create off road parking for school teachers, to improve traffic congestion at peak times around the school area
- Implement informal speed signage, to raise people's awareness of their speed



Action	Target date
Set up traffic and roads group	June 2005
Set up Walking Bus Scheme group	September 2005
Publish Shepton Beauchamp bus timetable	September 2005 / ongoing
Submit formal letter to Authorities regarding speed restrictions and improvements to link road	September 2005 / ongoing
Create off road parking for teachers	September 2005
Carry out traffic flow survey	November 2005
Establish pavement survey	Annually/ November
Implement informal speed signage	March 2006

'Too many houses would cause the village to lose its special feel'

'The village has grown enormously over the past 15 years – it's big enough'

'Young people can't afford to stay in the village'

'Wouldn't mind limited development provided the village can take it'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

Our consultation was in two stages - the Parish Plan questionnaire, which asked general questions on housing and a Housing Needs Survey undertaken by the Community Council for Somerset, which was designed to identify the need for affordable housing in the village.

We know from the 244 completed Parish Plan questionnaires that:

- People do not want much more building in the village
- 80% of villagers own their own homes
- 50% of the population has lived here more than 10 years
- 25% of the population has lived here all their lives
- Whilst 39% of people definitely do not want any more houses to be built, 47% would welcome some limited development with an emphasis on accommodation for young people and small family homes

In addition:

- Many villagers (57%) would like mains gas to be available
- 39% would be interested in a bulk purchase scheme for oil
- 25 homes suffer occasionally from flooding

From the 131 completed Housing Needs Surveys, we found that:

- The population of Shepton Beauchamp is more aged than the average for South Somerset
- The majority of housing is suitable for families and there is a good stock of smaller homes, but affordability is clearly a major factor.

# Housing

86% said they would be in favour of additional affordable housing being provided within the parish for local people

- In relation to many of Somerset's villages, the proportion of rented accommodation is relatively high
- There is a small need for affordable housing of about two units

The full Housing Needs Survey report, issued September 2004, states that some of those who completed the "housing need" section of the survey should be able to resolve their housing needs on the open market. Whilst a small need for affordable housing was identified, there is not sufficient need, on a parish basis, to justify a new-build development of social rented/shared ownership accommodation.

The Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time and should be reviewed from time to time.

## OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that Shepton Beauchamp only has limited housing development
- To influence future development so that any building is sympathetic in style and materials
- To balance the needs of further housing with the village infrastructure
- To keep abreast of future needs for affordable housing

## ACTION PLAN

- Produce and publish a Village Design Statement that adopts a policy towards new housing in line with the views expressed by parishioners that there should be no substantial development in the Parish. The Design Statement should also give guidelines on conservation and on style and materials that developers, landlords and landowners should follow



# Housing

- Examine current housing and planning policies to ensure these reflect villagers' views
- Conduct a Housing Needs Survey every five years to ensure needs are regularly monitored
- Initiate a survey of young people (18 - 25 years old) to ascertain future housing needs
- Consult with gas suppliers about bringing gas to the village
- A bulk purchase scheme for oil already exists and is being publicised, no further action needed
- Monitor the measures that have been taken to address flooding in the village, to ensure enough has been done

The Parish Council will undertake these activities.



Action	Target date
Monitor flooding	Ongoing
Examine current housing/planning policies	June 2005
Consult with gas suppliers	July 2005
Conduct survey of young people's housing needs	January 2006
Produce Village Design statement	December 2006
Conduct Housing Needs Survey	Every 5 years

# Youth Activities

'There's not a lot to do'

'How about a mountain-bike track around the allotment field?'

'We need better facilities for 8 - 18 year olds'

'The playground does need improving'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

Our consultation was in two stages - in addition to the Parish Plan questionnaire, which went to every household, a separate youth questionnaire was given to all the young people of the village.

The Parish Plan questionnaire shows that:

- More activities are needed for the youth of the village
- An astounding 86 people want a mountain bike/BMX track in the village
- 43 people would like to have a skateboard park located in the village

The youth questionnaire highlighted:

- An urgent need for somewhere that young people could meet with their friends on a regular basis

## OBJECTIVES

- To provide a range of youth activities to meet the needs of our young people
- To encourage further support and integration of the playgroup and school
- To investigate the feasibility of building a BMX track and a skateboard park at suitable locations in the village
- To promote the Youth Group and encourage new members
- To encourage more volunteers to assist in the running of the Youth Group

# Youth Activities

- To improve the facilities and provide more equipment for the children and young people of the community

## QUICK WINS

- Inauguration of our own Youth Group (The Drop In Centre) January 2004, which meets on Tuesday evenings at the old Pavilion at the recreation field
- The children of the village rallied together and enthusiastically helped to clean and paint the building themselves
- Residents donated money (£378) and equipment for use at the premises
- New lighting has been installed at the recreation field
- A new pathway has been laid at the recreation field
- 53 children now attend regularly
- The club is self-financing. In addition, the Youth Group has raised a further £660 through sponsorship and events

## ACTION PLAN

- Publicise activities, promote the Youth Group and encourage new members
- Recruit more volunteers to assist in the running of the Youth Group
- Organise a Youth Dance/Disco and other activities
- Hold an annual meeting, inviting parents of young people to meet and discuss organised youth events and organisation
- Meet with school staff and governors to determine opportunities for joint projects such as an after school club
- Meet with playgroup staff to determine opportunities for joint projects
- Determine the support for a Summer play scheme using the South Somerset District Council Play Bus



# Youth Activities

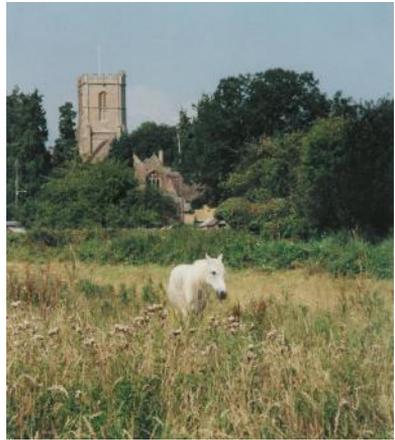
- Liaise with young people, the Parish Council, potential funders and other key stakeholders to determine the feasibility of and location for a BMX track and skateboard park
- Endeavour to improve the facilities and provide more equipment for the children and young people of the community



Action	Target date
Promote the Youth Group, encourage new members and more volunteers	Ongoing
Organise Youth Disco and other activities	Ongoing
Improve facilities and provide additional equipment	Ongoing
Meet with school staff/governors to consider joint projects	June 2005
Meet with playgroup staff to consider joint projects	June 2005
Implement a Summer play scheme	July 2005
Organise parents' meeting to discuss youth events	September 2005
Investigate feasibility of BMX track and skateboard park	Spring 2006

# Local Environment

- 'Keep the green belt round our village'
- 'We need a group to tackle local issues'
- 'Make footpaths easier for the elderly'



## CONSULTATION RESULTS

- 3 out of 5 people feel that more could be done to encourage and preserve wildlife
- 28% of people use the footpaths on a daily basis, a further 20% use them weekly. Many said they need to be more accessible
- 48% of people think creating bridle paths round the village a good idea

## OBJECTIVES

- To encourage people of all ages to be actively involved with the local environment
- To encourage and preserve wildlife in the locality
- To encourage the use of traditional land management skills where possible to enhance the natural habitats that already exist
- To create a nature reserve within the village
- To improve the quality and increase awareness of footpaths and bridleways

## ACTION PLAN

- Determine the feasibility of turning what is known as the water field (Cowleaze) into a nature reserve, with guidance from South Somerset District Council's conservation team and the Somerset Wildlife trust. The reserve will provide a quiet place for people to spend time. Produce a draft plan of the reserve, ask villagers for their thoughts and ideas before implementing proposals

# Local Environment

- Create a sensory and educational garden that the playgroup could use as well as those with disabilities and with special needs
- Introduce planting at the Shepton Beauchamp village signs
- Invite guest speakers to give presentations on how to be actively involved with the local environment
- Promote the work of the Environment Group and encourage new members and volunteers to join. Aim to involve all other groups and organisations within the village
- Establish regular contact with the local councils to review the condition of footpaths and enable maintenance to be carried out when required
- Investigate the feasibility of creating local bridle paths



Action	Target date
Promote the Environment Group, encourage new members and volunteers	Ongoing
Liaise with councils over footpaths	Ongoing
Introduce planting at village signs	September 2005
Create sensory garden	December 2005 / ongoing
Investigate feasibility of bridle paths	December 2005
Investigate feasibility and draw up plans for the nature reserve, implementation Summer 2006	December 2005

# Where do we go from here?

Work has already started on many of these projects and a number of Action Groups have been set up. However, these things can only happen if we all help. *This is your chance to make a difference.* If there are any projects in the Plan that take your interest, please let one of the Steering Group know, email the Group at [parishplan@bakerycomputing.co.uk](mailto:parishplan@bakerycomputing.co.uk) or contact the Clerk to the Parish Council:

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## Members of the Steering Group

Terry Bate, Lucy Blows, Jan De Caux, Jackie Priddle, Sharon Roberts, Fiona Rowsell, Debbie Welch, Brian Whalan, with help from Emily Winter.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Available from the Clerk to the Parish Council:

- Large print version of this booklet
- Copies of "Shepton Beauchamp Housing Needs Report"
- The booklet summarising the results from the Shepton Beauchamp Parish Plan Questionnaire
- The complete set of results from the questionnaire

Available on the web:

- The complete set of results from the questionnaire by accessing [www.xposition.co.uk/parishplan/](http://www.xposition.co.uk/parishplan/)

The Shepton Beauchamp Parish Plan Steering Group would like to acknowledge the following for their support in the creation of the Parish Plan:

