PLAXTOL PARISH PLAN

2015 UPDATE

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

This 2015 Update to the Plaxtol Parish Plan offers the views of Plaxtol parishioners and what they wish for the parish over the next five to ten years. It is an update to the Plan published in 2005. It addresses issues which are likely to feature in the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (TMBC) Local Plan, which is currently being prepared, including land allocation and housing needs. It is designed to reflect the views of a Plaxtol population which has changed in the decade since the original document was produced.

It considers requirements and sets out aspirations and actions, in respect of:

- **housing and planning**
- **environment and landscape**
- **highways, road safety and transport**
- **local businesses (including farming)**
- **policing and community safety**
- **community activity and communication**
- **social facilities and services**

This update has been produced following informal consultation within Plaxtol and with the Borough Council. The revised Parish Plan will be taken into consideration during the preparation of the TMBC Local Plan, which is expected to be adopted during 2017.

Due consideration has been paid to the relevant content of the 2011 Localism Act, the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance published in 2014. Parishioners acknowledge and support the policies laid down in paragraphs CP12, CP13, CP14, CP17 and CP19 of the current Local Development Framework Core Strategy, with the proviso that any development under the terms of CP19 should be in response to confirmed need within the parish.

The general outcomes of the consultation are set out opposite.

Copies are available from Plaxtol Church, the village shop, the butcher's shop, the Parish Clerk and on the Parish website:

www.plaxtol.com

Consultation: General Outcomes

> Concerns over the affordability and availability of housing for first-time home owners and downsizers are discussed.

> There is recognition that affordable dwellings within the Isles Quarry West development at Borough Green rural service centre are available to Plaxtol residents who meet the housing need criteria.

> Every development proposal within the parish should take into account the contents of the Plaxtol Parish Design Statement. The parish council will additionally seek assurances at the planning stage in relation to:

  — means of rainwater capture, including Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) where these are indicated;

  — restrictions upon security lighting (quantity and type) to address light pollution, as set out in paragraph 125 of the NPPF;

  — provision of sufficient off-road parking to mitigate existing parking problems.

> Parishioners wish to see the rural character of Plaxtol parish preserved, and emphasise:

  — the productivity and versatility of Plaxtol's farmland;

  — Plaxtol's position within the Kent Downs AONB;

  — the existence of four Conservation Areas and around 80 Listed buildings within the parish;

  — a preference for development of brownfield sites within the Plaxtol village envelope over development of greenfield sites.

> This update resolves to seek assistance from the Kent County Council Highways Authority in addressing the condition and repair of roadside speed restriction signs, new road markings, repainting of existing road markings and the use of temporary interactive signs.

> Parishioners have to travel outside the parish to attend GP surgeries. The prescription medicine delivery service offered by the Borough Green and Hadlow medical practices is highly-valued and well-subscribed.

> Bus services are open to improvement.

> Changes in the way our parish is policed need to be better communicated to residents.

> The value of the key businesses in the parish – the shops and public houses – goes far beyond their commercial worth. Their viability needs to be protected. Actions in support of these and other local businesses are identified.

> Farming remains of key relevance to the sustainability of Plaxtol's economy and ecology.

> Community Assets, for which the parish could seek Right to Bid, are identified as:

  — the village shop;

  — the post office;

  — the public houses in the parish; and

  — the School Lane recreation ground.

> The wide range of community activities in Plaxtol is vital to both formal and informal support networks within the parish. The Update contains suggestions as to how these might be added to, to widen appeal and inclusiveness further.

> Our parish website, plaxtol.com, continues to evolve in both reach and content. Additional subjects and functions are suggested.

> Concern is expressed regarding environmental matters which lie beyond parish control.

> This update also seeks to address environmental issues within the parish's own control.

> It identifies and proposes activities of value to community cohesion and community pride.

> All of the action points are set out in each relevant section.

Background

In 2005, Plaxtol produced a Parish Plan and a Parish Design Statement. These documents were to be viewed in concert, detailing the character and community of our parish and the building and landscaping styles sympathetic to this cherished rural location. They were submitted to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and form part of the Development Plan which is currently in place. However, TMBC are now in the process of producing a new Local Plan, in line with legislation. Thus, a review of Plaxtol's Parish Plan is not only timely but essential, offering the opportunity for reassessment and reassertion of our parish priorities. The 2005 documents remain available for download from our parish website (plaxtol.com), together with a 2011 Planning Review which offers guidance for applicants.

The aim of this update is to set out a vision for the future of Plaxtol in the next five to ten years, producing a strategy which can accommodate the expected pressures on land use, provision of services, local authority expenditure, etc and be incorporated within TMBC's Local Plan. As the core strategy development document, the Local Plan is expected to look as far forward as 2031. It is important that this time scale is acknowledged, as it will affect the choices and actions that Plaxtol makes.

In 2014, an informal consultation took place, comprising distribution of questionnaires via the village shops and a Drop-In Day open to residents and non-residents. Over 60 questionnaires were returned and 50 people attended the open event. At the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting the steering group presented draft Action Points based on the parish consultations, and this document has incorporated further views expressed at that meeting. TMBC had indicated that such informality in consultation would still produce acceptable feedback for them to take into consideration when preparing the Local Plan.

One of the goals of this update is to gauge the views and wishes of Plaxtol residents today, compared to a decade ago, taking account of new people who have moved into the parish in that time and movement between the different demographic groups. Comparison of the 2001 and 2011 National Census figures for Plaxtol shows that the population of the parish increased from 973 to 1,117 between those dates. There were increases in all age groups except for those aged 20-29. The 2011 increases in the under-9s and in the age group 60-74 are the most marked.

The figures highlight that school places, housing and employment opportunities for people at the beginning of their working lives, and accommodation and services for the over-70s were likely to be priority concerns for the parish both today and in the next five to ten years. These expectations were largely fulfilled by the response to the informal consultation.

Many of the views and concerns contained in the 2005 documents continue to be relevant now and for the future. However, the changes in the functions and procedures of local authorities which were introduced by the Localism Act of 2011 and in planning policy as prescribed in 2012's National Planning Policy Framework mean that our approach today needs to be more proactive and well-defined than it was a decade ago. By taking time to consider now how Plaxtol people live, work and play, we are laying an excellent foundation to both protect and promote Plaxtol's interests as the Local Plan is developed.

Plaxtol Parish Boundary

Housing & Planning

Central government has placed significant pressure on local authorities to sustainably boost housing stocks, through either land allocation or the planning application process. In either case, guidance and constraints are laid down within the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Each planning authority is required to produce a new Local Plan. It is anticipated that the first public consultation on TMBC's Local Plan will take place in Autumn 2015, at which time Plaxtol Parish Council will ensure that the views expressed here are submitted to TMBC for consideration.

One of the questions the Local Plan is likely to ask of all parishes is where will local people live, work and play? TMBC's own figures for Plaxtol state a population of just over 1000. This is made up of just over 70% economically active (66.1% employed, full-time students and 1.8% unemployed). The remaining amount is made up of just under 16% retired and 13.6% other.

The 2005 Plaxtol Parish Plan demonstrated the history and variety of dwellings in our parish, ranging from historic buildings, many Listed, to the more modern designs of the twenty-first century.

The four questions concerning housing in the consultation were:

1. How do we help people who wish to remain in the parish do so?
2. What can Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council do to help?
3. What type of housing will be required in the parish?
4. Because of Government demands on borough and district councils, TMBC has identified housing and the use of land within the borough as a top priority. Plaxtol is unlikely to be immune, so how should we respond?

The priority which came through clearly was for more provision of affordable housing and also for smaller dwellings to be built, both for children who have been brought up in Plaxtol and wish to continue living here, and for residents downsizing and wanting to stay in the parish. Another desire was for more off-street parking in planning applications and preventing over-large extensions on smaller houses for the main purpose of inflating the price at sale, later. Phase Two of Shrubshall Meadow is now completed; a review of need in the parish should be made once the take-up of this additional Moat housing has been completed and the impact of the Isles Quarry West development in Borough Green taken into account. The current Isles Quarry West construction is for 171 dwellings, 40% of which will be affordable. It is acknowledged that TMBC regard the affordable homes within this site as suitable for those wishing to continue living in this area. In each planning scenario TMBC can only abide by planning law. For example, some responses suggested restricting the amount an applicant is allowed to extend their property. This is difficult to achieve, because under Permitted Development Rights a householder is allowed to extend their property up to certain limits, without requiring planning permission and is therefore outside the control of the Local Planning Authority.

The style and materials of new or extended properties should continue to abide by the guidance laid down in the 2005 Plaxtol Parish Design Statement and be sympathetic to the wider environment. In terms of environmental preservation, respondents are supportive of steps to limit rainwater run-off, including the use of Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) where indicated, to control the quantity and quality of security lighting in accordance with paragraph 125 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and to seek appropriate levels of off-road parking. Avoiding potential development is not an option and the responses on the whole reflected this. But there was strong agreement that the integrity of the Conservation Areas and AONB should be preserved.

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Encourage those who are considering submitting a planning application to talk to the Parish (details in *The Plaxtol Herald* or on parish website) or Borough Councils (01732 844522).	Ongoing.	Parish Council.
Continue to work with TMBC to ensure parishioners' views are taken into account, with particular regard to smaller dwellings and the monitoring of potential sites for affordable housing where there is proven need.	Ongoing.	Parish Council.
Environmental impact should continue to be an important consideration in determining planning applications at parish and borough level.	Ongoing.	Parish Council.

Environment & Landscape

The comments from the parish consultation drop-in day indicated a strong concern for the environment and made many useful suggestions. All appreciated the beauty of the surrounding countryside and recognised the impact on it from modern-day life. The descriptions in the original Parish Plan are as relevant today as they were then:

'A typically Kent village in an idyllic setting.'

'Orchards, meadows, fields and agricultural nature of area surrounding the village is of the utmost importance to most villagers.'

'The views of the surrounding countryside are some of the most superb in the South East.'

The parish is fortunate in having two well-maintained recreation grounds and a community orchard, the Garratt Memorial Land, (where a new grant for pruning and replanting various apple trees to return it to its former glory has been awarded).

There were five questions asked in the questionnaire:

1. What are your concerns regarding the environment in our parish?
2. Bearing in mind current financial realities, what could be done to make the parish look better?
3. How do we attract sufficient resources to help address this?
4. One of the issues over the past few years has been dog fouling in the streets. What can be done to address this?
5. What would your view be on new forms of energy such as solar, wind, heat pumps and mains gas?

Some areas of concern emerged from the consultation. These included matters of regional responsibility or national significance, such as recycling facilities, aircraft noise and changes to the Gatwick flight-path. On a parish level, litter, fly tipping and fly-grazing, light pollution, dog mess and the spread of common ragwort are also raised.

Recent housing development in the village, close to the Bourne, and the increasing prevalence of hard landscaping have raised the question of Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) as a means to capture rainwater and preserve the biodiversity of our watercourses. SuDS attenuate rainwater run-off, reduce the risk of flooding and replenish groundwater. They also create new habitats and

opportunities for wildlife. It is expected that the Parish Council will pursue the question in relation to planning applications as they arise.

It is suggested that a 'Heritage ABC' (in effect an alphabet of local distinctiveness devised by the organisation Common Ground) might help to draw together many of our environmental and landscape features and highlight the treasured and everyday qualities which give Plaxtol its unique character. There is interest in a wildlife observation scheme and a wildlife column in *The Plaxtol Herald* and on the parish website.

With global environment and welfare in mind, moving towards Fairtrade Community status is also suggested; the criteria appear achievable and will be investigated further.

Some interest is expressed in burying power cables underground and in alternative energy sources. Solar panels on roofs received some positive responses, but their application is limited by the cost of installation and restrictions through Listing and Conservation Area status. The geographical and financial viability of mains gas will be investigated.

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Set up a Wildlife Observation scheme, ideally to involve Plaxtol Primary School.	Progress report end of December 2015, complete end of December 2016.	Parish Council representative and group of parish volunteers.
Establish an occasional wildlife column in the *The Plaxtol Herald* and on plaxtol.com.	Progress report end of March 2016, complete in Summer 2016.	Volunteer author(s).
Compile a Heritage ABC (and develop into a booklet or series of posters.	Progress report end of December 2015, complete end of December 2016.	Parish Council representative and group of parish volunteers.
Produce a two-year rolling programme for enhancing the appearance of the parish, involving residents, including a parish litter pick.	Progress report end of October 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council.
Explore avenues for promoting the parish such as introducing a Flower and Produce Show, entering into the Kent Village of the Year or Britain in Bloom competitions.	Progress and report at Annual Parish Meeting 2016, complete end 2016.	Parish Council representative and group of parish volunteers.
Monitor the impact of increased use of security lights, on-street parking, and overhead power and telephone cables in the planning process.	Ongoing.	Parish Council.
Commission a five-year plan to preserve and enhance the landscape of the Spoute recreation ground.	Progress report end September 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council representative and Parish Clerk.
Continue to monitor any changes in Gatwick flight paths.	Ongoing.	Parish Council.

Highways & Transport

Most highways in the parish are unclassified, single-carriageway lanes. Highway maintenance in the parish is the responsibility of Kent County Council (KCC). Cyclists, the provision of parking and potential parking issues, the state of the bus service and condition of the roads in the parish were the areas canvassed from parishioners.

The questions asked were:

1. How do we reduce the impact of aggressive speeding cyclists through the parish?
2. How can we improve parking provision in the village?
3. Do you think the bus service is satisfactory? If not, how could it be improved?
4. How satisfied are you with our roads, particularly in respect of potholes and gritting?
5. If you think there are traffic problems in the parish what in your view is the cause?
6. Have you identified any danger spots on the roads in and around the parish and do you have any suggestions for making these areas safer?

Parking continues to trouble residents and local businesses, especially at peak and delivery times. The village car park is small and its use is limited by various factors. School drop-off and pick-up times, when traffic volumes increase exponentially, present particular problems. Some asked for new housing to include sufficient off-street parking in the planning application process.

The bus service was regarded as good for Borough Green, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells but a more frequent one for Sevenoaks was preferred. Smaller buses, as opposed to double-decked buses, on all routes outside school times, were requested.

In general people felt that pothole repairs have improved. KCC have a pothole report and repair service on their website and the Parish Council monitors and is in regular contact with KCC Highways. More grit bins were mentioned with a wider area of road to be gritted when the weather turns icy. Generally, people felt that it would be beneficial to have more lanes gritted.

As before, the areas of concern in respect of speeding are from Church Hill down to The Street or straight on past Ken Francis Butcher's into School Lane. At peak times School Lane is also often used as a 'rat run' to and from Hadlow.

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Contact cycling clubs to raise awareness of speed and ask for their help.	Progress report end of September 2015 and ongoing.	Residents liaising with Parish Council.
Monitor the village car park so it is not used to park vehicles long-term.	Ongoing with review every six months.	Parish Council.
Investigate widening the village car park entrance and enforce parking restrictions opposite.	Progress report end of October 2015, completion May 2016.	Parish Council.
Develop a close relationship with bus companies and KCC to ensure Plaxtol is consulted on any changes and to voice parishioners' wishes (such as smaller buses during the day and an extra service to Sevenoaks).	Ongoing.	Parish Council Transport representative.
Monitor grit bins and look into getting more. Consider acquiring a gritter and also draw up a local map of salt bins which could go on public noticeboards in winter months.	Progress report end of September 2015, complete end of December 2015.	Parish Council Highways representative.
Ask KCC Highways to repaint Give Way white lines at the Spoute end of the village.	Progress end of September 2015, report end of December 2015.	Parish Council Highways representative.

Local Businesses

The village stores and post office, the butcher's shop and pubs remain at the heart of the community and should be considered as community assets. Despite constant pressures from outside competition, local demand continues but needs to be reinforced to ensure the continuation of these vital assets. More than forty other businesses are located within or close to the parish.

Farming is a part of Plaxtol's heritage and remains a profound presence today. Many of our farmers are at least second or third generation, with ties to the locality and to the community. Our farmland is productive and versatile, worthy of the commitment which our farmers demonstrate through their ongoing investment, diversification and offerings of value-added produce. Commercial methods of growing top, stone and soft fruit co-exist with productive traditional cobnut plantations and larger-scale vegetable, arable and forage crops, while pastureland is grazed predominantly by sheep. Our farmers provide jobs through both direct employment and subcontracts, and are vital in their contribution to the maintenance of our cherished and characteristic landscape, now and in the future.

Supporting local produce and a consideration for the availability of Fairtrade foods were included in the questionnaire responses.

Parishioners value local businesses and the range of services they provide and felt strongly that these assets to parish life should continue. The questions asked were:

1. How often do you make use of:
   — the shops in the village (daily/weekly/never)?
   — other local businesses (please give examples).
2. Please describe any improvement you would like to see to local businesses for example, services offered, opening times, accessibility, etc?
3. What do you think are the biggest issues facing local businesses within the parish?
4. We are proposing to have a register of local businesses on the Plaxtol website. Can we promote these businesses in other ways?
5. If you run a local business would you be prepared to participate in a business group to meet on a regular basis to discuss local issues/ideas?

Full listing of the businesses are available on the parish website, www.plaxtol.com

6. Local councils have the right to register appropriate businesses or amenities as 'Community Assets' in case they become in danger of failure or being disposed of/ sold. Would you like Plaxtol to do this, and if so, which ones would you suggest we register?

7. If you have a particular business skill or knowledge base and would be willing to be contacted for advice in respect of that subject by a member of the Parish Council, please give contact details and a description.

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Maintain regular communication with local businesses.	Ongoing.	Parish Council and local businesses.
Develop relationships with local media to maximise the benefits of the parish's varied businesses.	Ongoing.	Parish Council.
Give suggestions to local businesses based on responses from questionnaire, such as the inclusion of Fairtrade produce.	Progress report end of December 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council representative and group of parish representatives.
Encourage a local business register on the parish website.	Progress report end of November 2015, complete end of January 2016.	Parish website coordinator and Parish Council representative.
Set up a working group to consider registering the village shop and post office, butcher's and parish's pubs under the Community Assets register.	Progress report end of October 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council representative and relevant local businesses.

Policing & Community Safety

Police Coverage

Plaxtol falls within the West Kent Police area. Since the original Parish Plan was published, the police station in Borough Green has been closed as a result of national and regional cuts in UK policing and Plaxtol no longer has a dedicated local community officer. The parish is now supported by a PCSO based at Tonbridge Police Station on a 37-hour week and supported by a police officer at Tonbridge. Regular surgeries take place and residents can keep up-to-date with the opening times by accessing the Kent Police website. The PCSO attends Parish Council meetings when shifts allow. A quarterly newsletter is also of use (see right).

The consultation exercise asked three questions:

1. How can we improve contact with our local police?
2. How do we raise the profile of Neighbourhood Watch and support its aims to promote community safety?
3. How should we use social media/e-mail etc to help promote community safety?

Responses to the first indicated that where the need had arisen, for example a theft from the church, the police had been 'very good' and 'helpful'. There was also the recognition that improving contact with local police was very challenging in a climate of national public sector cuts to policing and that any future plans needed to take this into account. Some parishioners were unaware that Plaxtol no longer had a local community officer and that the role of our PCSO had largely taken on these responsibilities instead, supported by a police officer in Tonbridge.

The Kent rural policing quarterly newsletter is available at:

http://www.kent.police.uk/advice/business/rural_crime.html

Crime

Since the publication of the Parish Plan, Plaxtol has remained a comparatively safe place with a low crime rate. Vandalism is rare and although household burglaries do take place, they remain infrequent. Thefts from sheds, oil tanks and gardens remain a concern, which has been highlighted a number of times by our PCSO. Lower-level environmental issues such as fly-tipping, litter and dog fouling are a concern to many, as highlighted by the responses to the consultation exercise.

Neighbourhood Watch

A village coordinator, a deputy and a large number of local coordinators who look after their patch – each typically about twenty properties – run Plaxtol Neighbourhood Watch. The village and deputy coordinators receive email alerts from the police, warning of suspicious persons or vehicles or requesting information on incidents that have taken place. These warnings are passed on by email to any parishioner who asks to be included.

Responses to the remaining two questions indicated that residents valued Neighbourhood Watch and were grateful to the parish coordinator for playing an important role in promoting community safety and crime prevention.

Suggestions on raising the profile included a re-launch evening; using the village shop window and village noticeboards to highlight Neighbourhood Watch; using Facebook and Twitter to improve the immediacy of reporting crime; canvassing support by door-to-door visits and/or leaflet drops; running a texting service to report crime; canvassing support for more representatives to improve parish coverage and more signs to advertise Neighbourhood Watch.

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Upload picture of local PCSO, updated local crime figures and any suitable advice to parishioners on Plaxtol Facebook page, via Twitter and in shop windows and noticeboards.	Progress report end of September 2015 and ongoing.	Parish Council Police Liaison representative and Parish Clerk.
Develop close working relationship with senior police officers for this area.	Ongoing.	Parish Council Police Liaison representative.
Develop the use of Twitter further, to advertise Neighbourhood Watch information.	Progress report end of 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council Police Liaison representative with parish website coordinator.
Consider an email and text alert service.	Progress report end of 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council Police Liaison representative with parish website coordinator.

Community Activity & Communication

There are many clubs and societies in the parish, which are open to all. The parish website offers a run-down of the variety. The breadth is demonstrated in the following list: Local History Group, Women's Institute, Men's Society, PLOTS (the village allotment association), an informal curry club, several book clubs, Plaxtol Players, The Friends of Plaxtol Church, Plaxtol Music Festival, Plaxtol Church Choir, and Plaxtol Singers. On the sports front there are cricket and tennis clubs, which also take players from outside the parish. All are well-attended and contribute to the great sense of community in our parish.

Suggestions from the parish consultation included a table tennis club as well as a bike track and skateboard area on the Spoute recreation ground. Also with the young generation in mind, there was a recommendation for under-sixteens to be consulted on what facilities they would like in the parish. The Plaxtol Players are also keen to encourage young adults to participate in their productions.

Communication within the parish

The primary source of information within the parish is the monthly magazine, *The Plaxtol Herald*. This remains so from the responses to the questionnaire with the added benefit of the parish website.

The questions asked were related to the current communication networks within the parish and how to improve them:

1. Which methods of communication do you find useful in the parish?
2. How could we enhance our parish communication?
3. How can we improve readership of the parish website?
4. Would you be interested in a text service to your mobile phone for urgent local news/alerts?
5. Are the current noticeboards in the parish useful and, if so, are they in the right place?

The Plaxtol Herald is produced and distributed by Plaxtol Church. It is funded by the church, the parish council and voluntary contributions. Anyone can offer an article for publication. It has advertisements from local businesses, a diary and information on upcoming events, reports from clubs and societies, minutes of Parish Council meetings, gardening and cookery pages and a letter from the Rector.

The parish website, www.plaxtol.com, also provides a wealth of information for both residents and visitors.

Readership of the website is growing but more publicity is needed to improve this further. Suggestions from the responses included an allotment blog, an opt-in for a weekly or monthly newsletter, a buy/sell page, and further utilisation of the parish Facebook page.

In addition to the official Parish website, Plaxtol has its own Facebook page, primarily used as a local market place for residents but which is also used to inform residents of local news and events and generally for unofficial communications between members of the parish. It is accessible to anyone with a Facebook account, and to ensure that content remains genuine and relevant, only approved contributors are allowed. @PlaxtolVillage is the parish Twitter account with a growing number of followers. Again, this is used for notifying residents about news and events but also for sharing other local information which may be of interest.

Fibre-optic broadband is being introduced to some parts of the parish, addressing slow broadband speeds. There are also some concerns about mobile phone reception in parts of the parish. The consultation showed that there is appetite for a text or email service for urgent local news and alerts such as road closures and Neighbourhood Watch issues.

https://twitter.com/plaxtolvillage

https://www.facebook.com/groups/323980021069309/

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Set up a working group to explore table tennis club, a bike track and skateboard area on the Spoute recreation ground.	Progress report end of November 2015, complete end of December 2016.	Parish Council representative and group of parish volunteers.
Canvass young people on what they would like within the parish.	Progress report end of December 2015, complete Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council representative and group of parish volunteers.
Work with the Plaxtol Players to encourage young adults to participate in productions.	Progress report end of January 2016, complete end of December 2016.	Parish Council representative and Plaxtol Players committee.
Set up a communications team which would examine suggestions from the questionnaire responses such as allotment blog, texting service, buy & sell page and family page on the parish website, and emailed newsletter.	Progress report end of December 2015, complete end of December 2016.	Parish Council representative, *The Plaxtol Herald* editors, parish website coordinator and group of parish volunteers.
Improve current noticeboards and explore cost of getting more.	Progress report end of September 2015, complete by Annual Parish Meeting 2016.	Parish Council.
Put parish website address on posters and shop noticeboards. Use Facebook, Twitter and *The Plaxtol Herald* to promote events and items on the parish website, providing relevant web link in each case.	Ongoing.	Parish Council.
Encourage PLOTS to start a blog or online forum and expand this into a parish-wide online community for gardeners.	Progress report end of December 2015, complete in 2016.	Parish Councillor responsible for allotments and a member of PLOTS committee.

Social Facilities & Services

The questions, set out below, looked at what is needed for the vulnerable and elderly, how to support young families and how an individual could contribute his/her skills to the parish.

1. What services might be needed in the future for the elderly?
2. What do the younger generation in the parish want?
3. How can we best support young families?
4. How can we best support the vulnerable?
5. What more could Plaxtol Church actively do in the community?
6. In addition to the 'Welcome Packs' currently given to newcomers to the parish by the church, what else could be done to encourage them to become actively involved in community life?
7. How and what would you be able and willing to contribute to activities in your parish?

There are numerous formal and informal support networks and a wide range of activities enjoyed by a broad section of residents. Coupled with the peace and beauty of Plaxtol's natural environment, the regular social gatherings and events make the parish an enviable place in which to live. Help for the vulnerable is offered by an active Church Pastoral Team and there is support for the suggestion of a wider community-run car service for GP/hospital visits or other journeys and a 'buddy' scheme offering household tasks, such as gardening, reading to the visually-impaired and form-filling, possibly culminating in a formalised 'Good Neighbour' scheme. The Church Pastoral Team do much of this work already, meeting every six weeks to review the pastoral needs of the elderly and sick in the parish, to consider how best they can help and to pray for parishioners in need. Apart from home visits, the team helps the elderly with shopping and also plans occasional day trips for those who are unable to get out. The team also runs a Pastoral Car Service.

It was also thought useful to include in the Parish Emergency Plan a list of vulnerable residents and their individual circumstances. There are no GP surgeries held in the village and residents must travel to Borough Green, Hadlow, or further afield. Neither the Borough Green nor Hadlow practice is directly accessible by bus, but each offers a well-subscribed delivery service for prescription medications to Plaxtol Village Stores. A Community First Responder and a homeopathic practitioner are also based in the village. It is suggested that a parish list of registered First Aiders would be of use.

Plaxtol Memorial Hall, supported annually by the Parish Council, continues to be the centre of village activity, with its own stage and kitchen. It provides facilities and services for organisations of a diverse nature: Plaxtol Nursery School, Youth Club, Toddler Group, Plaxtol Parish Council, Plaxtol

Players and Plaxtol Women's Institute. Additionally, it is used for wedding receptions, birthday parties, exhibitions and so on, as well as being the registered centre in the event of a parish disaster and our polling station for general and local elections.

Places of worship in the parish are Plaxtol Parish Church, in a shared benefice with St Giles' Church, Shipbourne, and an Evangelical Free Church chapel at Dunks Green. New church initiatives since the 2005 Plan include a monthly Coffee, Cake & Company meeting, Pause for Thought meetings aimed at parents and toddlers, a monthly bring-and- share lunch held in one of the Pastoral Team's homes for widows and widowers in the church congregation, and a social morning on the first Thursday of every month. There is also a new service every third Sunday, Community@4, a direct result of the worship review held during 2014. For the younger members, Playchurch continues to run on the fourth Thursday of every month and on the first Sunday of each month there is a young family service.

Plaxtol Primary School takes about 100 pupils from the parish and surrounding area. The children are actively engaged in the community, joining in Easter, Christmas and Harvest Festival activities with the elderly of the village. Plaxtol Nursery School provides the Early Years Foundation Stage in a kind and caring atmosphere, judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

ACTION	TIMESCALE	WHO
Draw up a list of Emergency Responders living in the parish for help in emergency and for Severe Weather Plan.	End of September 2015.	Parish Council Representative.
Offer training on the parish defibrillator	End of August 2015.	Parish Clerk
Look into providing a help service for elderly or infirm residents, in liaison with the Church Pastoral Team.	Progress report by end of October 2015, complete end of January 2016.	Parish Council representative, Church Pastoral Team and volunteers.
Examine the legal issues around retaining a secure register of vulnerable residents for reference in emergency situations, in liaison with the Church Pastoral team.	End of October 2015.	Parish Council.
Explore the creation of a 'buddy' system to complement the work of the Church Pastoral Team	Progress report end of November 2015, compete end of January 2016.	Parish Council representative, Church Pastoral Team and volunteers.

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