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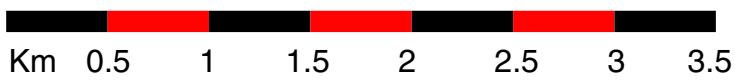
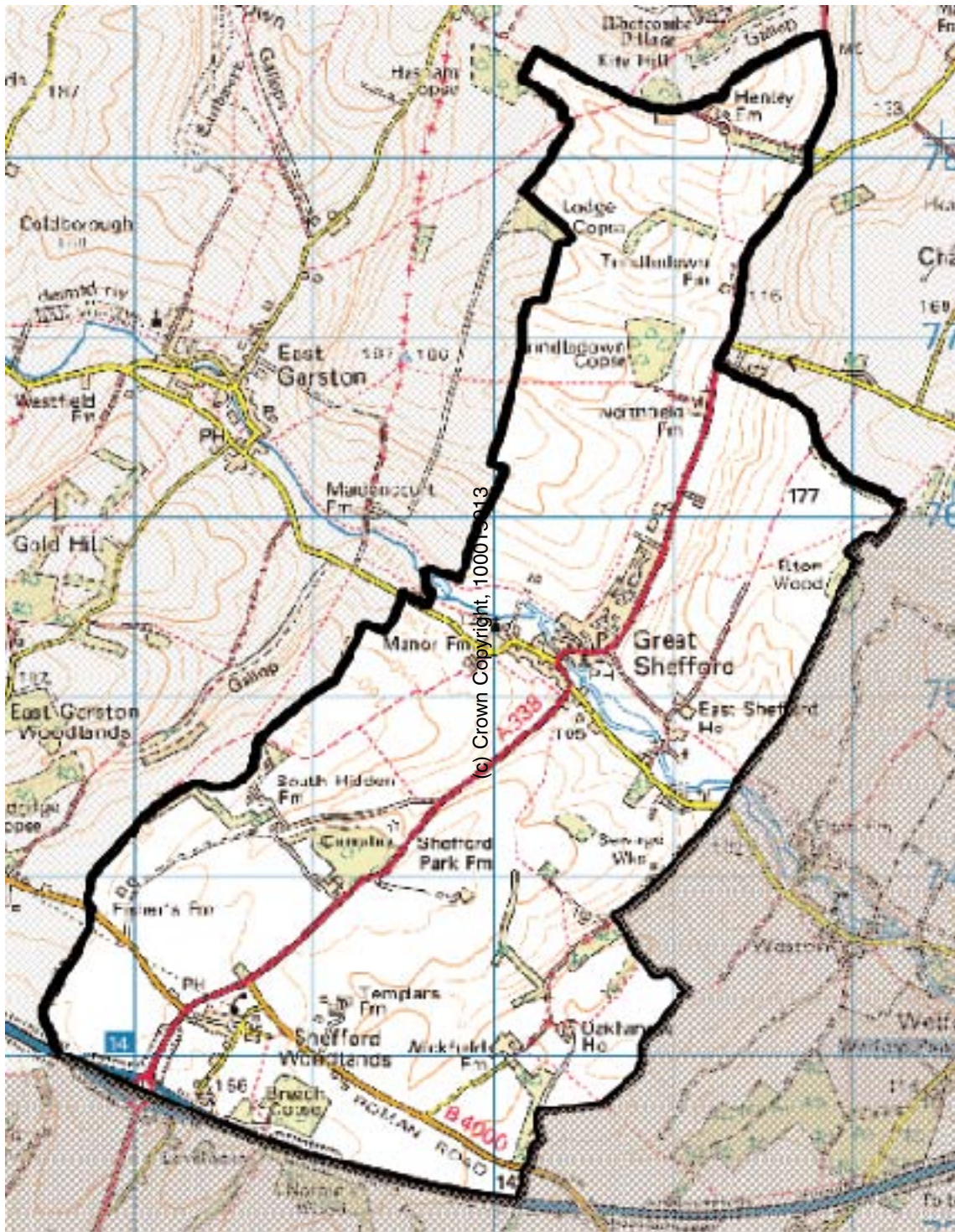
Great Shefford Parish Plan



One copy delivered to each household in the Parish
Additional copies £5

This Parish Plan can be downloaded from www.greatshefford.org.uk or from www.westberks.gov.uk

Great Shefford Parish



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This Plan is the result of work stretching over more than three years from the time that the Parish Council set the wheels in motion in 2003. With a community project such as this, when already busy people give up their scarce spare time to make their contribution, it is inevitable that progress has been at times slower than our original naive and optimistic estimates. We suffered early setbacks, but the pace has quickened since mid-2005. We have got there in the end, and our community has already benefited from the teamwork involved.

Many people gave freely of their time and energy to making this Plan possible. It is not possible to name everyone involved, but Great Shefford Parish Council would like to give heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the work of the Steering Committee and individual Working Groups. Their work will make a significant difference to tackling important issues on behalf of all who live or work in our Parish. Other numerous volunteers also gave sterling service delivering and collecting questionnaires and willing hands for initiatives such as the "Litter Pick". The expertise contributed by all the Villagers was considerable, with the majority of the work for the Plan being accomplished "In-House".

Individuals who made a particular contribution include John Turton for pioneering the Questionnaire, Liz Saunders, our Village Archivist, with her unparalleled knowledge of our history, Serena Nickson who used her artistic background to tackle the photographs and design work for the Plan, and Jane Turton who did much of the research and drafting for the "Parish Today" section. Andy Sleight, who led two Working Groups, Alick Natton who tackled our environmental issues, Kingsley Harniman our passionate advocate for road safety, and Nikki Robinson, who not only led a Working Group and worked on the Youth Consultation, but acted as the general Secretary for the whole process. Difficult issues of questionnaire analysis and presentation of results were ably tackled by Jenny and Richard Whitteron. Finally, much of the editing work was undertaken by Liz Bell, who collected everyone's contributions and assembled the Plan.

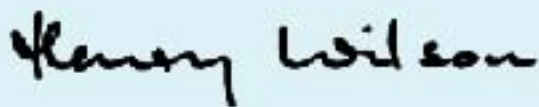
It would also not have been possible without the support of other people and organisations. Sarah Ward, the Parish Plan Development Officer of Community Action West Berkshire, has been a constant source of guidance throughout the process. Her advice and encouragement were invaluable. Greenham Common Trust has been very generous, providing Parish Appraisal Questionnaire Software, help with printing the Questionnaire and with Data Input and Analysis, and Graphic Design during the publication process. It is hard to imagine how the project could have happened without them and we would like especially to thank Melissa Elliott and Teresa Newson. Mo Brickwood and Debbie Openshaw at the Downlands Youth Network have inspired and helped us with the Youth Consultation, enabling our young people to make a

positive input to the planning process and who are now helping us to set up a Youth Club and to improve the football facilities. Richard Clarke and Huw Williams of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty have given us valuable counsel. West Berkshire Council have been supportive throughout, giving us a great deal of advice and assistance with issues such as access to maps and guidance on how best they could help us to achieve our objectives. Our thanks go to Carole Ruse, our Liaison Officer at the Council.

Other Parish Plan Groups, including Aldermaston and Compton, assisted with advice based on their experiences. It is always much easier to follow a path well trodden by people before you, their Plans were an inspiration to us and set high standards for us to follow. We were very grateful for the grant money we received, DEFRA/Community Council for Berkshire giving us £1000 and Awards for All (National Lottery) £2560. Many individuals not only gave their time, but also generously used their own computers, stationery, telephones and vehicles. The Pheasant and Swan Inns each donated prizes of dinner for two in a Questionnaire draw contributing to the very high response rates that we received.

Finally, perhaps one of the best ways to show our appreciation for all the help we received is to say that we hope other villages that have not yet prepared a Plan will go through the same process. We will be very pleased to share our experiences with them.

This, of course is not an end but a beginning. We now have a Plan to help us in Great Shefford Parish to meet the challenges and opportunities of the next few years. In preparing the Plan we have forged links with other organisations in West Berkshire and beyond, and it is now up to all of us in the Parish, with their help, to achieve the objectives and aspirations which we have set ourselves.



Henry Wilson
Chairman
Great Shefford Parish Council
Parish Plan Steering Committee

January 2007



Why Have a Parish Plan?

The Government is encouraging local communities to take more control of their own lives, to say what they want doing in their own neighbourhoods, and to engage with other powers to get it done. The Plan is a statement of how our community sees itself developing over the next ten years. It will provide a means of influencing decisions on planning and community strategies and be a basis for action by people in the Parish. The Statutory Planning System has recently undergone some major changes. West Berkshire Council is preparing the new Local Development Framework. Community involvement will be at the heart of this new system and the planning policies will be expected to meet community aspirations. Our aim throughout has been to

- ✧ identify our aspirations and likes and dislikes
- ✧ take stock of the Parish of Great Shefford
- ✧ enhance community involvement
- ✧ develop a sense of direction
- ✧ influence our own future.

The Steering Committee

The initial Steering Committee was established in 2003. Unfortunately the Countryside Agency withdrew its financial support for Parish Plans and the project was put temporarily on hold. During 2004 the Steering Committee continued to develop the Parish Survey, and held a consultation exercise at the Village Fayre in July.

Less progress was made in the early months of 2005 owing to other commitments of members of the Steering Committee, but the Survey was developed in late summer with the active involvement of Parish Councillors.

At two public meetings held in November 2005 a strategy for the Parish Plan exercise was decided and volunteers were invited to form a new Steering Committee. The role of the Steering Committee was to review the results of the Parish Survey, to promote discussion at public meetings and other fora, decide on any further consultations required, follow up issues raised in the Survey, identify costs, agree the budget and raise any necessary funding, and to prepare and distribute the final Parish Plan report. Regular Steering Committee meetings were held in 2006.

Funding

The Parish Council successfully applied for funding for the preparation and publication of the Parish Plan. £1000 was awarded under the Community Council for Berkshire / DEFRA Parish Plan Grant Scheme, and £2560 was received from the National Lottery Awards for All programme. Great Shefford Parish Council authorised the expenditure of £500 on the project.

In addition, help in kind was received from Greenham Common Trust who supplied the Parish Questionnaire computer software, printed the forms, analysed the survey results and provided graphic design services for the final report.



The Consultation Processes

For a Parish Plan to be robust and credible, it must reflect the views of the whole Parish Community. Therefore a Household Survey questionnaire was developed by the Steering Committee to give everyone a chance to share ideas about living and working in the Parish. This was based on well proven University of Gloucester "Village Appraisal" software customised to Great Shefford's needs.

The questionnaire for the Household Survey was developed over an extended period starting in 2003 and the resulting forms distributed to all households (over 390) in November 2005. The response rate exceeded 76%, so the results can be regarded as a true reflection of the opinions of the inhabitants of the Parish.

Following the analysis of the Household Questionnaire by the Greenham Common Trust, the results were presented at the Public Meeting in January 2006 where parishioners were given the opportunity to discuss and prioritise issues to be taken forward for action. A number of Working Groups were established to follow up all the issues raised. A consultation with young people in the Parish was also undertaken by the Downland Youth Network. Separate small groups of 8 to 13 year-olds and 14 to 17 year-olds participated in informal discussions in March 2006 and subsequently presented their proposals to the Steering Committee. An additional Traffic Survey was also conducted by the Traffic, Highways and Public Transport Working Group.

It was considered important to give our business community a chance to participate in developing the Parish Plan. A supplementary Business Survey was sent to 28 businesses in the Parish and 21 responses were received (75%). The Household and Business Questionnaire results were posted on the Parish Council Website.

Working Groups

Six specific topic areas were identified by the Steering Committee and Working Groups were set up for each one, together with a Group which concentrated on production of the final report. The conclusions of the Working Groups are set out in the Key Issues and Action Plan sections. Working Group findings and Action Plans were displayed at the Great Shefford Country Fayre in August 2006.

Finalisation of the Plan

Potential actions identified by the Working Groups were discussed with West Berkshire Council and other partner organisations in the Autumn of 2006 and ratified by the Parish Council on 2nd November 2006. The Plan was presented to the Downlands Area Forum on the 16th January 2007 for adoption and then published. This was followed up by a Community Presentation and Launch of the Implementation Programme at the end of January 2007.



Members of the Steering Committee and Working Groups and Contributors

Steering Committee Co-ordinators: Henry Wilson and Nikki Robinson

Working Group Co-ordinators: Village Amenities and Facilities (Andrew Sleigh); Social Issues (Nikki Robinson); Planning Issues (Andrew Sleigh); Environmental Issues (Alick Natton); Traffic, Highways and Public Transport (Kingsley Harniman); Business Issues (Henry Wilson); Report Production (Liz Bell).

Membership of Steering Committee and Working Groups and other Contributors included: Roy Bailey, Lisa Birtwhistle, Linda Bowden, George Fry, Stephanie Griffiths, Lister Hickson, Beryl Jones, Audrey Kelly, Jackie Langford, Jeremy Nickson, Serena Nickson, Liz Saunders, Linda Taylor, Jane Turton, John Turton, Karen Turvey, Jenny Whitteron, Richard Whitteron, Angie Williams and Samantha Williams.

Period	Action
2003	Meetings of initial Steering Committee
2004	Preparation of draft Household Survey Investigated Funding Offer of assistance acquired from Greenham Common Trust
July to September 2005	Steering Committee completed Household Survey Trial run of Survey and final modifications made
October 2005	Household Survey printed by Greenham Common Trust
November 2005	Household Survey distributed and collected Sent to Greenham Common Trust for analysis
November 2005	Two open meetings held to establish Steering Committee, to establish strategy and to expand participation in Working Groups on six identified topic areas
December 2005 January 2006	Funding applications successfully submitted to Community Council for Berkshire / DEFRA (£1000) and to Awards for All (£2560)
January 2006	Household Survey results received Public meeting held to present questionnaire results in Great Shefford Business Survey questionnaire planned, distributed and collected Steering Committee meeting
February 2006	Public meeting held to present Household Survey results in Shefford Woodlands Steering Committee meeting Business Survey data analysed Writing of background sections started
March 2006	Youth consultation exercise by Downlands Youth Network Steering Committee meeting

Period	Action
April 2006	Steering Committee meeting and senior Youth Group presentation Started to prepare Action Plans
May 2006	Steering Committee meeting and junior Youth Group presentation Highways and Traffic Survey planned and distributed
June 2006	Steering Committee meeting Action Plans discussed
July 2006	Steering Committee Meeting Action Plans discussed
August 2006	Steering Committee Meeting Display of Working Group findings and Action Plans at Great Shefford Country Fayre Action Plans discussed with West Berkshire Council
September 2006	Action Plans finalised
October 2006	Draft Plan circulated to West Berkshire Council, North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Community Action West Berkshire and other partner organisations for comment
November 2006	Final Draft Plan approved by Great Shefford Parish Council
December 2006	Design Work by Greenham Common Trust
January 2007	Plan presented to Downlands Area Forum for approval Parish Plan Community Presentation and Launch of Implementation Programme



THE PARISH TODAY

Introduction

The Parish of Great Shefford comprises Great Shefford village itself, the hamlets of Shefford Woodlands and East Shefford and a number of outlying farms. It is set in beautiful countryside that is part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area is able to offer a rural setting lifestyle for those who choose to live there.

The village of Great Shefford is situated in the Lambourn Valley on the Berkshire Downs where the A338 crosses the river Lambourn. It lies just under 2 miles north of Junction 14 of the M4 motorway which provides direct access east to London and west to Bristol. There are also good routes to Southampton, Oxford and the Midlands via the A34 and the M40. These good transport links have attracted a commuting population who venture every day to such destinations as London and Bristol and have encouraged businesses to locate within the Parish. Those wishing to travel by train can choose between the stations in Hungerford, Newbury, Didcot and Swindon. Unfortunately, only Newbury can easily be reached by public transport.

The B4000 follows the route of the Roman road known as Ermin Street from east to west at the southern end of the Parish and along it for some two miles stretches the settlement of Shefford Woodlands. The main concentration of houses is around the crossroads with the old Hungerford - Wantage road, but since the construction of the M4 motorway (which forms the southern boundary of the Parish), this part of the hamlet has been closed to through traffic, but not to the blight of motorway noise. Shefford Woodlands is served by the small church of St. Stephen's and the Pheasant Inn but has no other facilities. Wickfield is an outlying settlement, formerly agricultural, with some seven dwellings and a small commercial business park. Because of their location, residents at this end of the Parish tend not to look to Great Shefford village for entertainment, services or facilities.



Over 950 people live in the Parish, in some 370 households, the majority of which are owner-occupied and detached or semi-detached. The Parish has its share of "character" housing with several centuries-old, thatched houses. In addition to the traditional village activities of farming and breeding racehorses, the area has attracted many local small businesses such as a micro-brewery, suppliers of equine equipment, and a variety of service and light industrial businesses. With the advent of broadband, a new trend in working patterns has emerged over the past couple of years with many former commuters now having the flexibility to be able to work from home wherever this is possible and feasible. The village has a good community spirit, combining a strong sense of tradition with a welcoming attitude towards newer residents from outside the area.

Environment and Wildlife

In terms of biodiversity, one of the most striking features of Great Shefford is the River Lambourn, the whole of which has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It is a chalk bourn rising near the village of Lambourn and flowing 26km through the downs to the River Kennet at Newbury. Higher up the valley its flow is seasonal, but from Great Shefford downstream it flows year-round. The river supports brown trout (*Salmo trutta fario*) and grayling (*Thymallus thymallus*). In addition to common species of aquatic flora, such as water crowfoot (*Ranunculus penicillatus*) and lesser water parsnip (*Berula erecta*), the river also supports rarer species including horned pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) and opposite-leaved pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*). Dry arable fields support some relatively rare species including corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*), narrow leaved pepperwort (*Lepidium ruderales*) and red hemp nettle (*Galeopsis angustifolia*). Local woodlands support sparse populations of herb paris (*Paris quadrifolia*). Red kites (*Milvus milvus*) are regularly seen over the village, while sharp eyed observers may be lucky enough to see a sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*). Other wildlife such as foxes, deer, hares and badgers are also commonly seen.

Facilities and Amenities

Great Shefford village has a primary school, a public house, churches, a village shop, a petrol station, a garage, a village hall, a social club and a recreation ground. There is even an astronomical observatory in a private garden.

Shefford School is situated amongst newer housing in the northern part of the village. It currently has about 40 pupils, many of whom are able to walk there. There are many thriving out-of-hours school clubs such as chess and football, mainly run by a combination of teachers and local volunteers, and the School Community Task Force regularly organises events to foster links between the school and the community. Shefford School is rapidly overcoming the problems from which it has suffered in recent years and has recently combined administratively with another Church of England school, St. Andrew's at Chaddleworth to create the first federated school in West Berkshire.

The Swan is a popular pub situated in Great Shefford where the A338 crosses the river and it has a riverside terrace. The Pheasant on Ermin Street, Shefford Woodlands, has a thriving local and passing trade. The Village Shop and the Petrol Station are much appreciated local amenities.

The Village Hall, administered by a committee consisting of representatives of all organisations in the village and responsible to the Charities Commission, has recently been renovated and its facilities include an up-to-date kitchen and a car park. It is frequently used by the Under 5s and Brownies, and hosts many local meetings such as the monthly Parish Council meeting. The building also houses the Social Club which has been popular, but is currently suffering a declining membership.

Churches

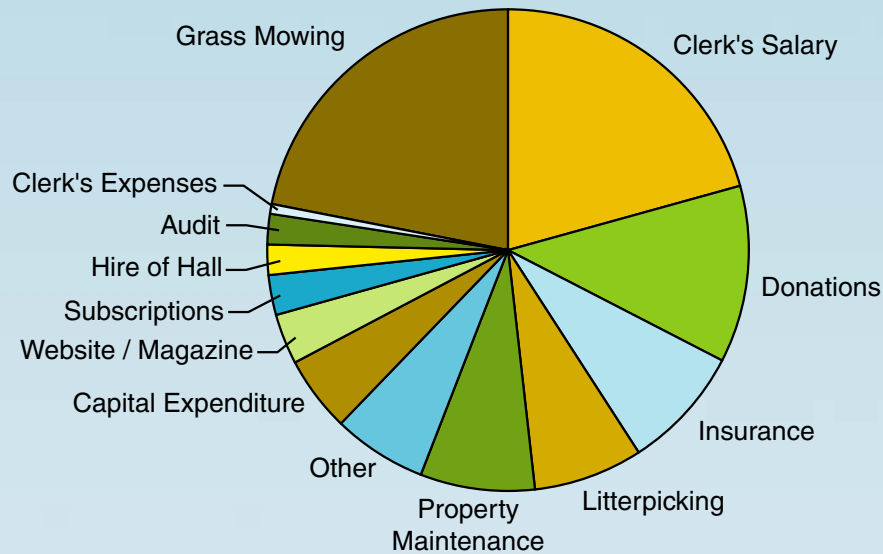
Great Shefford Parish has three churches: the Parish church of St. Mary, the chapel of St. Stephen in Shefford Woodlands and the redundant church of St. Thomas in East Shefford. The Parish is part of the benefice of Welford with Wickham and Great Shefford, Boxford and Stockcross and the rectory is in Wickham. Services are held in Great Shefford on the first, second and fifth Sundays of the month and in Shefford Woodlands on the fourth Sunday, with occasional additional services.

The Parish church stands at the western end of Great Shefford within a conservation area that includes the Manor House and Great Shefford House, once the rectory. Approached through an avenue of lime trees with a rookery, its churchyard overlooks the river and the water meadows. There is a fine display of snowdrops in the churchyard in late winter, followed by primroses and then cuckoo flowers. The Parochial Church Council, with the support of the Parish Council, is currently extending the churchyard into the adjoining glebe, thereby extending its life for many years to come. St. Stephen's Church stands at the crossroads in Shefford Woodlands. Small, and dwindling, congregations work hard to keep both churches flourishing and in good repair. The main fund-raising event is the Duck Derby held each Easter on the river at East Shefford.

The Parish Council

The Parish Council consists of seven councillors, including one from Shefford Woodlands. It meets every month apart from August. The Parish is fortunate that in recent years it has been possible to fill all places, as well as that of a paid clerk, with volunteers able to attend nearly all the meetings as well as to carry out many tasks between meetings. The council fulfils a vital role as a link between the people of the Parish and West Berkshire Council and its activities are funded primarily by the parish precept element of Council Tax which in 2006/7 was £9336 or an average of £25 per household. The largest item of expenditure is the care of the recreation ground and other public open spaces within the Parish not cared for by the District Council.

Great Shefford Parish Council Expenditure 2005/6
Total Expenditure £9568



An important task for the Parish Council is advising West Berkshire Council on all planning applications relevant to the Parish. Other regular meeting topics include highway matters, footpaths, Parish events and social issues. Meetings are open to the public, but attendance is sparse and communication with members of the Parish is a matter of major concern.

Community Spirit

To foster community spirit, the Parish Council was instrumental in launching the Great Shefford Parish News, a monthly magazine which provides a wealth of useful local information as well as regular feature articles. It is bought by about 25% of households, and is distributed free to all homes every December. The Council also backed the establishment of the village website www.greatshefford.org.uk, but the use of this by parishioners and organisations has so far been light. The annual Great Shefford Country Fayre is organised by its own committee and raises funds for community projects, and the Parish Walk held each May attracts up to one hundred paying participants. Litter picking days not only enhance the Parish but also foster a sense of involvement.

A major aim of this Parish Plan is to harness the community spirit which already thrives in the Parish and to work together to create or enhance facilities and amenities to make Great Shefford an even better place for residents and for visitors.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Introduction

Great Shefford has a long history. There is evidence of Prehistoric or Roman field systems in the north of the Parish, while just south of Coldridge Copse there is a Bronze Age barrow. Even older is a Neolithic hand-axe, dating from 2,000 to 3,000 BC, which was recently found in the village. There were definitely settlers in Shefford by least 400 AD. An important Early Saxon graveyard was discovered just to the west of East Shefford Farm during construction of the railway in 1890. An excavation by Newbury Museum in 1912 revealed that it contained about 95 bodies. Jewellery and weapons from the graves were mostly Early Saxon, with some Roman, dating the burial ground to the fifth and sixth centuries. The variety and number of objects found in the graves indicated that the Saxon community in Shefford was a relatively prosperous one.

The name 'Shefford' is Saxon and probably means sheep ford, being derived from two words - sciep (sheep) and ford. In the Domesday Book of 1086 it was spelt Siford and other early written forms of it include Siffort, Scifford, Sipford, Schipforda, Shipford and Shyfford.

The Parish of today used to be two Parishes: one was West or Great Shefford and the other East or Little Shefford. West Shefford included the village of West Shefford, the hamlet of Shefford Woodlands and Henley Farm, while East Shefford included the hamlets of East Shefford and Wickfield. The village of West or Great Shefford has always been the principal settlement. In 1926 the Diocese of Oxford brought the ecclesiastical Parishes together, but for civil purposes the Parishes were not amalgamated until 1972. For much of Shefford's history the Parish boundaries were almost identical with the boundaries of the manors of West and East Shefford. These manors were created in the two centuries before the Norman Conquest. This was the time when the Lambourn Valley was divided up into long, narrow estates in order to give each lord a share of the different types of land within the valley - river meadows, arable land, downs and wood. The villages probably also date from this period, previous settlement having been more scattered.



The village may originally have clustered around the manor house and the church, perhaps extending as far as the mill. Pottery evidence supports a theory that the village was re-planned in the thirteenth century, with regular plots being laid out along Church Street and Newbury Road. Expansion along the Wantage Road came later.

Agriculture

The villagers were arable farmers. Two common fields were divided into a multitude of strips shared between the lord and his tenants. Beside the river were meadows and to the north, around Trindledown, was the common down. While one common field was planted with crops, the other was left fallow. Flocks of sheep were grazed on the meadows or down during the day and then folded on the fallow at night so that their dung would fertilise the poor, chalky soil. This system persisted until Parliamentary Enclosure in 1812, when the common fields and down were divided into smaller, individually owned fields.

By 1700 all the major farms of the Parish were in existence, some of them created by enclosing parts of the common fields and down. Manor Farm was the result of the lord exchanging his scattered arable strips, together with his entitlement to graze animals on the meadows and down, for enclosed fields next to the village. These included twenty acres of floated water meadow. The floating of water meadows was common in chalk valleys by this time. A system of channels and sluices allowed a thin sheet of steadily moving water to cover the meadow during the winter, keeping the ground temperature above 5°C. This stimulated early growth, enabling the meadows to be grazed with sheep four to six weeks earlier than usual. The sheep were then moved to summer pastures so that the meadows could be floated again for a good, reliable hay crop in June or July. The additional grazing and hay enabled larger flocks to be kept, providing more manure for the arable.

Ownership of the manors can be traced back to the time of William the Conqueror, when Hugh de Port was listed as the major landholder. The religious upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the manor in the hands of staunch Catholics, first the Brydges and then the Brownes. The manor house contained several secret hiding places, and a Catholic priest was sheltered there for seven years before being captured. During the Civil War, Sir George Browne was host for a night to King Charles I when he was on his way to Oxford with his army. The Brownes were the last lords of the manor to actually live in West Shefford and there are memorial tablets to them in the Parish church.

Churches

The churches are the oldest buildings in the Parish. The redundant church of St Thomas, in East Shefford, was built no later than 1100 AD, whilst the Parish church of St Mary dates from about 1200 AD. The tiny East Shefford church is cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust and holds an annual candlelit carol service. Grade 1 listed, it is notable both for its medieval wall-paintings and a fifteenth century Fettiplace tomb. The flint church of St Mary has the only original round tower in Berkshire and is Grade 2* listed. It too has wall-paintings, this time Victorian and dating from 1870.



The much newer church of St Stephen in Shefford Woodlands was consecrated in 1911 after being converted from a disused Methodist Chapel. A few years later a local landowner began transforming it into a memorial to the eleven men from the Woodlands who lost their lives during the First World War. He carved the names of all the men, with the dates and places of their deaths, on the backs of the pews. Two stained-glass windows depict war and peace, the scene for peace being the crossroads in Shefford Woodlands.

Methodism had a strong presence in Shefford for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there being both Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist chapels. The Primitive Methodists built a meeting room in the village in 1830 and then replaced it with the Russell and Ride Memorial Chapel in 1905. The Wesleyan Methodists had one chapel in the village and another in Shefford Woodlands. All the chapels had closed by the early 1980s and the two chapels in the village have since been demolished.

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Great Shefford used to have a range of shopkeepers and traders to support its agricultural population. In the nineteenth century these included bakers, blacksmiths, a wheelwright, miller, bricklayer, corndealer, carpenter, shoemaker, maltster, tailor, coal dealer, draper and a Post Office. Shefford Woodlands had its own Post Office, as well as a blacksmith and a carpenter. For other purchases, carriers provided a service to Newbury, the last one continuing until the late 1940s.

Improved links with the rest of the country came in 1898 when the Lambourn Valley Railway opened. Local farmers used it to transport milk, cattle, sheep, corn, hay and straw. In 1910 a horse-loading dock was constructed at the station for the use of nearby trainers. For villagers the railway brought cheaper coal as well as an easier means of getting to Newbury and beyond. Coal was stored in the station yard, as was timber for a period in the 1920s. The railway closed in 1962.

1905 was a year of upheaval in West Shefford, for it was in that year that the lord of the manor, the sixth Marquis of Downshire, sold his Shefford estate. For centuries successive lords of the manor had owned almost the entire Parish, but farms and houses were now up for auction. Following the sale, much of the arable land was converted into extensive sheep-pasture, putting farm labourers out of work. Some land was temporarily ploughed during the First World War, but reverted to pasture in the depression years. Then in 1939, when war once again brought a drive for increased food production, the pastures were ploughed-up and have continued as arable up to the present day.

It is probable that the population of Shefford Woodlands in 1900 was greater than it is today. Heavy snow would sometimes isolate the hamlet for weeks on end. The community was dependent on deep chain and bucket wells

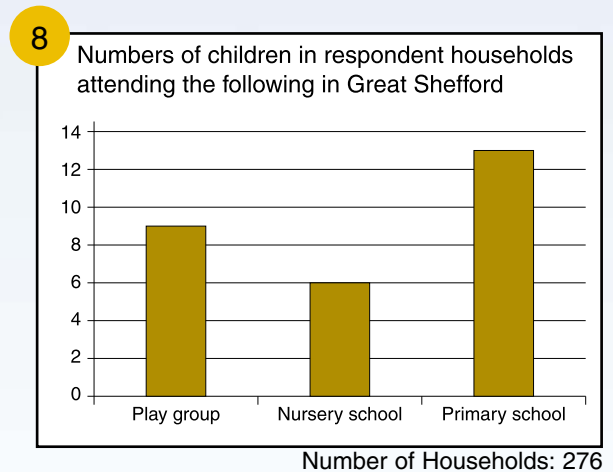
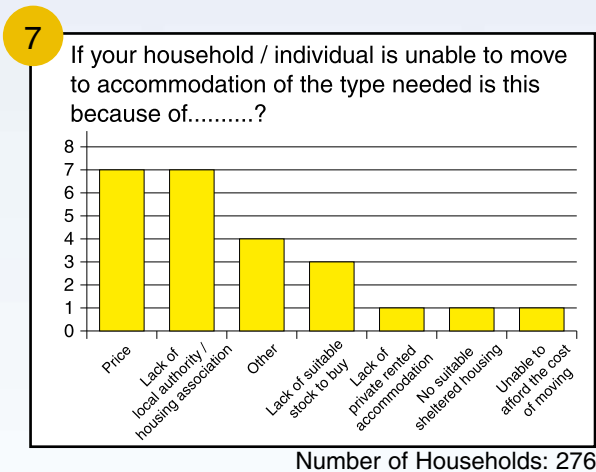
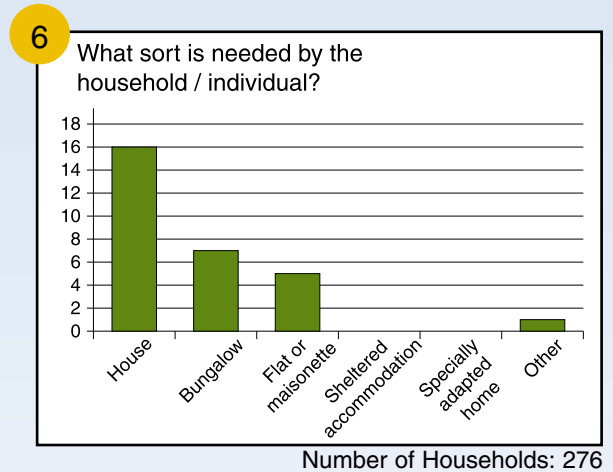
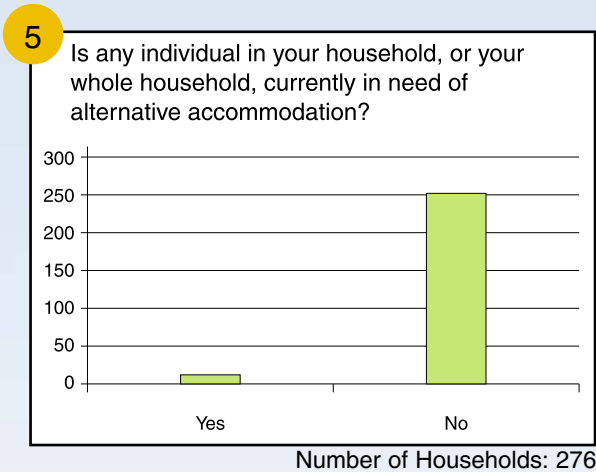
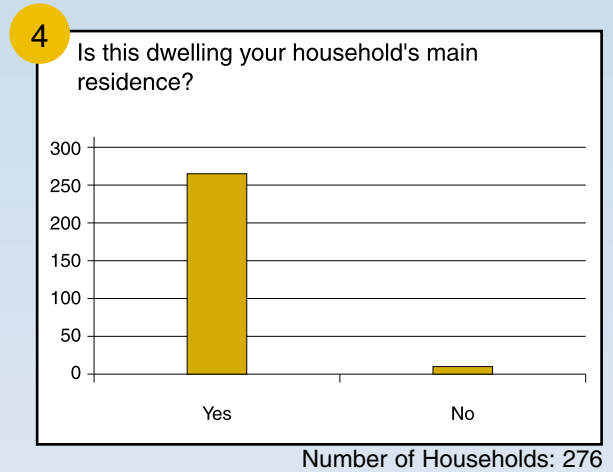
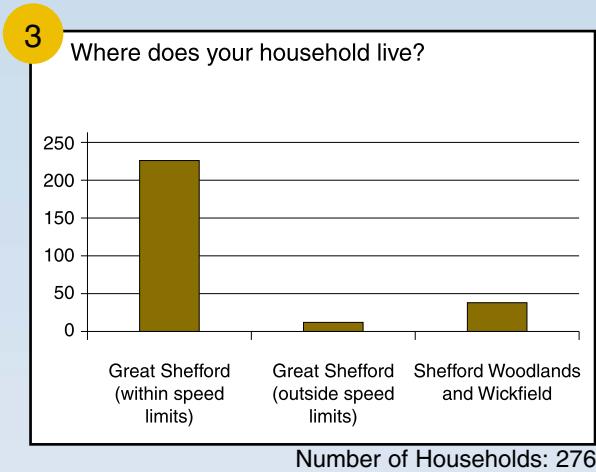
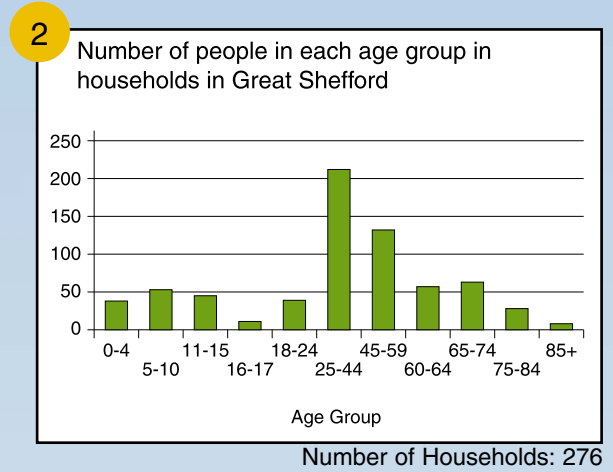
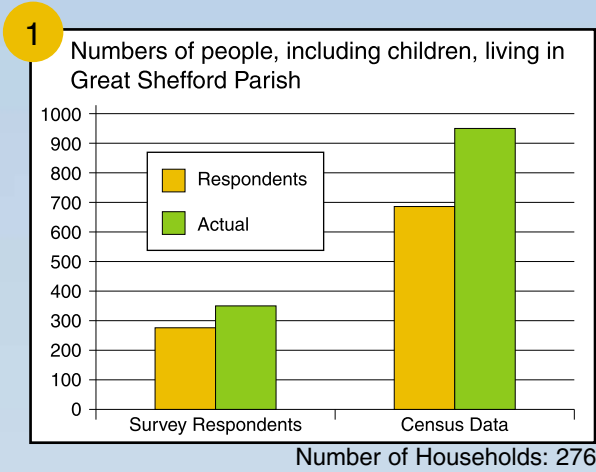
and rainwater tanks for their water supply. In times of drought, the farmers would run a service of water carts to Great Shefford where water was dipped from the ford.

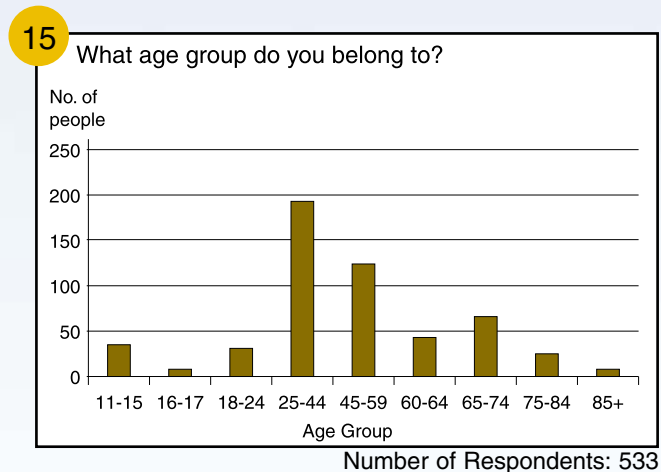
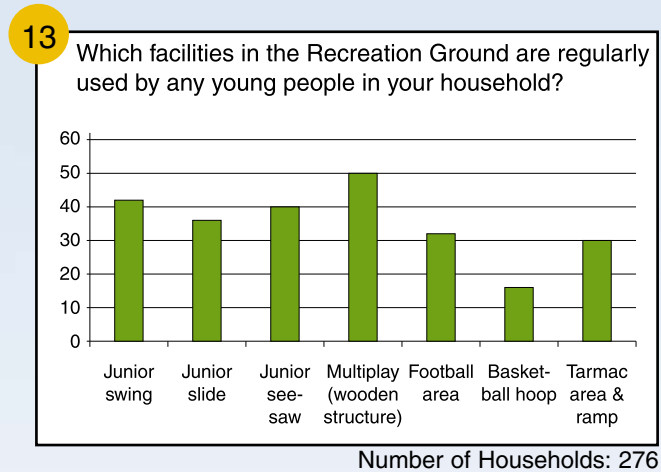
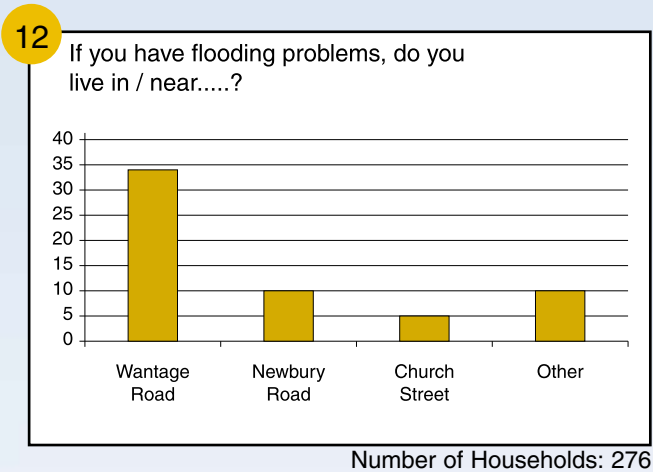
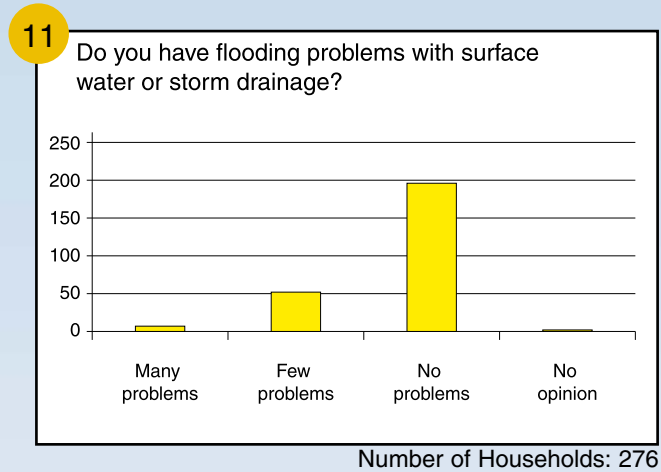
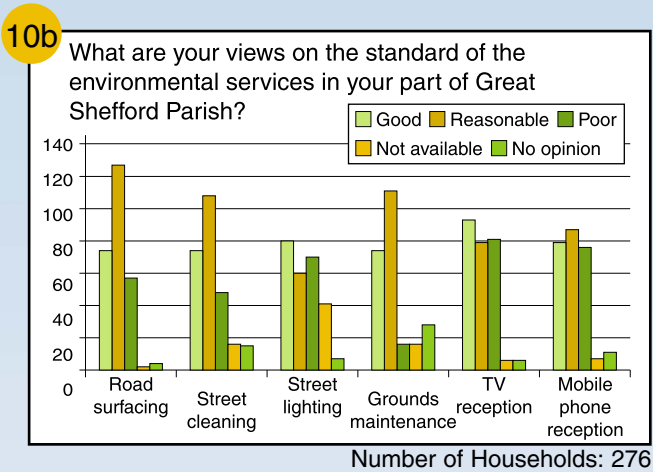
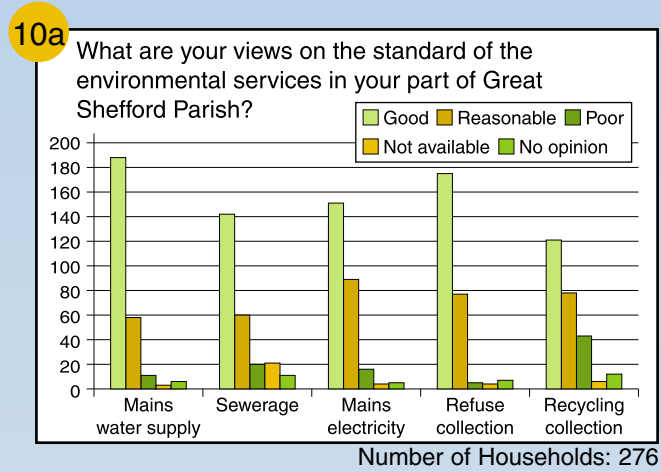
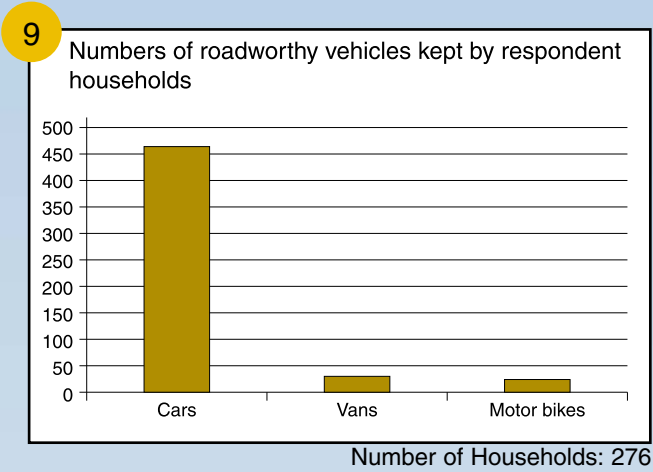
The twentieth century saw great changes. Mains water replaced wells in the 1930s, electricity arrived in 1939 and sewers in the 1950s, although Shefford Woodlands is still without mains drainage. Above all, there was a dramatic increase in the size of Great Shefford village. In 1948-50 the Mead was built, followed in the sixties by Millers Field and Station Road. In the seventies came Nimm's Meadow and Riverway; in the eighties, Hunters Meadow, Blakeney Fields, Chapel Corner, the Mallards and Spring Meadows; and finally, in the nineties, Scholars Close.

Today some of Shefford's history is visible in its listed buildings. These include several cottages within the village, as well as scattered farmhouses and farm buildings. Parts of the manor house date back to the 15th century, while Hillside Cottage was probably built in the 16th century. Shefford's comparative lack of old cottages is in part due to the destruction of six in one disastrous fire in Church Street in 1908.

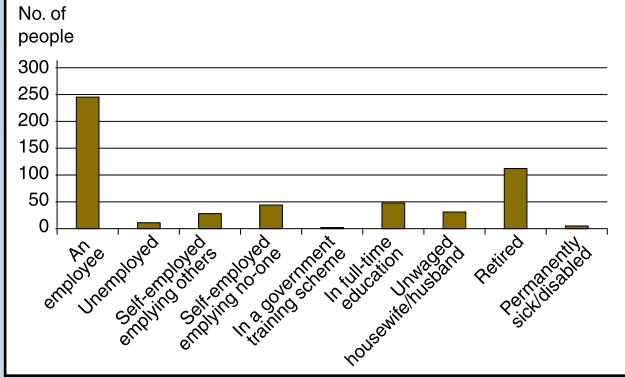


Photo reproduced by kind permission of the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading



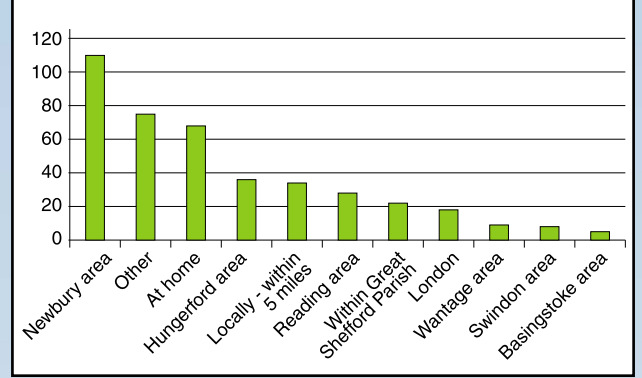


16 Are you at present.....?



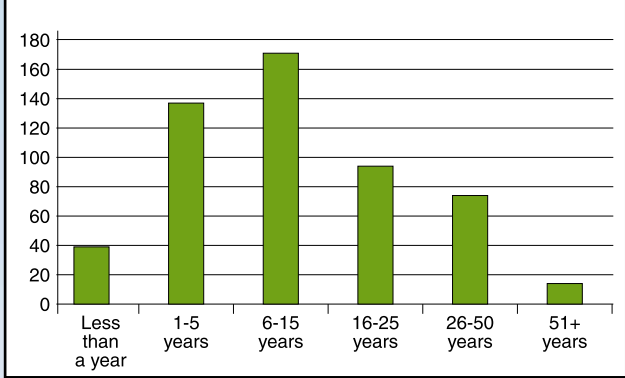
Number of Respondents: 526

17 Where is your main place of work / education?



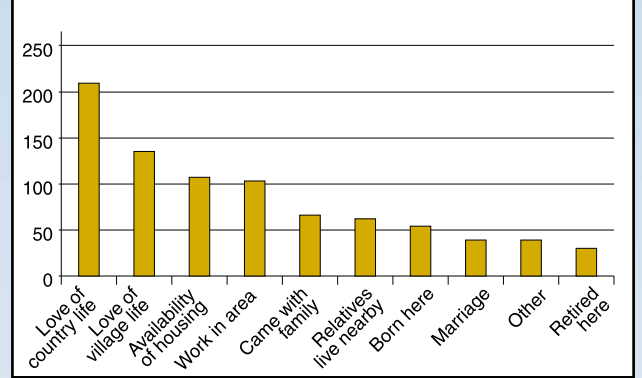
Number of Respondents: 413

18 How long have you lived in Great Shefford Parish?



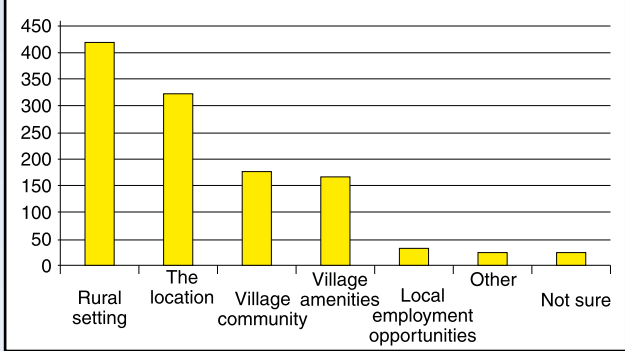
Number of Respondents: 529

19 How did you come to live in Great Shefford Parish?



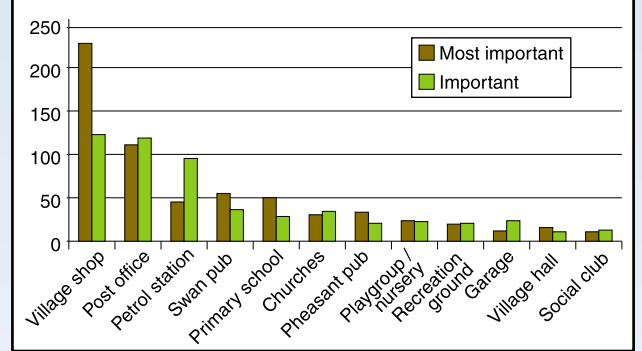
Number of Respondents: 528

20 What is most important to you about living in Great Shefford Parish?



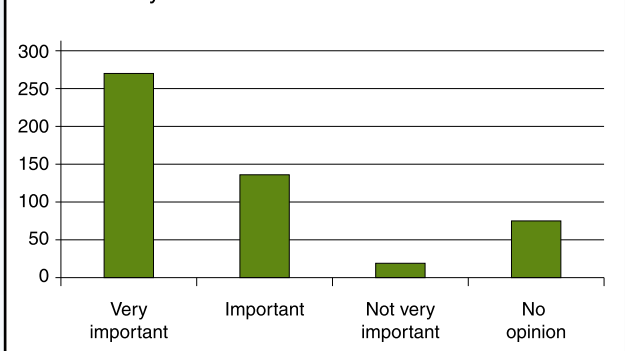
Number of Votes: 648

21 What are the most important facilities we currently have in Great Shefford Parish?



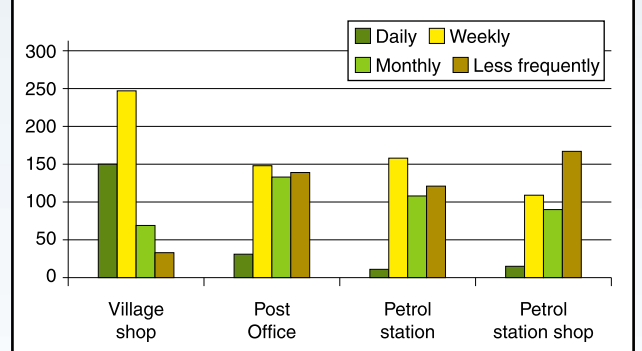
Number of Respondents: 513

22 How important is Shefford School to the local community?

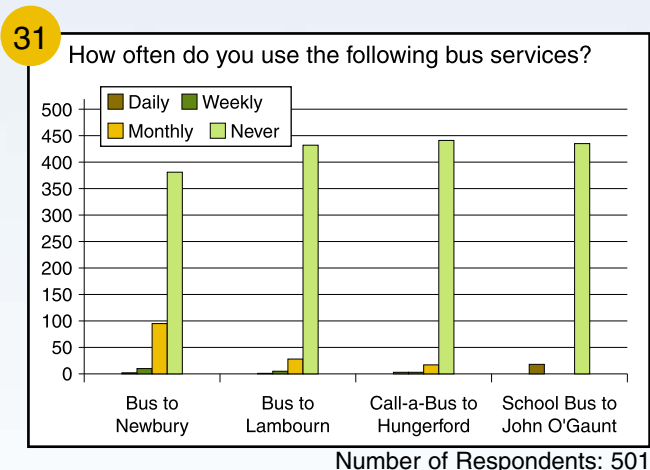
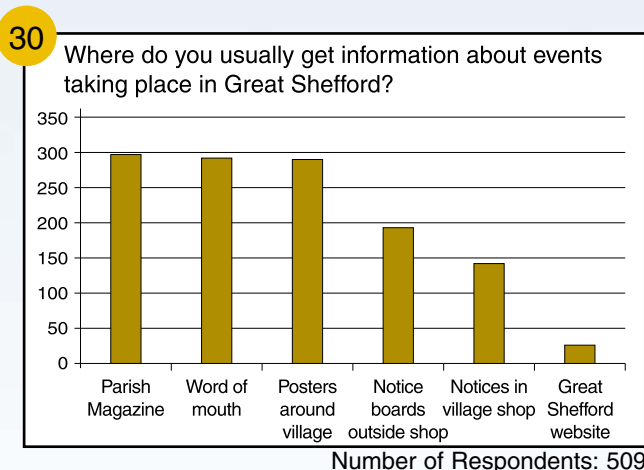
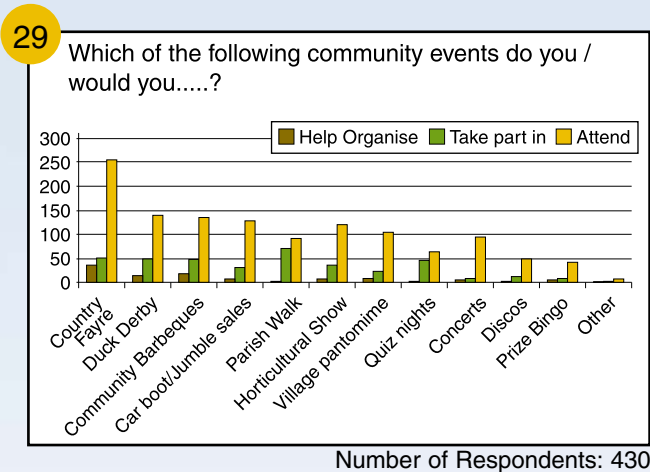
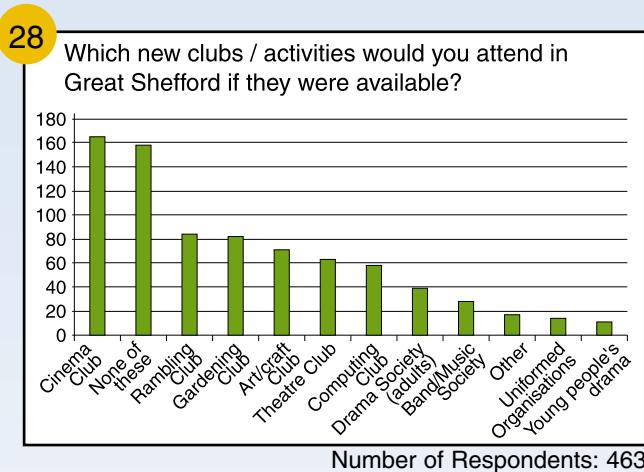
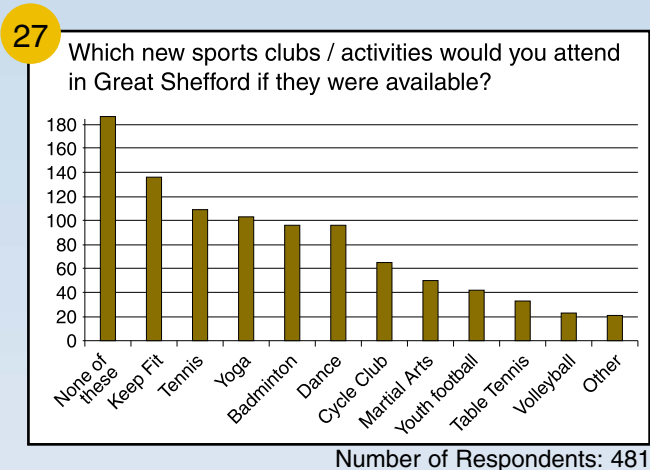
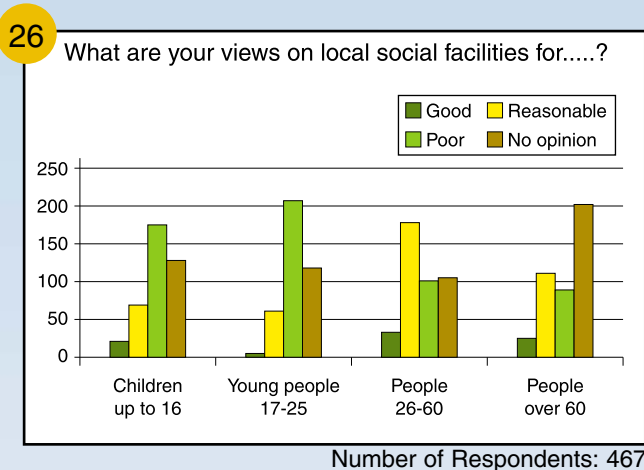
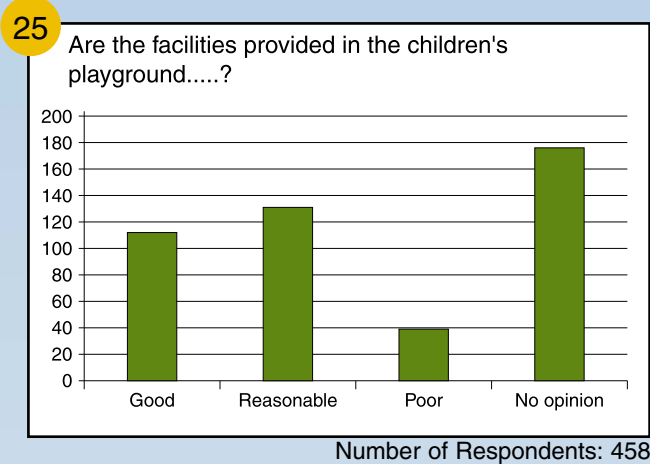
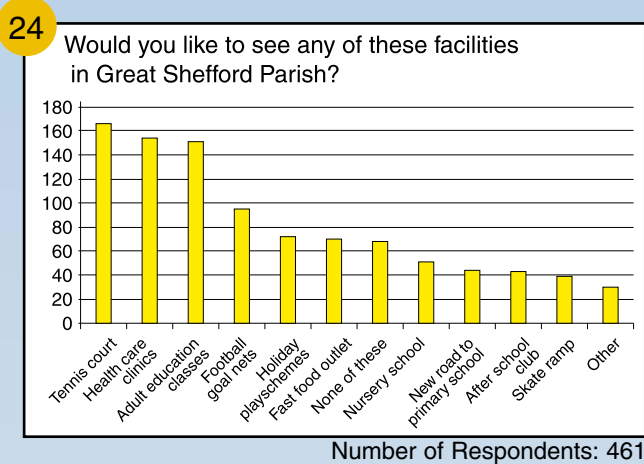


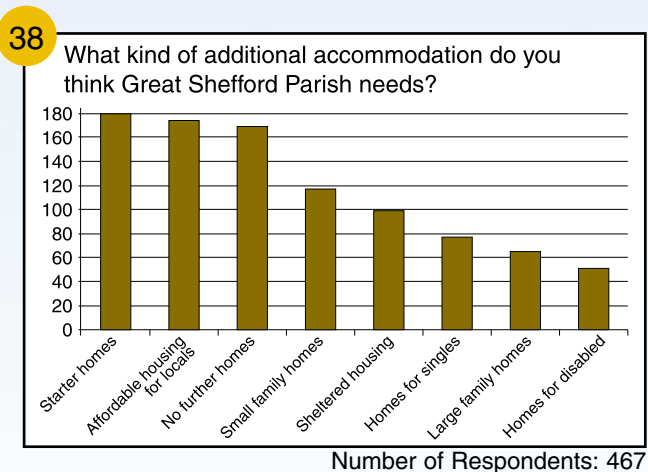
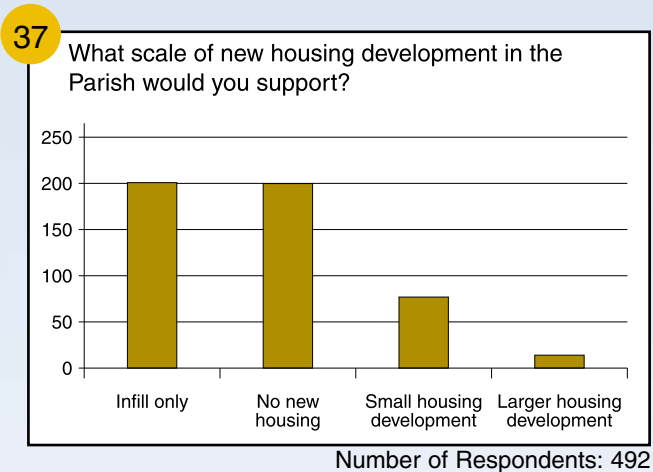
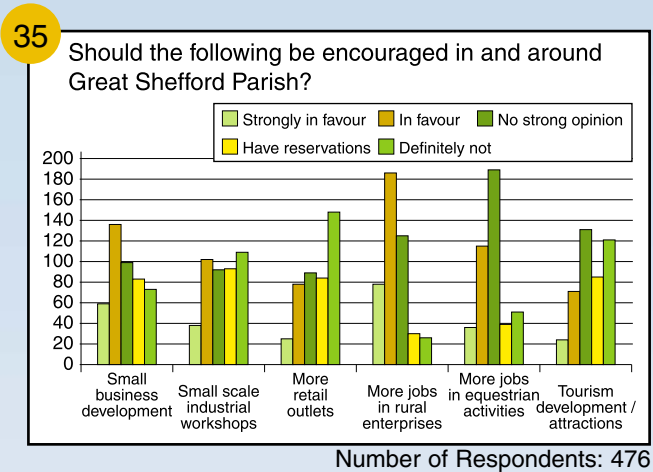
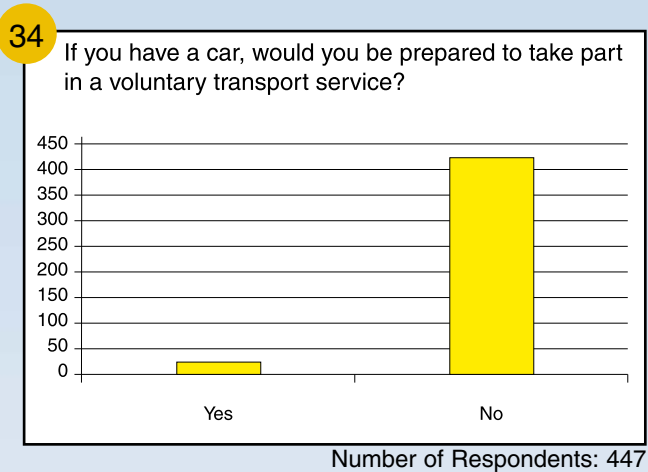
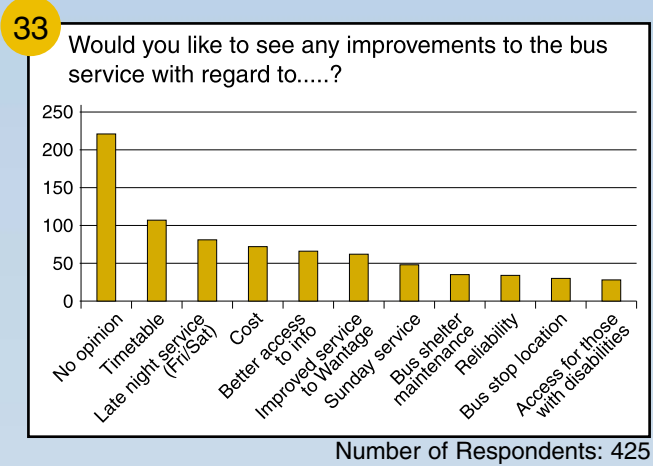
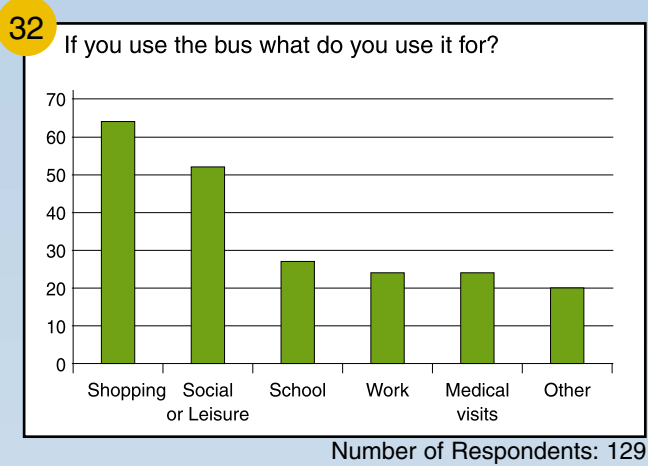
Number of Respondents: 500

23 How often do you use the following shops and services?



Number of Respondents: 508





39a Where do you think any new housing in the Parish should be located?

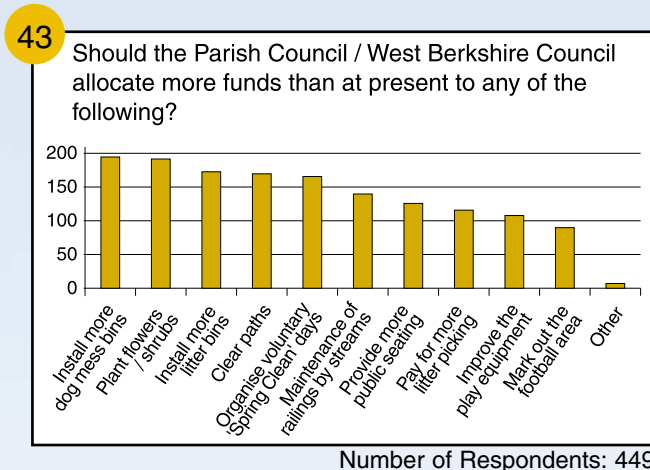
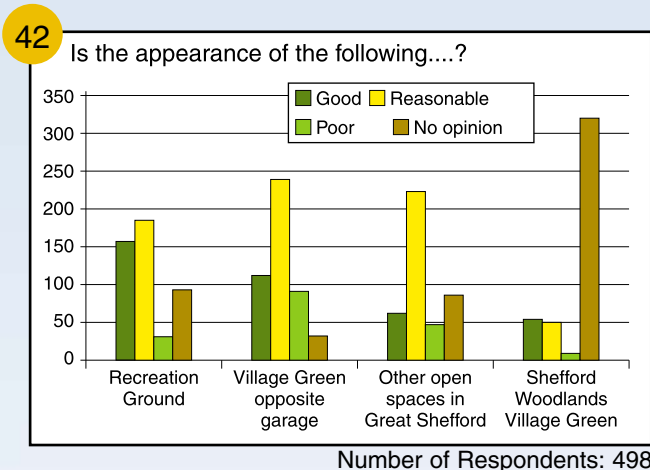
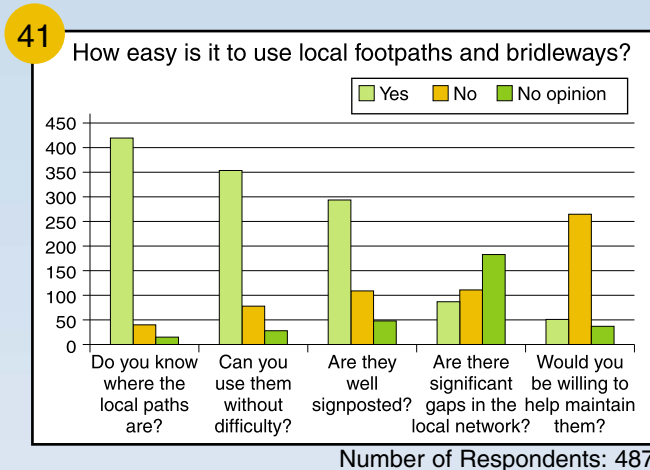
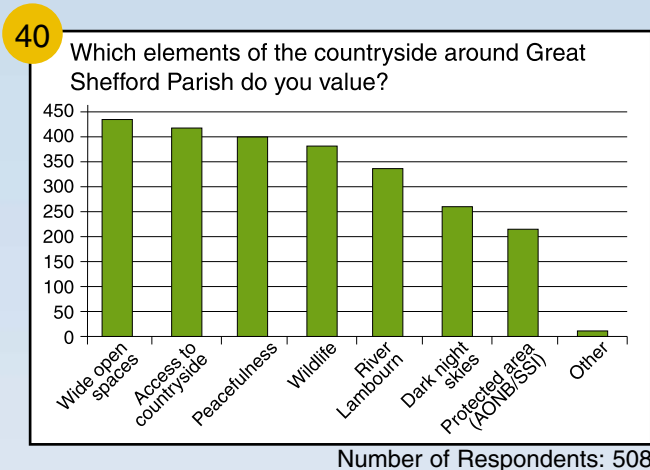
- “Natural infill at edge of village locations”
- “Within existing built environment and be vernacular in style”
- “The Harrow Wantage Road”
- “Field adjacent to Swan with suitable access”
- “The council garages if all are not in use”
- “Possibly along the Wantage Road (East)”
- “As an infill to a bypass to east of village”
- “Corner of Hungerford Hill”
- “The old football pitch”

39b Where do you think any new housing in the Parish should NOT be located?

- “None - keep as village - not town”
- “Not on the flood plains - that’s just common sense”
- “Outside village boundary”
- “I don’t want any houses to take away green fields”
- “Not be located in Great Shefford”
- “Not in Shefford Woodlands”

39c Where do you think any new housing in the Parish should NOT be located?

- “Behind petrol station”
- “Around the recreation”
- “Not close to River Lambourn”
- “Not East side of A338”
- “Not in playing field next to the Swan”
- “East Shefford or around the water meadows near the Church”
- “Not in my front garden”
- “Not in my back garden”

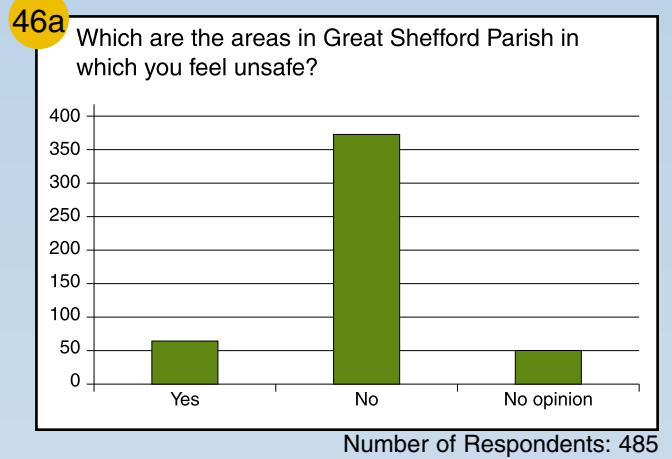
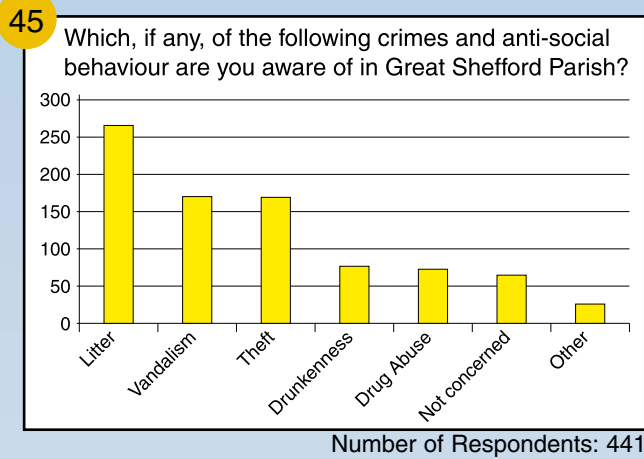


44a What do you think should be done to help protect and enhance the local environment of Great Shefford Parish?

- “Clean / tidy up river by Riverway”
- “Clean and maintain Black Water”
- “Advertise wildlife walks”
- “Stop dog fouling of footpaths”
- “More Litter Bins Required”
- “Upgrade playground equipment”
- “Regular voluntary litter picking patrols”
- “Grass areas should be kept cut and tidy with some seating and plants”
- “Provision of a village green (i.e. rent unused field next to Swan)”

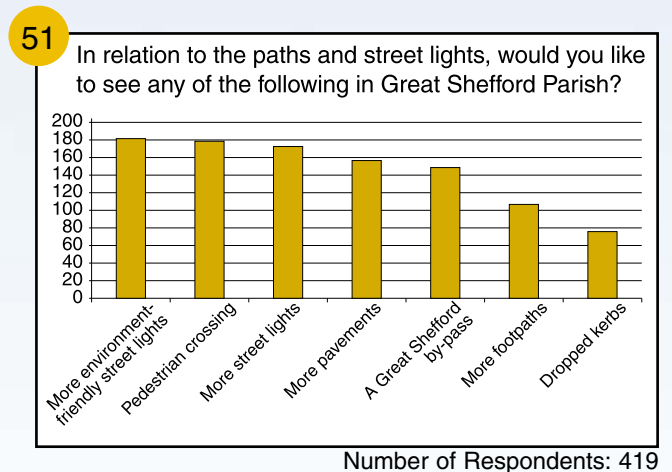
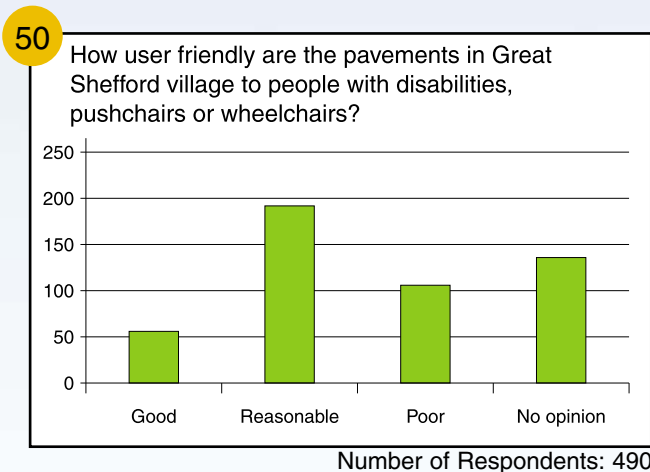
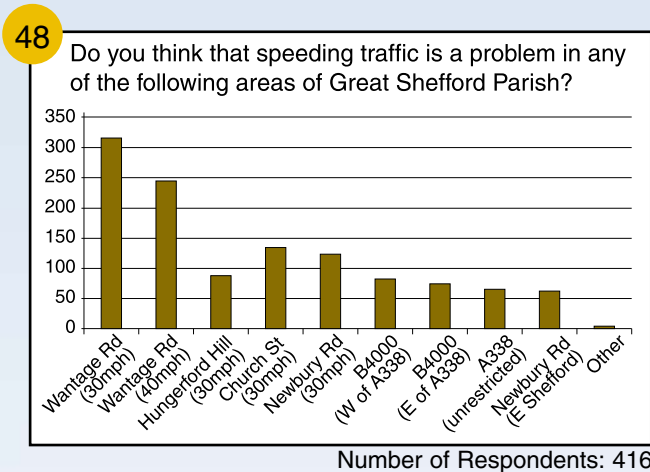
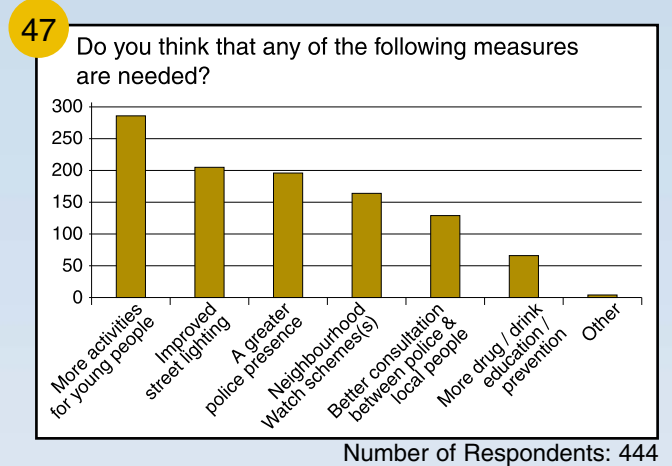
44b What do you think should be done to help protect and enhance the local environment of Great Shefford Parish?

- “Village seat on village green in Shefford Woodlands”
- “‘Tone down’ the petrol station and garage”
- “No additional road lighting - as it damages the dark night sky”
- “Traffic calming on B4000”
- “Quiet surfacing on M4 to reduce intrusive noise in Shefford Woodlands”
- “Keep children / young adults occupied by youth clubs etc”
- “Reintroduce neighbourhood watch”
- “Re-invigorate Parish Council”



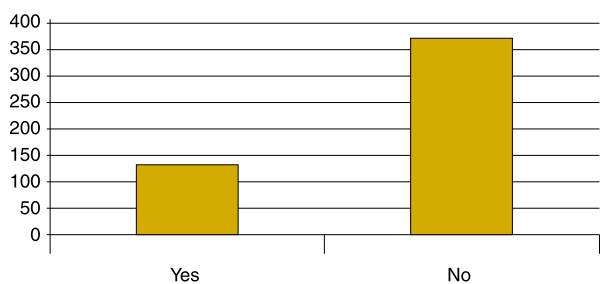
46b Which are the areas in Great Sheffield Parish in which you feel unsafe?

“Alley between Swan and Riverway”
“Walking from Station Road to bridge at the Swan Pub”
“The dark alleyways with no lights”
“The lane to the Recreation Ground”
“Alleyway past garages opposite shop that leads to opposite garage”
“The shortcut to Park from Mead”
“Walking along the A338”
“When people are shouting and screaming by the seat at the phone box at night”



52

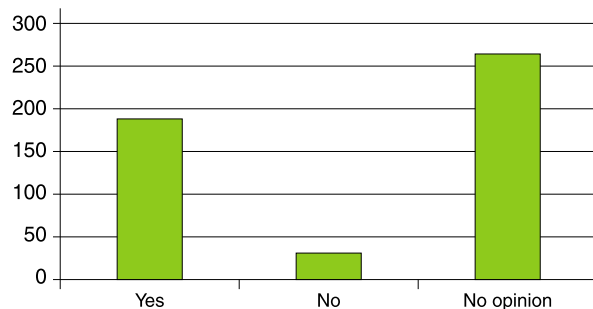
Have you ever attended a meeting of the Parish Council?



Number of Respondents: 503

53

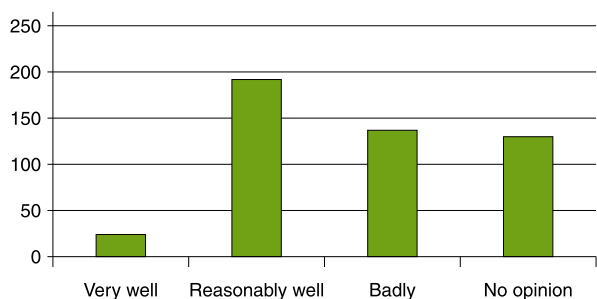
Do you feel that the issues discussed by the Parish Council reflect local concerns?



Number of Respondents: 483

54

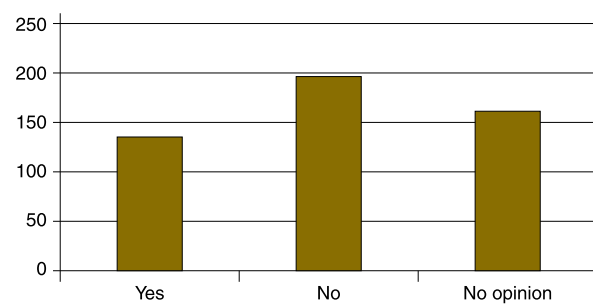
How well does the Parish Council publicise its decisions and activities?



Number of Respondents: 483

55

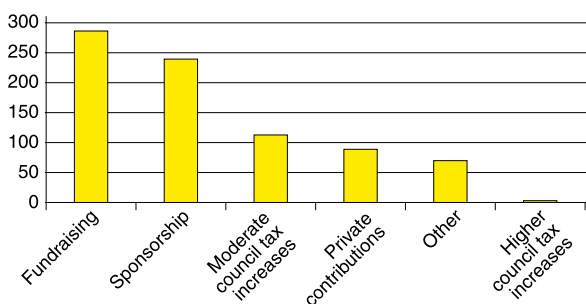
Do you think sufficient publicity is given to planning applications which affect Great Shefford Parish?



Number of Respondents: 492

56

If suggestions raised by the questionnaire require money for implementation, where should the money come from?



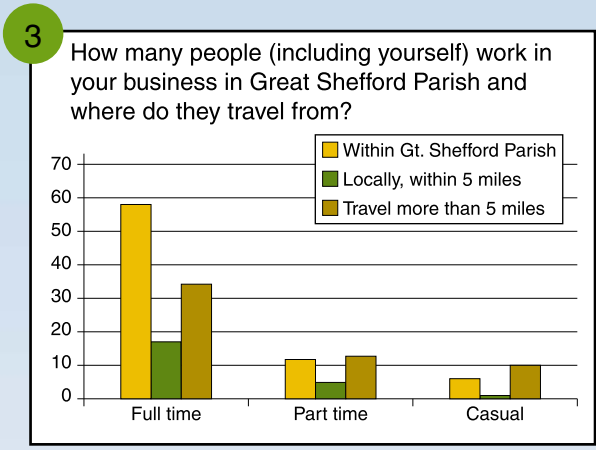
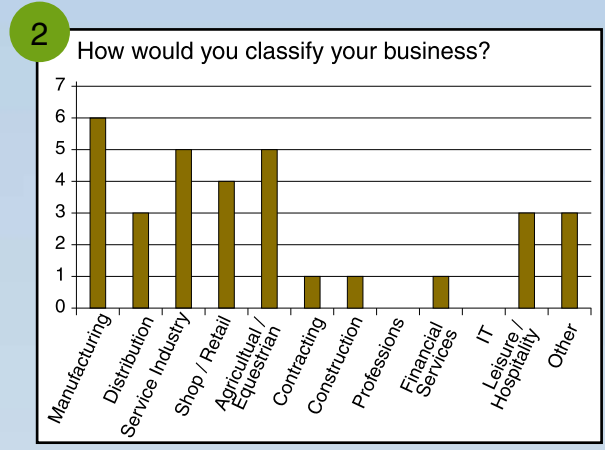
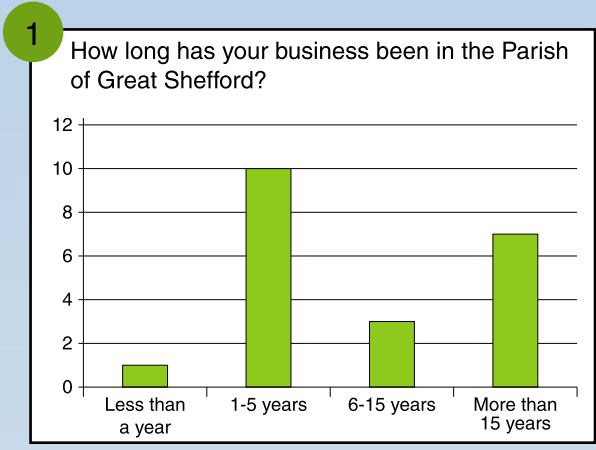
Number of Respondents: 453

57

If you have any concerns or observations about the Parish which this questionnaire has not addressed please give brief details.

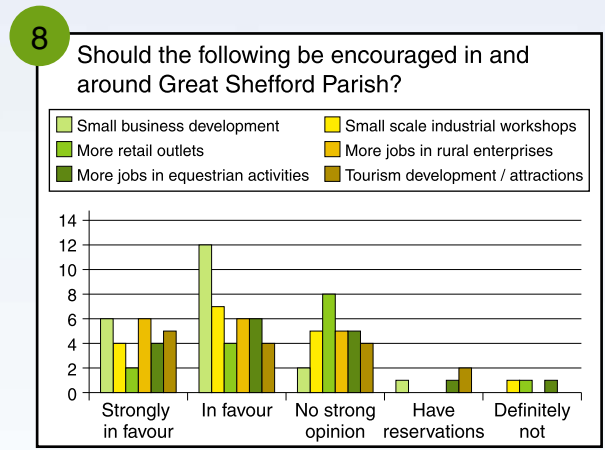
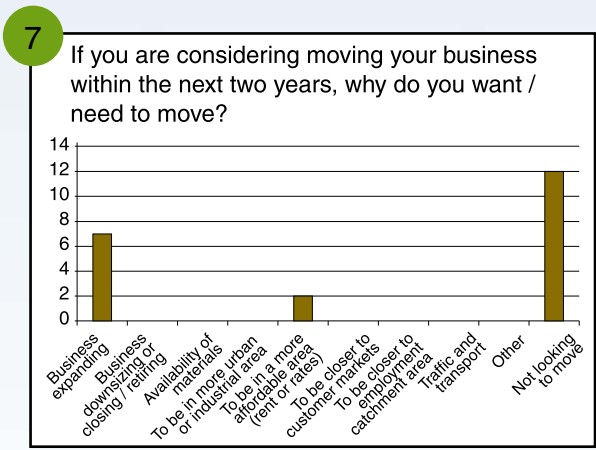
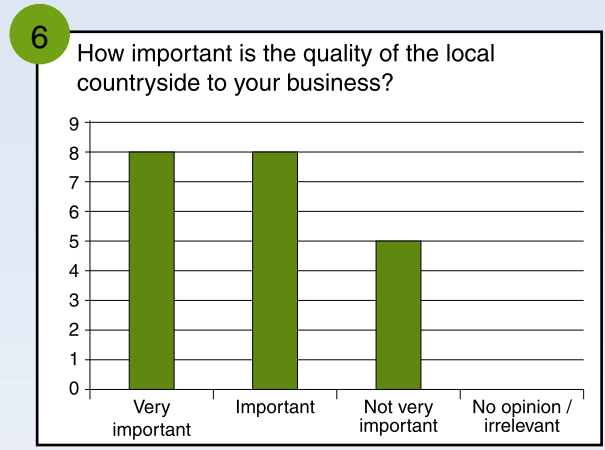
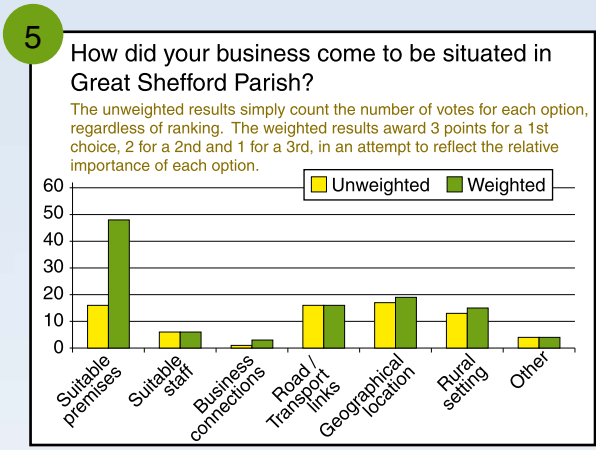
- “Tennis Court and better play equipment”
- “Stop rubbish dumped on Baydon Rd, Shefford Woodlands”
- “Shefford Woodlands village green should have some tasteful play equipment”
- “No pavements exist west of Great Shefford House”
- “Need better links from village to bridle network”
- “Why is it in this area that the bridleways do not link up?”
- “We have noticed an increase in fly tipping”
- “Can we have green bins?”
- “A good transport system i.e. bus”
- “Information board with history of Gt. Shefford...or put it all on the website”
- “I like it as it is - that’s why I live here”

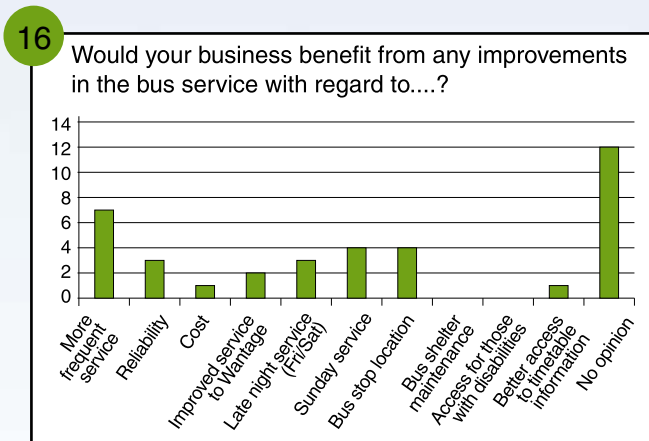
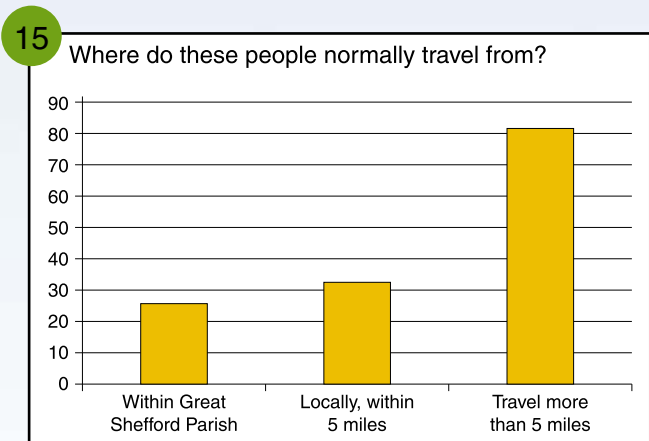
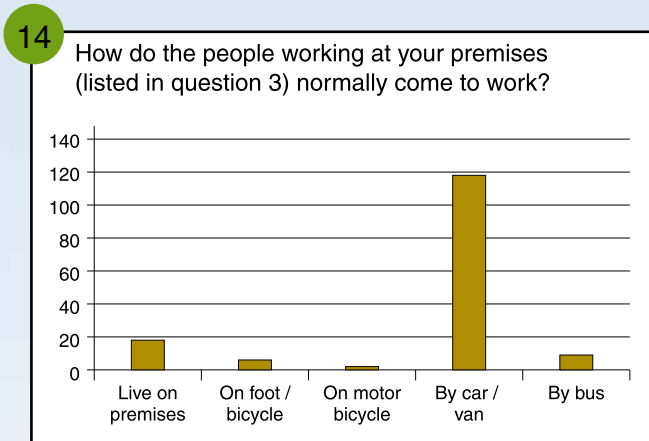
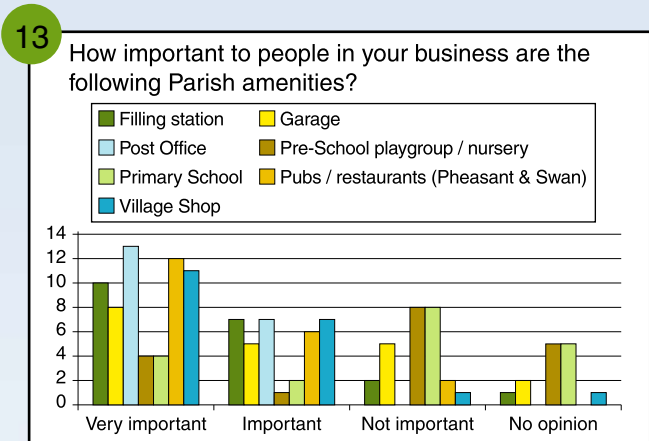
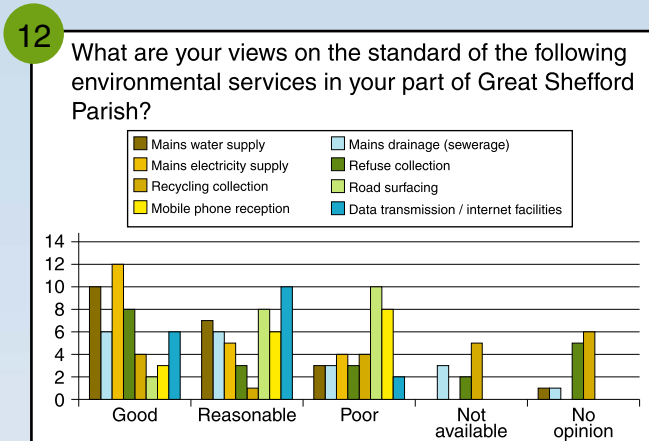
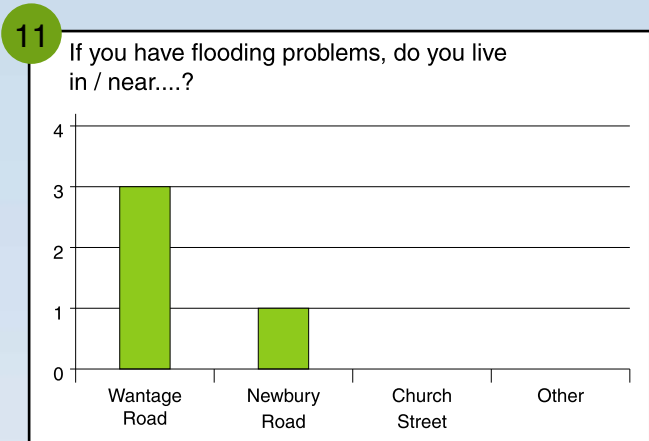
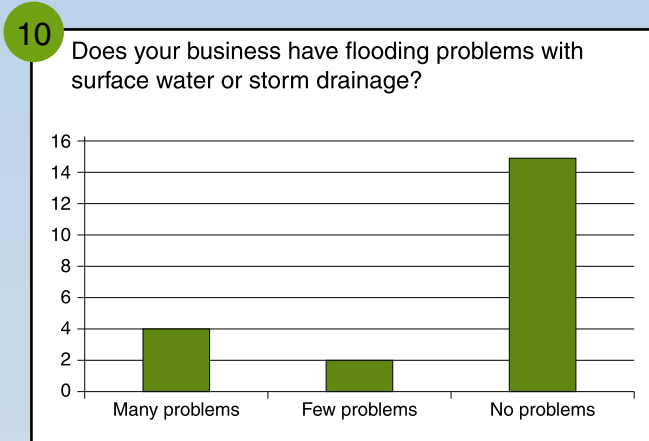
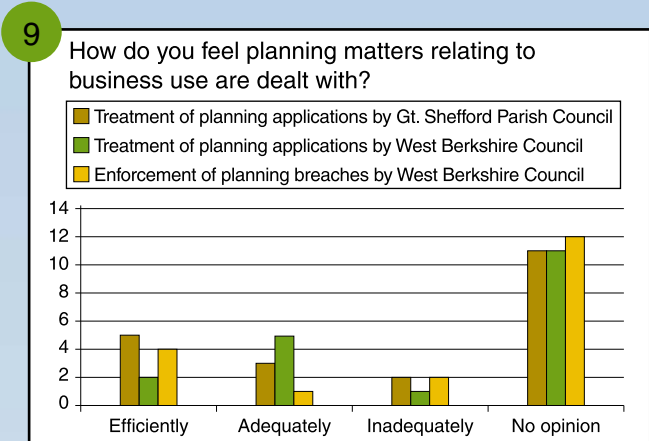
Great Shefford Parish Plan



4 What could be done locally or within the Parish to enhance facilities and the business environment for enterprises such as yours?

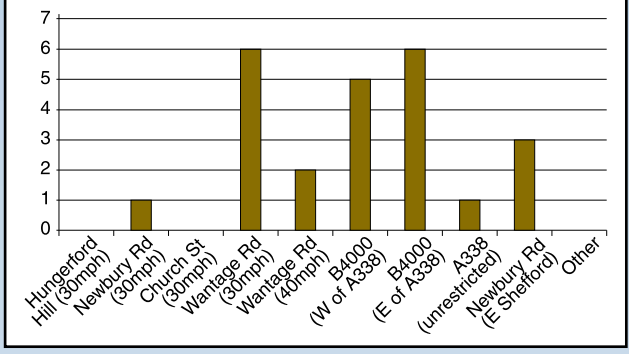
“Improve bus service to allow younger employees to get to work”
“Banking facilities”
“Recycling of cardboard - local contractors, Biffa, not interested in collecting cardboard waste separately. We generate a lot of cardboard waste.”
“More local housing and businesses”
“Recycling bins for bottles, papers and clothes”
“Improve roads to offices”





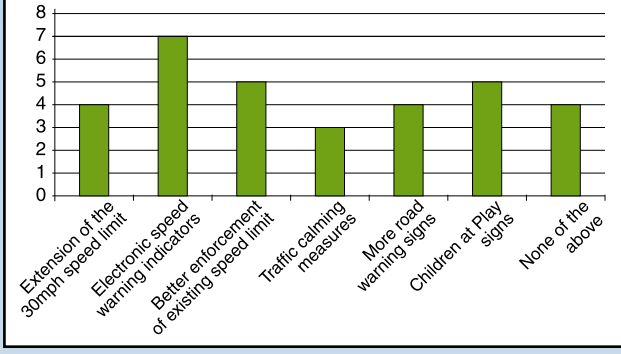
17

Do you think that speeding traffic is a problem in any of the following areas of Great Shefford Parish?



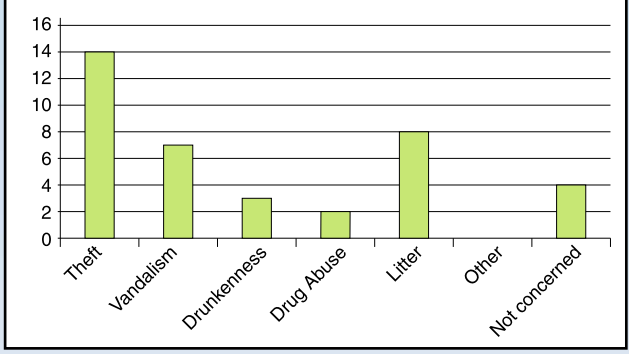
18

Would you support the following speed control measures in Great Shefford Parish?



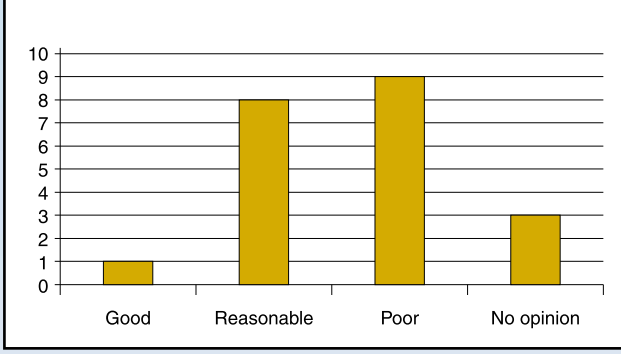
19

Which, if any, of the following crimes and anti-social behaviour are you aware of in Great Shefford Parish?



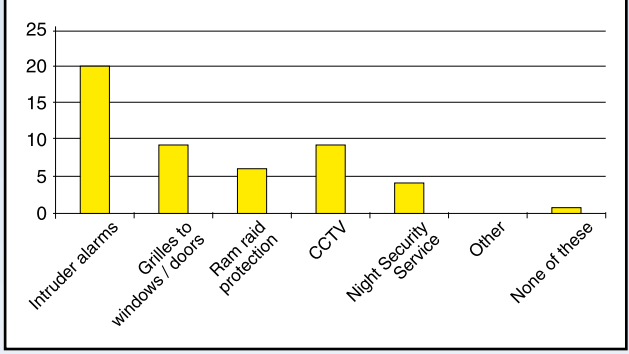
20

Do you regard the Police coverage of the Parish of Great Shefford to be....?



21

Has your business installed / employed any of the following?



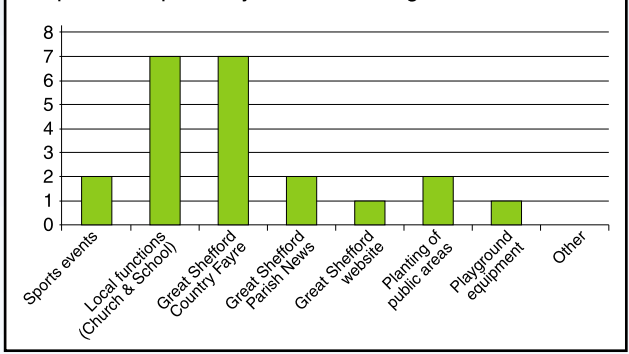
22

Where do you usually get information about events taking place in Great Shefford?



23

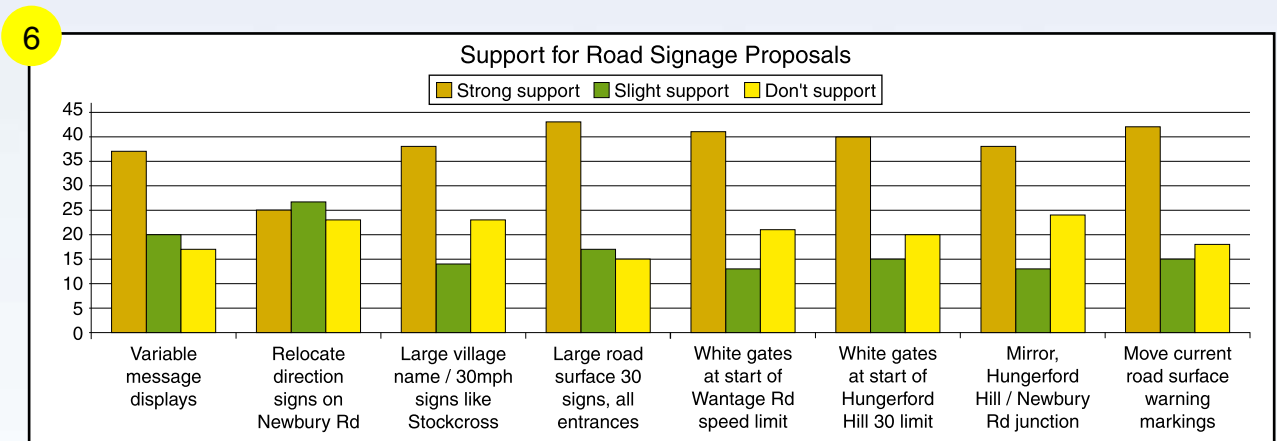
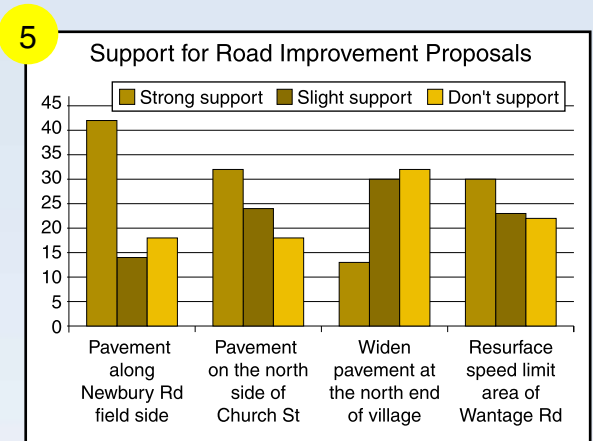
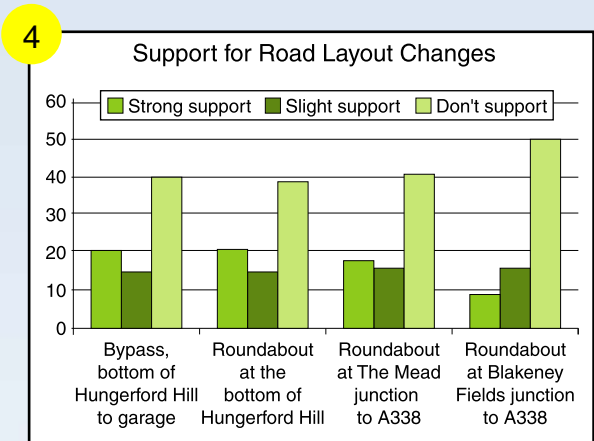
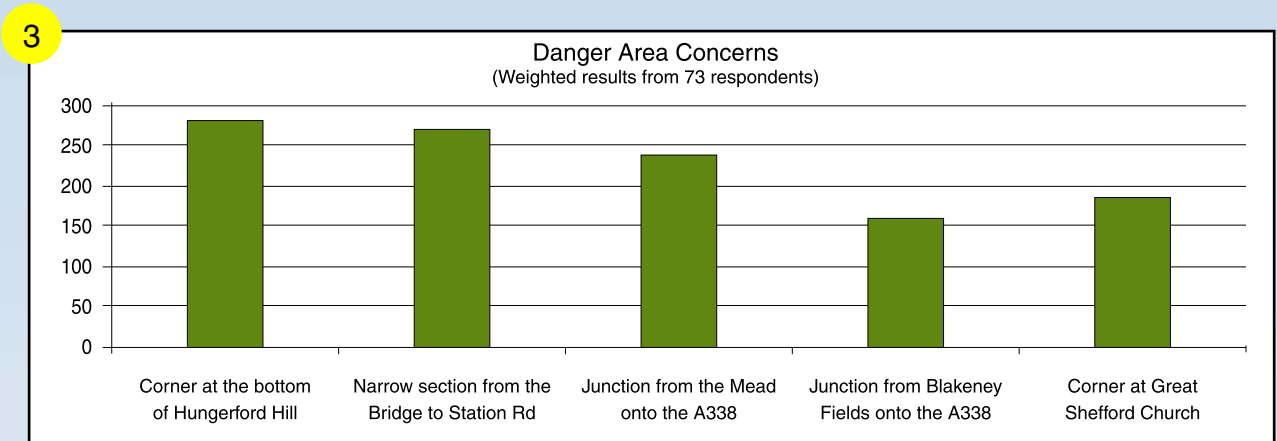
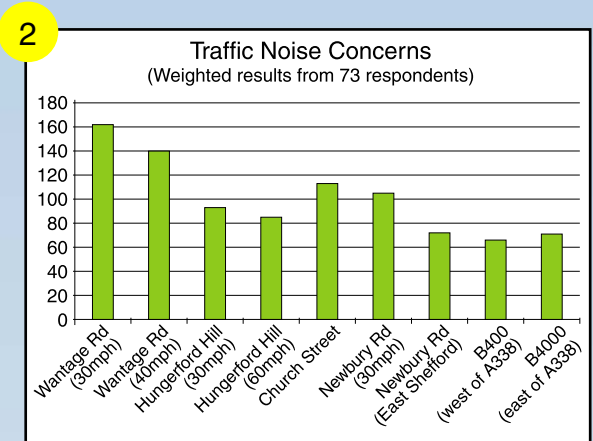
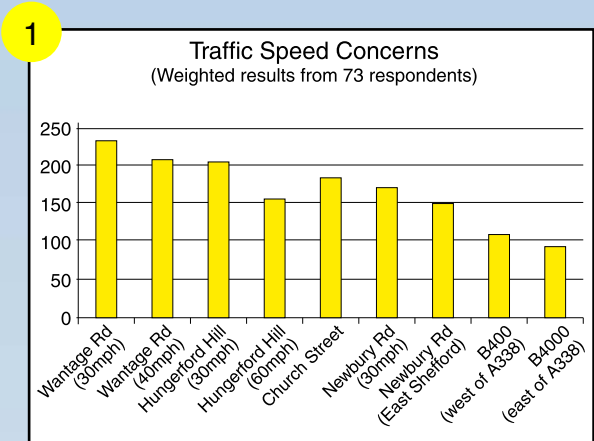
Would your business be willing to provide support or sponsorship for any of the following in the Parish?



24

Are there any other issues you would like to raise that are relevant to the Parish of Great Shefford and are not addressed elsewhere in this Questionnaire?

Q5: How did business come to be situated in Shefford? "Close to my home"
Q10: "Flooding of Wantage Rd affects access to our site"
Q17: Do you think speeding is a problem? "No"
Q20: "Police coverage of the parish is very poor"
Q20: "Our experience of Police coverage is actually excellent when required"
Q23: "We already support by providing raffle prizes, selling Parish News plus purchasing of advertising in same" / "We already support the School" (3 responses)
Q24: "Litter is a problem throughout Newbury area. This really needs to be tackled by the Government to introduce heavy fines to deter litterbugs rather than employing Biffa to clean up"



KEY ISSUES

Following the completion of the Household Survey, Working Groups were set up to consider in detail the issues raised in each of the following six topic areas:

1. Village Amenities & Facilities
2. Social Issues
3. Planning Issues
4. Environmental Issues
5. Traffic, Highways and Public Transport
6. The Views of Local Businesses

It became evident that more information was needed in some areas. A questionnaire was circulated to all the business premises in the Parish which yielded some useful data and opinions which largely reinforced the results of the Parish household exercise. The Traffic group conducted a more detailed survey of their own, and the Social group consulted the younger residents.

The major issues identified by the Working Groups are summarised below. Each Group then prepared a list of proposed actions to be carried out to meet the challenges discussed. These draft Action Plans were later submitted to West Berkshire Council and other potential partner organisations and to the Parish Council for their comments and suggestions. These were incorporated to produce the final Action Plan, presented in tabular form at the end of this document, which is the most important part of this Parish Plan and should be read in conjunction with these commentaries.

1. Village Amenities & Facilities

Areas of concern highlighted by the Survey were:

- ✦ The Parish website is little used as a source of information
- ✦ The Village Hall and Social Club were rated the least important of a dozen facilities in the Parish
- ✦ The lack of a public tennis court and football nets
- ✦ A desire for adult education classes

Sources of Information

The Parish website www.greatshefford.org.uk was set up in 2005, at the instigation of the Parish Council, in order to make information available and promote community links. It has not yet become a prime source of information for more than a very small percentage of people in the Parish and this issue therefore needs addressing. Possible reasons suggested for the low take-up were that the website needed improving, that it was not particularly easy to use and that people were put off by being asked to register. In order for these issues to be properly addressed the website needs an active administrator.

Posters were important sources of information about events taking place around the Parish, so it may be appropriate to consider whether there is a suitable location in the village for an additional notice board. The Shefford Parish News which is sponsored by the Parish Council, but sustained by local advertisers also evidently plays a major part in spreading news of events. Word of mouth plays an equal part.

Great Shefford Village Hall

The Village Hall, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006, was built using money raised by public subscription. Its facilities have been considerably enhanced in recent years, and the Village Hall Committee are currently engaged in an exercise to encourage its use and to identify how it might be further improved. The major user of the Hall is the thriving Great Shefford Under 5s Group, and other regular users include the Brownies and the Parish Council. Part of the premises is leased to the Social Club which in recent years has suffered a decline in membership.

Additional Sports Facilities

With over 160 people supporting the idea of having a tennis court in the Parish, the Working Group decided to look into the possibility of creating one. It soon became obvious that location and funding would both pose problems. If a tennis court were provided, further problems could be administration and the issue of Health and Safety. It was also accepted that the Survey results provided no real idea of how many people would actually use a tennis court if one was available. It was noted, meanwhile, that a tennis club in Boxford was actively seeking new members. The Working Group suggested that the issue of a tennis court should be of medium priority.

About 95 people were in favour of football goal nets. This being an easier issue to address than a tennis court, the provision of better football areas was awarded a high priority. Of those who expressed an opinion on the facilities in the children's playground, 85.5% thought they were good or reasonable and 14.5% considered they were poor. The Working Group decided that steps to improve the Recreation Ground should be given a high priority including looking at replacement / new equipment. The first step would be to gather information on other local play areas. In the meantime, it was felt that a seat would be welcomed and that the toddlers' area might be fenced off. It was acknowledged that occasional vandalism and the ever-present issues of Health and Safety hindered the provision of a playground that was as comprehensive and exciting as some might like.

The Village School

The Village School has recently taken steps to actively promote stronger links with the community and has set up a School Community Task Force. With the objective of broadening the range of activities available within the village it was deemed appropriate to consult this group about facilities that the school might be able to make more generally available. This was deemed a high priority. The school already has a weekly Badminton Club and there is the possibility that pottery and computing classes could be offered.



Shefford Woodlands

The views expressed by Shefford Woodlands residents were broadly in line with those raised by the rest of the Parish, with residents recognising that facilities in a small hamlet are likely to be limited.

2. Social Issues

Responses to the Household Survey highlighted the following areas of concern:

- ✂ Limited facilities & activities available for young people in the Parish
- ✂ Antisocial behaviour - litter being the major issue, followed by significant concern over vandalism and theft
- ✂ Access to health care services, particularly amongst the over 60s

Youth

Local social facilities were rated as 'poor' for children up to 16 (37.5%) and for young people 17-25 (44.3%), according to the survey. The Working Group decided to focus on the needs and aspirations of young people up to the age of 17, i.e. without their own transport.

In order to clarify what our young people want, The Group enlisted the help of the Downland Youth Network (DYN). The consultation sessions were carefully planned to be lively and interactive and appropriate to the two age ranges identified: 14-17 year olds and 10-13 year olds.

In spite of widespread publicity, including door-to-door leafleting, attendance at both the March sessions was disappointing (only 5 young people at each). However, both groups were able to prioritise their wish lists and subsequently made very professional and convincing presentations to the Parish Plan Steering Committee.

The 14-17 year olds wanted new football goals and nets and a properly marked-out pitch at the Recreation Ground in the short-term, with football coaching in the medium-term. The 10-13 year olds wanted a drama group, with professional coaching, which they hope will launch a youth club with a wider range of facilities. Both teams have been working closely with the DYN to secure funding under the Big Boost scheme (Lottery funding for applications made by young people for young people). The Parish Council will need to take responsibility for the maintenance of the football pitch once the new equipment is in place. The DYN has considerable experience in setting up youth clubs and is able to give support in finding professional coaches and advising volunteers. A Steering Committee for the youth club has now been set up.

The DYN also held a consultation at Great Shefford School with the nine pupils who live in the Parish to find out what activities they currently do, and where and what they would like to have in the Parish. There is considerable support for the football and drama activities, and some interest (5 pupils) in a skateboard ramp. The level of interest needs to be investigated further, as a small low-budget ramp a few years ago was quickly vandalised. The school consultation also revealed some of the children's concerns about where they live, particularly their worries over speeding traffic.

Antisocial Behaviour and Crime

38% of the respondents expressed concern over vandalism and the same proportion expressed concern about theft. This was echoed by the Business Survey. West Berkshire crime figures show that low-level crime is on the increase. A public meeting was held in May 2006 to address Neighbourhood Policing issues and to promote the use of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Representatives of Thames Valley Police were made aware of serious concerns over the lack of police presence in the Parish and dissatisfaction over police co-ordination and follow-up when incidents are reported. The response to recent incidents of vandalism in The Mead was cited as an example.

There is no prospect of our having a village policeman, as we did until the 1990s, but under the Neighbourhood Policing Scheme, each community has a named officer assigned. Considerable interest was expressed in the 'police surgery' held in Lambourn every Friday, which helps to provide a police presence and a familiar face who can monitor local issues. The feasibility of this option should be explored for Great Shefford. Thames Valley Police are currently promoting a Neighbourhood Policing Scheme, using Community Support Officers to provide a regular police presence in local communities. To speed up the roll-out of the scheme, Parishes can fund their own officers. At £30,000 per year, the cost is high, but the feasibility of sharing the cost with other Parishes is worth investigation.

As the manpower and resources of the police are and will remain limited for the foreseeable future, the extension of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme within the Parish needs to be actively encouraged (37% of survey respondents were in favour of this). Between 30% to 40% of the Parish has schemes that are up and running with more coming on line. It is hoped that coverage will reach 50% by the end of 2007. By promoting awareness of simple security measures to reduce the opportunities for crime, and by disseminating reports of criminal activity in the area, the scheme aims to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Ideally the scheme should cover the entire Parish, as national statistics show that crime levels have fallen in areas displaying Neighbourhood Watch signs - householders are eight times less likely to be burgled in a Neighbourhood Watch area. Ongoing publicity, with support from the Newbury Area Administrator and Thames Valley Police should be used to raise this coverage by the end of 2007. In the meantime, any individual can register as a member of Community Watch and have access to regular local crime alerts by registering via www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org.

Another way to take back some control of what happens in our community, rather than being passive victims, is to promote awareness of the West Berkshire Council Streetcare Scheme for reporting vandalism and graffiti on public amenities via 01635 519080 or email to streetcare@westberks.gov.uk.

Access to Health Care

33% of respondents said they would like to have health care clinics in the Parish. The highest demand was for clinics for the infant and elderly age groups, so the Working Group conducted informal surveys with members of the target groups to identify current needs.

Canvassing of opinion at the Mother and Toddler Group revealed that most mothers are happy with the baby clinics run at local surgeries, and transport is not an issue. They do appreciate the monthly visits made by the Health Visitor to the Group, but do not feel the need for additional baby healthcare services in the Parish at present.

In order to assess the needs of the over 60s, a door-to-door survey of areas where housing for senior citizens is concentrated was conducted, and a questionnaire was distributed to local members of the Valley Over 60s. They were asked what healthcare clinics they would like to have in the Parish and whether access to local surgeries is an issue. A significant number of our Senior Citizens do find access to local surgeries a problem. As the bus service to Lambourn is two-hourly, those who do not drive face lengthy waits or have to rely on lifts from friends and neighbours. We recommend the setting up of a voluntary transport service to help with transport to the surgeries. 24 respondents to the Household Survey said they would be willing to take part in such a scheme, so this needs co-ordinating and promoting, with the aim in 2007 of launching a Great Shefford scheme, or of forging a link with the established Lambourn Valley scheme.

Volunteers from Great Shefford and East Garston already collect prescriptions from the doctors' surgery at Lambourn three times each week. These prescriptions are brought to the shop in each village for collection by patients.

Many of the long-term residents recalled that the doctor used to hold regular surgeries in the Parish. Whilst this is no longer a feasible option, the Patient Participation Group has reported that Lambourn Surgery will consider the possibility of offering local clinics where significant demand can be shown. Three respondents to the Over 60s questionnaire expressed a wish for a footcare clinic; this aspiration needs further investigation in conjunction with the Patient Participation Group, as there may be more significant demand along the valley. The issue of local clinics should be reviewed regularly, for example via the December issue of the Parish News, which goes to all households.

Other Issues Affecting Senior Citizens

The questionnaire feedback appeared to show a significant demand for sheltered housing (21%, and 11% saying that Great Shefford needs homes for people with disabilities). However, canvassing of opinion amongst senior citizens revealed this to be an aspiration rather than a need, as all the residents questioned are happy with the facilities offered by their current accommodation (including panic buttons and security notices) and the support given by their neighbours. This is an issue which should be monitored at least annually, for example via the December issue of the Parish News.

Shefford Woodlands

The residents of Shefford Woodlands again responded in line with the responses of the wider Parish; however the lack of Health Care clinics was the largest concern.

3. Planning Issues

The decision was taken early in the Parish Plan exercise that detailed consideration of the built environment should be the topic of a separate study, and that the Parish should prepare a separate Village Design Statement after the completion of the Parish Plan.

However, planning is such a fundamental topic that it comes into every area of the Parish Plan and was partially considered by all the Working Groups. A number of points were brought out by the results of the Household Survey. Although the categories of housing seen as most desirable were starter homes and affordable housing for locals, 53% of respondents believed that no new houses of any sort should be built. Of those who supported new housing, the vast majority only wanted in-fill development within the existing built-up areas.

The encouragement of more jobs in rural enterprises was quite well supported. When it came to the type of jobs, there was more support for small business development than there was for small-scale industrial workshops. Of those who expressed an opinion, there was a small majority against the encouragement of small-scale industrial workshops but in favour of small business development. Despite the support for more jobs, there was strong feeling against the encouragement of more retail outlets and tourism development/attractions.

The Planning Working Group came to the conclusion that there are no further sites where significant in-fill could take place without compromising the character of the Parish. Any future small-scale development should be appropriate to the needs of the village, in keeping with its character, and should respect the objectives of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Outside the built-up areas, the Parish is largely protected from development because it is within the AONB. In accordance with the AONB Management Plan, developments that are intrusive, unsympathetic or can be seen over a wide area should be resisted (Policy DP4). Where farm buildings are converted into offices or workshops, care should be taken to ensure that the landscape will not be harmed by light pollution or excessive signage. The Parish Council has been particularly disturbed by the relatively large number of retrospective planning applications that have been submitted over recent years.

Shefford Woodlands

The residents of Shefford Woodlands also recognised the benefits of living within an Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and as in the responses of the wider Parish expressed a strong desire to limit further building within the Parish and their village, other than limited infill or replacement buildings.

4. Environmental Issues

Responses from villagers showed five main areas of concern for the local environment: litter, lighting, the state of the footpaths and river and flooding.

Litter

60% of respondents identified litter as a significant social and environmental problem. The Social Issues Working Group organised a Village Litter Pick in March 2006 to address the problem. This was well supported, and the volunteers managed to clean up the whole of Great Shefford in one morning. Whilst it is hoped that improved environmental awareness and enforcement measures will reduce the problem, it is planned to hold twice-yearly Litter Picks for the foreseeable future. This will require active community involvement, and village organisations, particularly youth groups, will be encouraged to take part to help to promote a spirit of community responsibility and pride in maintaining our environment.

Experience from the Litter Pick and anecdotal evidence suggested that there are several sources for the litter problem. One is passing motorists throwing litter including cigarette ends and fast food wrappers out of their



vehicles. This problem is most noticeable along the A338 and the valley road. Additionally, there is a related problem at the lay-bys on the A338 by Junction 14, where HGVs stop overnight. Here the litter-bins regularly overflow. Local residents also drop litter, including garden waste, plastic bags and other items on residential streets, footpaths and open spaces. The final source of litter is spillage from refuse and recycling collection rounds.

The Environmental Issues Working Group came up with many proposals to tackle this. Litter bin capacity and frequency of collection at the A338 lay-bys at Junction 14 should be increased. This will need liaison between the Parish Council and West Berkshire Council and their refuse contractors. Signs could be provided at the entrances to Great Shefford, requesting drivers to respect the local environment by refraining from littering. This will require liaison between the Parish Council and West Berkshire Council. Enforcement of existing anti-littering legislation should also be improved. This will require liaison between the Parish Council and West Berkshire Council and the active participation of the community in general to act as the eyes of the enforcing authorities. Awareness of the problems that litter can cause (e.g. to wildlife) could be improved among younger members of the community. This will require liaison between the various schools attended by local children. Local traders may be able to assist by displaying prominent notices requesting customers to respect the local environment and refrain from littering. This will require the assistance of local businesses, particularly the Shop, Petrol Station, Pub and Social Club. Residents awareness of the availability of subsidised composters via West Berkshire Council could be increased. This will require liaison between the Parish Council and West Berkshire Council. Incidents of spillage from refuse/recycling vehicles should be reported to West Berkshire Council. This would require the active participation of the community in general.

Footpaths

Great Shefford is provided with an extensive network of footpaths, which contribute to the rural feel of the community, which in turn is highly valued by residents. However the network of rights-of-way is regarded as being fragmentary. The Parish Council could effectively lead negotiations between residents, local landowners, West Berkshire Council, North Wessex Downs AONB and organisations representing riders and walkers to seek to establish an enhanced and coherent rights-of-way network.

Lighting

This is an area of concern, which raised a large number of, often conflicting, comments. Observations fell into two broad camps, those who were concerned that current levels of lighting were excessive and contributed to general light pollution (or sky glow), and those who thought that lighting was insufficient for safety purposes. When these comments are considered in detail, it becomes apparent that some parts of Great Shefford are unlit, while some parts are regarded as having excessive street lighting.

In order to redress this balance the Parish Council will need to take a leading role in negotiating with West Berkshire Council for improvements in the design of street lighting luminaires when the opportunity arises (such as when any changes or improvements are proposed). The North Wessex Downs AONB Office is a useful source of advice in this respect. The areas of the village where lack of lighting is a concern include several of the footpaths, such as the one between the Swan and River Way Mill Lane, and some of the areas of pavement near the bridge. The main concern in these latter locations is one of safety, both in relation to crime and road safety. In essence what is required in such areas is low power, low level lighting to illuminate the path and give pedestrians confidence that they can see and be seen. Excessively bright lighting would be intrusive to residents near these locations and contribute to the problem of sky glow. The Parish Council is ideally placed to consult with the local population over detailed plans for each location and to lobby for funding for any such scheme as may be regarded as advantageous. North Wessex Downs AONB has suggested the establishment of a pilot project (later to be extended elsewhere) involving themselves, the Parish and West Berkshire Council to reduce the undesirable effects of street lighting whilst providing adequate illumination.

River Protection

The rural setting of Great Shefford is highly prized by residents. One of the features which contributes to the rural feel of the village is the River Lambourn. The River Lambourn is already extensively protected by its status as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This severely restricts what landowners can do along its banks. However, there is a need to ensure that the aquifers feeding it are able to maintain its flow. This requires liaison with the Environment Agency (EA) on Water Abstraction Licenses from the Lambourn Valley generally. The AONB Management Plan is committed to "Resisting new abstraction licences" (Policy CP1), and also to the promotion of river restoration (Policy CP8).



It will be necessary to work closely with other parishes within the Lambourn valley. Any signs of pollution or wildlife die off should be reported to the EA by either the Parish Council or any individual who notices such an incident. Furthermore, any activities which breach the river's protection as a SSSI should be reported to the EA.

Flooding

Residents of Wantage Road expressed concerns about flooding at times of high groundwater levels. The control measures put into place after the last serious flood by the Environment Agency, Thames Water and West Berkshire Council have not yet been tested by a similar challenge and it remains to be seen whether they are adequate. The Parish Council should continue to monitor the stream running parallel to the Wantage Road for potential obstructions and take appropriate action.

Under exceptional circumstances flash flooding has occurred in the past in Newbury Road and Church Street, and the Parish Council should confer with the AONB over the risk of flood damage here and in Wantage Road in the future before approaching the relevant authorities.

Shefford Woodlands

The responses of the residents of Shefford Woodlands focused on four main areas. Increasing motorway noise is the main concern of the villagers, and there is a strong desire to encourage the Highways Agency to resurface the motorway with a quieter road surface (see the traffic section below). Litter on the periphery of the village, particularly the side of the A338 by junction 14, was a concern together with the desire for dog litter bins in the hamlet to encourage the collection of dog litter from the footpaths. Improvements to some of the footpaths in the village to permit increased accessibility for children and buggies was desired. Another issue raised was that a safe footpath from Shefford Woodlands to Great Shefford might be developed.

5. Traffic, Highways and Public Transport

Background

The aim of this section of the Parish Plan is to produce a set of concerns and proposals, which are fully supported by both villagers and Parish Council and enshrined in a formal document. The Working Group would like the West Berkshire Council Highways Department to give serious consideration to these topics.

The Working Group aimed to develop a comprehensive and supported plan by taking the following steps:

- ✦ Pulling together and prioritising all areas of concern and proposed solutions
- ✦ Assessing the extent of support for both concerns and solutions
- ✦ Prioritising according to the level of support
- ✦ Putting the findings together into an action plan within the Parish Plan

The Working Group agreed that solutions presented for West Berkshire Council action should:

- ✦ Have significant support within the Parish as demonstrated e.g. by questionnaire responses
- ✦ Be physically achievable and cost effective
- ✦ Be reasonable in terms of 'A-road' traffic flow
- ✦ Be able to provide effective solutions to specific concerns

Highways and traffic issues have long been of concern to residents of Great Shefford. There is a perception that Great Shefford, despite its location on an A road, has received less support from the authorities than other local parishes and this sentiment led to the establishment of the Great Shefford Traffic Action Group (STAG) which has been very active in this area. The Parish Council has maintained a good working relationship with West Berkshire Council which has resulted in a continuous dialogue leading to improvements such as extended speed limits and footway construction and enhancements along the Wantage Road, and it continues to press for other improvements, but is aware that some residents believe that progress has not been fast enough.

The Household Survey

A number of questions were asked in the Household Survey which was completed by 75% of households in the Parish. The main conclusions from over 400 respondents were:

- ✦ Great Shefford inhabitants are very reliant on their motor vehicles. The 276 households which responded together keep 494 cars or vans and 24 motor cycles.
- ✦ Conversely, the bus service is used by relatively few people (20% of respondents use the bus service to Newbury; other services are less used). The services might be more used if they were improved, and they are important to those who use them.
- ✦ Speeding on the Wantage Road is a major concern and the installation of speed warning signs is favoured by the majority.

The Traffic Survey

Only a limited number of questions could be included in the original Survey. The Working Group therefore developed an additional more detailed questionnaire, which was distributed to all households. 73 individuals responded and the results were gathered together with the earlier data into a final Action Plan.

One area that specifically needed further clarification in the additional Traffic Survey concerned public transport. Public transport provision is limited and the current bus service appears to be significantly under-used, and buses are not run at times when you would expect them to be most popular. The Working Group felt that there was a danger that the current service provision is not based on any real assessment of when and where the service is needed, and that such an assessment is long overdue and would also help to ensure the future of the service by improving its economic viability.

The Traffic Survey attempted to clarify whether people would use additional public transport if available. As rural bus services are heavily subsidised due to low usage, a significant economic case would have to be made to justify the running of additional services or services at different times of the day. The Group felt strongly that an answer was needed, not to 'would you like certain bus services', but to 'would you really use them'. If you can get from A to B conveniently and cheaply, then the service will be used but in practice most people who have the use of a car will use that, whether the bus service is there or not. The additional Traffic Survey therefore asked specific questions to try to ascertain how often people claim that they would use certain services and what improvements would make that feasible.

Apart from suggested changes to speed limits in the Wantage Road, it was accepted that the present speed limits within the village were acceptable, with little need to extend or increase them. The major concerns and proposals are related to the perceived wide incidence of speeding and dangerous overtaking in particular areas. In addition several stretches of road within the area were felt to be extremely dangerous due to a mixture of width and visibility combined with traffic speeds and the high incidence of wide and heavy vehicles. The installation of speed indicator signs on the A338 in Wantage Road and at the Hungerford Hill approach to Great Shefford is identified as a high priority action.

Road noise is also an issue, with old style gravelled surfaces excessively noisy both within Great Shefford and on some of the more exposed high-speed approaches. Motorway noise from the M4 is a serious blight in Shefford Woodlands. The Parish on its own cannot achieve any reduction in this noise pollution. However, "Reduction in the noise and visual impact of the main trunk roads" is a key policy (T7) in the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan, and by working with the AONB, other local parishes, local councillors and MPs it is hoped that the highway authorities can be persuaded to lay quiet surfacing and install screening.

Shefford Woodlands residents were also particularly concerned with speed limit observation on both the B4000 and A338, and would be very keen to see increased use of electronic warning signs and enforcement of existing speed and weight restrictions on these roads.

Public transport has been shown to be as poorly supported as it appeared, with only 3 to 5 people of the 73 who responded claiming that they would use daily any of the three possible routes (to Hungerford, Newbury or Wantage), larger numbers weekly and the vast proportion monthly or not at all. The smaller flexible service to Hungerford was seen to be the most appropriate of those bus services which are currently available. Even late night weekend services did not receive the level of support that had been expected.

6. The Views of Local Businesses

Traditionally the business activities in Great Shefford Parish were farming and the provision of services required by local residents. Many of these businesses still remain; the Parish today has a Village Shop, a petrol station, a garage, two pubs and its farms, although the latter employ far fewer people than before. The significant change of the past decade has been the arrival in the Parish of a number of small businesses, many of which now occupy premises converted from their former agricultural use, most notably at Northfield Farm and at Wickfield.

These businesses form a significant part of the village community and it was decided to conduct a questionnaire survey of the enterprises located in the Parish in order to complement the information gained from the Household Survey (which itself confirmed that a significant number of people run businesses or work at home). 28 businesses were identified and requested to complete a 24-question form in January 2006. Three quarters of the enterprises returned their forms, so although the numbers are small the answers can be considered to represent the collective views of businesses in the Parish. The results are summarised in the Survey Results Section of this report.

These show that there is a remarkable diversity of business activity within the Parish, with manufacturing, service provision and agricultural/equestrian activities being the most significant. Reflecting the changes of recent times, over half of these businesses arrived in the past five years, and the most significant reason for locating within Great Shefford Parish was the availability of suitable premises, but road and transport links, the geographical location and the rural setting were also cited as being important. In fact 75% of respondents said that the quality of the local countryside was important or very important for their business. Most of the businesses are not currently planning to move, but those that are considering doing so say that it is because they are outgrowing their present premises.

The 21 businesses which responded provide employment (full-time or part-time) for over 150 people of whom 27% live in the Parish, 21% live within five miles and the remainder come from further afield. Over three quarters travel to work by car or van and only 6% use public transport. Not surprisingly over half the businesses had no opinion

about the bus service, but 7 would like a more frequent service with one respondent saying that this would help younger employees.

The business community appears to be broadly satisfied with the performance of West Berkshire Council and the utility companies, but would like to see better recycling facilities and one third had problems with mobile phone reception. Broadband availability was almost universally appreciated, as were the local Post Office, the Pubs, the Village Shop and the Petrol Station. Concern about flooding and surface water was confined to those with premises along the Wantage Road and in Newbury Road. Encouragement for small business development within the Parish was favoured by 85% and encouragement for small scale industrial units by 65% of respondents.

Opinion over police cover was almost equally divided between those who considered it poor and those who found it reasonable or better. Concern about theft is high, and vandalism and litter are significant worries. All bar one of the businesses have installed intruder alarms and most have taken other measures too. Speeding along the Wantage Road and along the B4000 is of particular concern, and the favoured remedies are electronic speed indicator signs and better enforcement of the existing limits.

There is a desire to be part of the local community. Two thirds offered support to local events, Parish facilities and services. Information about the community comes mostly by word of mouth and from the Parish Magazine. Posters are read, but few as yet are accessing the Great Shefford website.

These results show that we have a thriving business community within the Parish which appreciates the rural surroundings and what Great Shefford has to offer. These businesses provide significant employment opportunities for local people and use the services of other local enterprises. Over half of the people involved live outside the immediate area, but there appears to be a desire for greater integration within the Parish community and it is to be hoped that the implementation of the Parish Plan will help to achieve this.



The following abbreviations have been used in the Action Plan:

DYN	Downland Youth Network	GS	Great Shefford	TV	Thames Valley
EA	Environment Agency	GSPC	Great Shefford Parish Council	VH	Village Hall
GCT	Greenham Common Trust	NWD-AONB	North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	WBC	West Berkshire Council

Aim	The Action	How	Priority	Partners	When	Resource	Comments
Amenities							
To improve communication within the Parish	A1 Develop the Parish website www.greatshefford.org.uk	Recruit a webmaster asap Encourage Parish organisations to submit topical information	High	GSPC, Parish organisations Webmaster GCT	By mid 2007	GSPC	Website is little used, according to Parish Survey GCT have offered help with website design and set up
	A2 Ensure the continuing success of Great Shefford Parish News	Encourage advertisers and contributors Include business premises in December distribution	High	GSPC GSP News Editor & Treasurer	Ongoing	GSPC Local Advertisers	GSPC currently underwrites funding (if required) of Christmas edition for distribution to all households in Parish, and provides computer for editor
	A3	Promote magazine sales	Medium	Above + GS Shop & Petrol Station	Ongoing	GSPC	
	A4 Improve communications from the GSPC	GSPC to make better use of website	High	GSPC	Ongoing	GSPC, Volunteers	
	A5	GSPC to consider production of quarterly newsletter	Medium	GSPC	Early 2007	GSPC Volunteers	
To improve the Recreation Ground	A6 To improve existing junior play area facilities	Gather information on other local play areas, consult parents, seek funding then replace and/or add to existing equipment and to install a fence	High	GSPC WBC	6-12 months	Grant funding. Possibly Section 106 funds WBC Vibrant Villages Fund	Maybe funds can also be raised by village and local businesses. Advice available from WBC, Sport England & Oxford Playing Fields Association on all aspects of improving play and sport facilities
	A7 To provide better football areas	Provision of new nets and possible goal posts. Arrange marking out of football area	High	GSPC WBC DYN	3-6 months	GSPC Connexions grant (WBC)	Specifically requested by young people in the Parish. See also Social Issues Action Plan

	A8 To install a seat for supervising parents	Seek opinions from parents as to location and need	Medium	GSPC	2007	GSPC	
	A9 To replace the existing multiplay structure	Research options Consult children and parents Seek grant funding	Medium	GSPC WBC	2008	GSPC WBC Grant funding Local fund raising	Current structure was installed in 1988
To explore possibilities for new sports facilities	A10 To look at possibility of creating a tennis court	Explore potential sites and funding	Medium	GSPC WBC	2-3 months	GSPC WBC Village fund raising	Strong support noted from villagers.
To encourage the integration of Shefford School within the community and to encourage best use of its facilities	A11 Enhance communications between the School and the community	Publicity Magazine / Website articles School Open Days GSP Councillor visits	High	Shefford School, School Community Task Force GSPC	Continuous	GSPC WBC Village fund raising	Community events to be organised once a term - first of series of events - June 2006 "Wonderland" afternoon, November 2006 - Community Firework Party
	A12 Explore options for extending access to the existing Badminton Club, kilns and pottery equipment.	Liaise with School Community Involvement Group	High	Shefford School Community Task Force Shefford School Head Teacher, WBC	ASAP	Education Authority Participants' contributions	The School already offer lunch for villagers on Wednesdays and access to the Badminton Club. More community involvement is planned by the School
To make best use of Great Shefford Village Hall	A13 Promote the use of the Village Hall as a community asset	Review the current facilities and seek funding for desirable improvements if required	High	VH Committee	2006 / early 2007	VH Committee Grant Funding	Lack of storage space has been identified as a problem for one interested group
	A14 Promote the availability of the Hall	Publicity Actively seek use of VH by organisations, classes etc.	High	VH Committee GSP Magazine GS Website School Newsletter	Continuous	VH Committee	Continue promoting Hall to wider audience - eg October 2006 Watermill Theatre production
To offer more amenities generally	A15 Explore options for new clubs/classes	Questionnaire in Dec. edition of Magazine	Medium	GSP Magazine GS Website GSPC	December annually	Participants' contributions Newbury College?	Yoga classes were already offered at the Village Hall with a small take up. Salsa dance classes could be if enough people interested

Aim	The Action	How	Priority	Partners	When	Resource	Comments
Social Issues							
To improve the resources & facilities for young people in the Parish	S1 Clarify the needs / wishes of the young people	Youth consultation sessions: • 14-17 yrs on 22/3/06 • 10-13 yrs on 27/3/06 • Shefford School (6-11 yrs) on 22/5/06	High	DYN Shefford School	Done Done	DYN funding School time + DYN involvement	Already underway as a result of needs identified in Parish Plan Survey
Outcomes:	S2 14-17 yr old group want new football goals & nets and pitch marking at Recreation Ground	Presentation to Parish Plan committee on 3rd April. Scheme approved by GSPC, Funding secured	High	DYN GSPC	3-6 months	Connexions funding secured (£1000). Further bid for £2000 for coaching submitted. Maintenance by GSPC	Already underway as a result of needs identified in Parish Plan Survey
	S3 10-13 yr old group want a youth club, to include a drama group	Presentation to Parish Plan Steering Committee on 10th May. Scheme approved by GSPC, now applying for funding. Youth Group Steering Committee formed	High	DYN GSPC	2006-7	Local Network funding	Already underway as a result of needs identified in Parish Plan Survey
	S4 6-11 yr old group want improved football facilities, a dance/drama group & a skateboard ramp	Funding for football and drama facilities - as above. Further investigation into level of demand for ramp required	High Medium	DYN GSPC	2006-7	Local Network funding	Additional fundraising required if high level of demand for ramp proven
To promote community responsibility for reducing litter	S5 Continue to organise litter-picking days						See Environment Actions for details
To reduce the incidence of vandalism and graffiti	S6 Improve the resources & facilities for young people in the Parish	Improve playground facilities Encourage activities for young people					See elsewhere in Social Issues and in Amenities Actions for details. See Environment Actions for vandalism / graffiti repairs
To reduce the incidence of crime (esp. theft) in the Parish	S7 Extend existing Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	1) Public meeting on 8/5 to raise awareness of scheme 2) Local coordinators to further publicise scheme and extend coverage within Parish	High	West Berks Neighbourhood Watch + TV Police	2006-7	Ringmaster + TV Community messaging (min. cost to Parish) Volunteers GSPC to monitor progress	More coordinators recruited - half of Parish still to be covered. Consult businesses about involvement

	S8 Investigate options for Community policing	Public meeting on 8/5 to raise awareness of scheme	Medium	TV Police WBC GSPC Local Parishes	2006-7	TV Police GSPC Local Parishes	Consult businesses about involvement
To improve access to health care clinics	S9 Establish the need for a baby clinic in the Parish	Canvassing of opinion at Mother & Toddler group (April 2006)	Low	Patient Participation Group	Review annually	Via Christmas edition of GS Parish News (to all res.)	Feedback suggests that mothers are happy with existing clinics at local surgeries, and transport is not an issue. Health Visitor visits M&T monthly
To improve access to health care clinics	S10 Establish the need for clinic(s) for elderly parishioners	Canvassing of opinion of elderly residents + questionnaire to local members of Valley Over 60s.	High		Done		All residents canvassed said that the doctor used to hold regular surgeries in the Parish - that would be their ideal scenario. However a transport scheme may be a more attainable target
	S11	Set up a voluntary car group or establish links with the established Lambourn Valley group	High	GSPC. Volunteer drivers Lambourn Valley Volunteers Lambourn Surgery	2007	GSPC Initially, then appointed co-ordinator to liaise between patients and drivers	Transport to the surgery is the main problem as the bus service is 2-hourly Questionnaire found 24 drivers would be willing to volunteer
	S12	Some interest in a foot care clinic offering chiropody & podiatry (3 respondents) - findings passed on to Patient Participation Group	Low	Patient Participation Group	Review annually	Review via Christmas edition of GSP News (goes to all residents)	
To assist local people (who might otherwise not be able to do so) to live / continue to live in Great Shefford Parish	S13 To assess the perceived need for sheltered housing	Canvassing of opinion of elderly residents	Low	GSPC Sovereign Housing	Review annually	Review via Christmas edition of GSP News (goes to all residents)	21% of questionnaire respondents said it was needed. However, all elderly residents canvassed said that they were happy with the facilities offered by their existing accommodation (incl. panic buttons & security notices) and the support given by their neighbours
	S14 To assess the perceived need for affordable local housing scheme	Conduct a survey into affordable housing needs Act on the findings	Medium	Community Council for Berkshire, Rural Housing Trust, Sovereign Housing, GSPC	2007	GSPC CCB Sovereign Housing	37% of questionnaire respondents said it was needed

	E5 Anti-littering education	At school/playgroup	High	School Playgroup GSPC WBC	2007/8	Costs not yet identified, possible WBC contribution	May be volunteer effort
	E6 Signage and bins outside local businesses	Seek co-operation of businesses	Medium	GSPC GS Shop Petrol Station Swan, Pheasant	2007/8	To be provided by the businesses	
	E7 Increase awareness of availability of subsidised composters	Via website, GS Parish News	High	WBC GSPC	2006/7	Uses existing resources	
	E8 Report spillages from refuse / recycling vehicles	Community action	Medium	WBC Contractors	2006/7	GSPC Community effort	
	E9 Eliminate dog fouling problems in Shefford Woodlands	Provide a dog litter bin in Shefford Woodlands	Medium	GSPC WBC	2007	GSPC WBC	Requested in Questionnaire
Encourage recycling within the Parish	E10 Try to establish a recycling "bring site" in Great Shefford	Investigate the possibility of establishing a recycling "bring site" in Great Shefford and act on the results	Medium	GSPC WBC Sovereign Housing?	2007	GSPC to initiate WBC	
Reduce noise Pollution	E11 Encourage use of low-noise road surfacing on roads and motorway						See Traffic Action Points
Reduce light pollution	E12 Modification of street lights to reduce light overspill, glare and light pollution	GSPC to initiate programme for its own lights. GSPC to lobby WBC to modify their street lights	Medium	GSPC NYD-AONB	2007/8	GSPC	Cost not identified but will depend on design of light fitting and proposed modification Maintenance of dark night skies is a key objective of the NWD-AONB management plan (Policy DP8)
	E13 Pilot study to seek ways to provide adequate lighting, but minimise light pollution		Medium	GSPC NWD-AONB WBC	2007	GSPC NWD-AONB WBC	Suggested by NWD-AONB
Improve pedestrian safety	E14 Provide low level lighting at specific locations such as the path between the bridge and River Way	GSPC project & advice available from WBC & NYD-AONB	Medium	GSPC WBC NYD-AONB	2007/8	GSPC, WBC	Cost not identified but will depend on design of light fittings

Aim	The Action	How	Priority	Partners	When	Resource	Comments
Planning							
To ensure that development within the Parish is in keeping, appropriate and in the best interests of the whole community	PI Prepare and publish Village Design Statement	Set up a Working Group Seek funding Seek advice from WBC, NWD-AONB and possibly consultants	High	GSPC, Volunteers, WBC, N. Wessex Downs AONB. Consultants?	2007	GSPC WBC Grant Funding	It was decided not to consider planning issues in detail in the Parish Plan, but to do so in a Village Design Statement which would be prepared as a later separate exercise
To assist local people (who might otherwise not be able to do so) to live / continue to live in Great Sheffield Parish	P2 GSPC to strive to reflect local opinion when considering planning applications and to convey this to WBC	GSPC to review regularly planning procedures GSPC to ensure interested parties are aware of applications	High	GSPC, WBC Planning Dept.	From Autumn 2006	GSPC	

Environment

To keep the Parish tidy and litter free	E1 Continue to organise litter-picking days	Seek volunteers by word-of-mouth, website, GS Parish News	High	GSPC Brownies Volunteers W. Berks Volunteer Centre	Twice yearly	GSPC Community effort Volunteers Minimal cost	Insurance / safety issues W. Berks Volunteer Centre have offered assistance
	E2 Repair damage caused by vandalism & graffiti	Where appropriate organise volunteer repair parties	High	GSPC, Volunteers, WBC W. Berks Volunteer Centre. TV Police Get Rid of Graffiti campaign	As required	GSPC Volunteers W. Berks Volunteer Centre., WBC, TV Police	W. Berks Volunteer Centre have offered assistance Also raise awareness of WBC Streetcare service via Parish News & website NWD-AONB is concerned about fly-tipping (Policy SLM7)
	E3 Increase capacity of bins/ frequency of collection of bins at A338 lay-bys at J14	Liaison with WBC and contractors	High	WBC	2006/7	WBC responsibility	
	E4 Enforcement of existing anti-littering legislation	Deployment of authorised officer	Medium	GSPC WBC	2007/8	Costs not yet identified, possible WBC contribution	May be a WBC responsibility, but may also be delegated to Parish level

	E5 Anti-littering education	At school/playgroup	High	School Playgroup GSPC WBC	2007/8	Costs not yet identified, possible WBC contribution	May be volunteer effort
	E6 Signage and bins outside local businesses	Seek co-operation of businesses	Medium	GSPC GS Shop Petrol Station Swan, Pheasant	2007/8	To be provided by the businesses	
	E7 Increase awareness of availability of subsidised composters	Via website, GS Parish News	High	WBC GSPC	2006/7	Uses existing resources	
	E8 Report spillages from refuse / recycling vehicles	Community action	Medium	WBC Contractors	2006/7	GSPC Community effort	
	E9 Eliminate dog fouling problems in Shefford Woodlands	Provide a dog litter bin in Shefford Woodlands	Medium	GSPC WBC	2007	GSPC WBC	Requested in Questionnaire
Encourage recycling within the Parish	E10 Try to establish a recycling "bring site" in Great Shefford	Investigate the possibility of establishing a recycling "bring site" in Great Shefford and act on the results	Medium	GSPC WBC Sovereign Housing?	2007	GSPC to initiate WBC	
Reduce noise Pollution	E11 Encourage use of low-noise road surfacing on roads and motorway						See Traffic Action Points
Reduce light pollution	E12 Modification of street lights to reduce light overspill, glare and light pollution	GSPC to initiate programme for its own lights. GSPC to lobby WBC to modify their street lights	Medium	GSPC NYD-AONB	2007/8	GSPC	Cost not identified but will depend on design of light fitting and proposed modification Maintenance of dark night skies is a key objective of the NWD-AONB management plan (Policy DP8)
	E13 Pilot study to seek ways to provide adequate lighting, but minimise light pollution		Medium	GSPC NWD-AONB WBC	2007	GSPC NWD-AONB WBC	Suggested by NWD-AONB
Improve pedestrian safety	E14 Provide low level lighting at specific locations such as the path between the bridge and River Way	GSPC project & advice available from WBC & NYD-AONB	Medium	GSPC WBC NYD-AONB	2007/8	GSPC, WBC	Cost not identified but will depend on design of light fittings

Aim	The Action	How	Priority	Partners	When	Resource	Comments
Protection of River Lambourn	E15 Report any incidents of pollution or other abuse to EA	Community action	High	GSPC, Community EA	Ongoing		
	E16 To enhance water flow and quality in the River Lambourn	Lobby EA to reduce permits for groundwater abstractions in the Lambourn Valley	Medium	GSPC Lambourn Valley Parishes, EA, NWD-AONB Action for River Kennet, Newbury MP	2006/7	Minimal costs	
Minimise risk of flooding	E17 Ensure Wantage Road stream is unobstructed	Continue to monitor stream and remove any obstructions	High	GSPC Wantage Rd. residents	Continuous	GSPC, Community Effort	
	E18 Ensure flood protection measures are adequate	Consult NWD-AONB for flood risk information	Medium	GSPC	2007	GSPC NWD-AONB	Action A25 in NWD-AONB Management Plan
Improvement of footpath / bridleway network	E19 Initiate discussions to provide a coherent rights-of-way network	Liaison with WBC, landowners, Ramblers' Association, British Horse Society, N. Wessex Downs AONB	Medium	GSPC, WBC, landowners, Ramblers' Association, British Horse Society, NWD-AONB	2007/8	GSPC, WBC. Costs will depend on negotiations	

Traffic, Highways and Transport

Please refer to the responses to Household Survey questions 31-34,48-49, Business Survey questions 16-18 & the Traffic Survey for the basis for these Action Points

To address village concerns regarding speeding	T1 Continue to assess the exact scope and location of the problem	Measurement of traffic speeds on all roads & research into existing data to quantify the issue	Top	WBC	ASAP	WBC	Both the Household Survey and the Traffic Survey identified speeding in Wantage Road as a matter of particular concern
	T2 Conduct speed surveys to update existing data	WBC to undertake relevant traffic surveys	High	WBC	ASAP	WBC GSPC Volunteers	Parish Councillors can be trained to operate SID equipment
	T3 Improve 30 m.p.h. sign	Larger village/speed signs similar to Stockcross	High	WBC GSPC	2007	WBC	Negotiate the best and most effective signs that can be put in place. Space may limit the nature of the installation on Hungerford Hill

	T4 Improve 30 m.p.h. signs	White village gates at Wantage Road 30 limit similar to Stockcross	High	WBC GSPC	2007	WBC	Space is almost certainly not available for this installation on Hungerford Hill 30 signs on Wantage road are particularly poor
	T5 Improve road surface signs	Install & maintain road surface speed and warning signs (in keeping with other villages).	High	WBC	2007	WBC	Road surface signs for the Wantage Road 30 limit are particularly poor
	T6 Improve driver behaviour (speed)	Install Speed Activated Signs at strategic points	Very High	WBC	2007	WBC	On A338 at northern and southern entrances to Great Shefford as a priority
	T7 Improve driver behaviour (overtaking)	Double white lines through village 30 m.p.h. limit where appropriate	Medium	WBC	2007	WBC	National rules apply. Guidance required from WBC
	T8 Address anomaly in 30 m.p.h. speed signage on Wantage Road	Move 30 limit to coincide with the School warning signs	Medium	WBC	2007	WBC	Wantage Road 30 limit does not coincide with the School warning signs but starts at the School entrance road. However this change has been rejected several times by WBC Speed Limit Task Group
	T9 Enforce the existing speed limits	Press for more frequent police speed checks More SID surveys	High	TV Police WBC	2007		
	T10 Encourage slower speeds on B4000	Install "Shefford Woodlands" signs with "drive slowly" message at each end of settlement on B4000	Medium	GSPC	when funds available	WBC GSPC	Shefford Woodlands is the only settlement on Ermin Street not to have these signs. Important not to increase confusion
To address village concerns over safety	T11 Improve the corner at the bottom of Hungerford Hill	To be discussed with GSPC and WBC.	High	WBC		WBC GSPC	Currently the bend is completely blind and too narrow to allow lorries to turn safely. Any approaching car may meet a lorry approaching at speed, on their side of the road and within a few metres of them
	T12 Improve visibility from side roads	Explore possibility of mirrors or mini-roundabouts. Junctions are: The Mead, Blakeney Fields, Hungerford Hill	Medium	WBC GSPC	2007	WBC GSPC	This will improve both safety, and the noise from people accelerating fast to get out. Mirrors require Dept. for Transport approval which is rarely granted

Aim	The Action	How	Priority	Partners	When	Resource	Comments
	T13 Pavement Improvements	Pavement on Newbury Road (field side).	Low	WBC, GSPC Landowner	Long Term	WBC	Strongly supported, but practical problems are acknowledged
	T14 Pavement Improvements	Pavement on the North side of Church Street.	Low	WBC	Long Term	WBC	There is a gap in the path coverage from the new houses on the junction, through to the Mallards. People going to church from the village centre have to either cross the road twice or walk out in the middle of the traffic
To improve parking facilities and hence road safety in the Mead	T15 Remove grass verges where appropriate and replace with hard surface. Install drop kerbs where needed	Establish an agreement between Sovereign Housing and WBC jointly to fund and undertake this improvement	Medium	WBC Sovereign Housing	When funds available	WBC Sovereign Housing GSPC to lobby	Sovereign Housing have expressed willingness to do this in conjunction with WBC when funds are available
To address Parish issues with traffic noise	T16 Replace existing road surfaces within village speed limits plus possibly Hungerford Hill with low noise material	Request WBC to use low noise materials when resurfacing roads within the Parish	Medium	GSPC WBC NWD-AONB	Long Term	WBC	These materials are being used elsewhere in west Berkshire
	T17 Lobby for low noise road surface on M4	Press for low noise materials to be used when the M4 is next re-surfaced and for strategic tree planting and maintenance	High	Individuals, GS GSPC, WBC, NWD-AONB Other PCs along M4, Newbury MP	Long Term	Highways Agency	The noise from the M4 is a particular issue for Sheffield Woodlands and others who live along the B4000 Ties in with Policy T7 & Actions A85 & A13 of NWD-AONB Management Plan
To improve local bus and transport services	T18 Review real bus service requirement and agree appropriate solutions to meet demand	Press for the introduction of appropriate and flexible “on demand” services	Medium	Bus Companies, WBC's Improving Transportation Group, GSPC	Long Term	Bus Companies WBC	High levels of car ownership mean that demand for bus services is low, but the services are very important for those who do not have a car
	T19 Investigate the need for a voluntary car scheme and act on the results	Investigate need further, and if required appoint a liaison volunteer. Consider cooperation with Lambourn Valley Scheme	Medium	Over 60s Lambourn Valley Car Scheme GSPC	2007	Individuals, GSPC,	See Social action points. This could help with transport to medical appointments. Survey indicated potential volunteers W. Berks Volunteer Centre have offered assistance

Great Shefford Village Street Plan

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