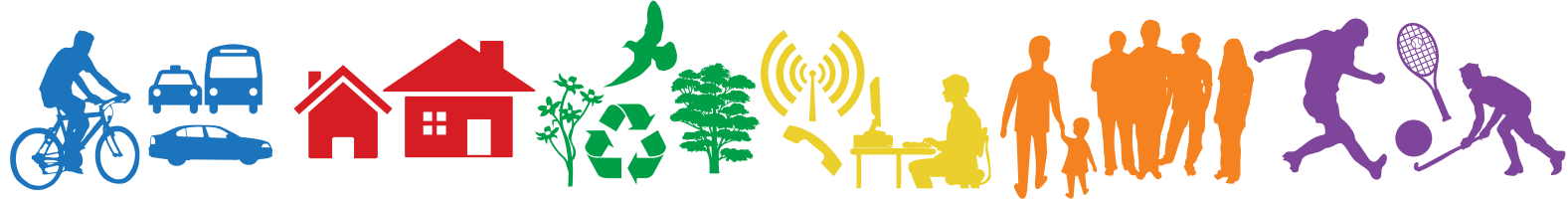




# Stowupland Parish Plan 2010



# Introduction

The first Stowupland Parish Plan was produced in 2005 and led to many improvements in our village. These include the transformation of Telstar into an award-winning monthly magazine, organisation of regular community events, including 'Music on The Green' and the setting up of 'Stowupland Good Neighbours'.

It was time for an update so each household was asked to complete a questionnaire. Eighty percent of you returned them and your responses have been used to write this Plan.

It has been a long task, and I am pleased to have worked with a very enthusiastic group of people without whom this would not have been possible.

## **Rick Hamilton**

Chairman Parish Plan Action Group.

# Why a New Parish Plan?

A number of major concerns were highlighted in the previous Parish Plan. Many of these remain, particularly about traffic and over-development.

New issues have arisen, with tremendous interest in environmental matters and the use of modern technology for communicating in the village.

# Stowupland People

The population has remained fairly static, around 2000, with about one quarter of the residents living here for 5 years or less, and over half for more than 16 years. It is not surprising, therefore, that the population is ageing.

Nearly half the people living in Stowupland are in work, about a third are retired, and most of the rest are in full-time education. Fewer than 40 people in the village consider themselves unemployed.

# The New Parish Plan

The Plan is divided into eight sections. Each section describes residents' feedback and our suggested steps for the future. The results of questionnaires are available on-line from the Parish Council Website:

**<http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/StowuplandPC/>**





# Travel, Traffic and Safety

Most residents have access to a car but 200 rely on public transport. Some do not live near enough to the bus service and mobility problems can make bus travel difficult.

Over 150 people are in favour of a village minibus, for community use.

The majority of Stowupland residents regularly travel no further than Stowmarket. Ipswich is the second favourite destination.

## **People are worried about road safety and levels of traffic through the village.**

The growth of Stowmarket is likely to increase traffic through Stowupland. Lorries are a major concern and residents would like signs to encourage them to use other routes.

Speeding is a major problem along Church Road (A1120), Gipping Road/Thorney Green Road, in The Heights and Saxham Street.

The area around the Shell garage causes concern and crossing the road to the garage is difficult. Most residents are in favour of a roundabout at the A1120/B1115 junction.

In 2005 a significant number of people asked for more streetlights in the village. That number has now halved, perhaps because of concerns about light pollution.

Many residents regularly walk or cycle. **There is good support for safer routes to school and better maintained paths.**



## Steps for the Future

- Press the County Council for the following:
  - traffic calming for Church Road, the Shell garage region, Gipping Road/Thorney Green Road, The Heights and Saxham Street
  - a roundabout at the A1120/B1115 junction and a pedestrian crossing to the garage
  - improved signage to encourage traffic, especially lorries, to use the A14 and A140 instead of the A1120 and Saxham Street.
- Lobby for a reliable bus service that is accessible by people with mobility problems and serves the whole village.
- Investigate the feasibility of providing and maintaining a village minibus.



# Housing and Development

**What has changed in the five years since our first Parish Plan?** Steeple View, the very sheltered housing complex, has been completed. The Dual Sensory Loss Unit has been built in Barley Close and some affordable homes in Barley Close/Reeds Way and Trinity Walk.

Very few residents want large-scale housing schemes in the village and many think there should be no more development. However, there is still strong support for building single houses and groups of 10 or fewer houses.

**Are further homes needed?** Many feel they are not, but many others would like to see more homes for young people and for small families, including rented homes.

As in 2005, the significant support for rented accommodation is because there are still not enough affordable homes for local people, young and old, who wish to remain in the village, or return to it.

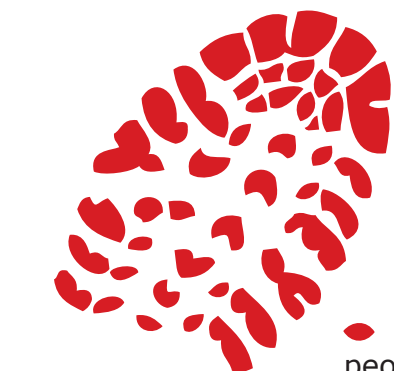
There is great concern over the rapid growth of Stowmarket and the impact of that on Stowupland. Many residents still fear that Stowmarket will swallow up the village. They do not think that Mid Suffolk District Council takes enough account of these concerns.

The community, environment, village facilities and location are all important to Stowupland people. They are more convinced than ever that **the village character and rural setting must be preserved.**



## Steps for the Future

- Maintain the village character and its rural environment.
- Lobby Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council to recognise and react to the impact of the rapid growth of Stowmarket on the quality of life in Stowupland.
- Work with Mid Suffolk and others to provide affordable housing for local people in Stowupland.





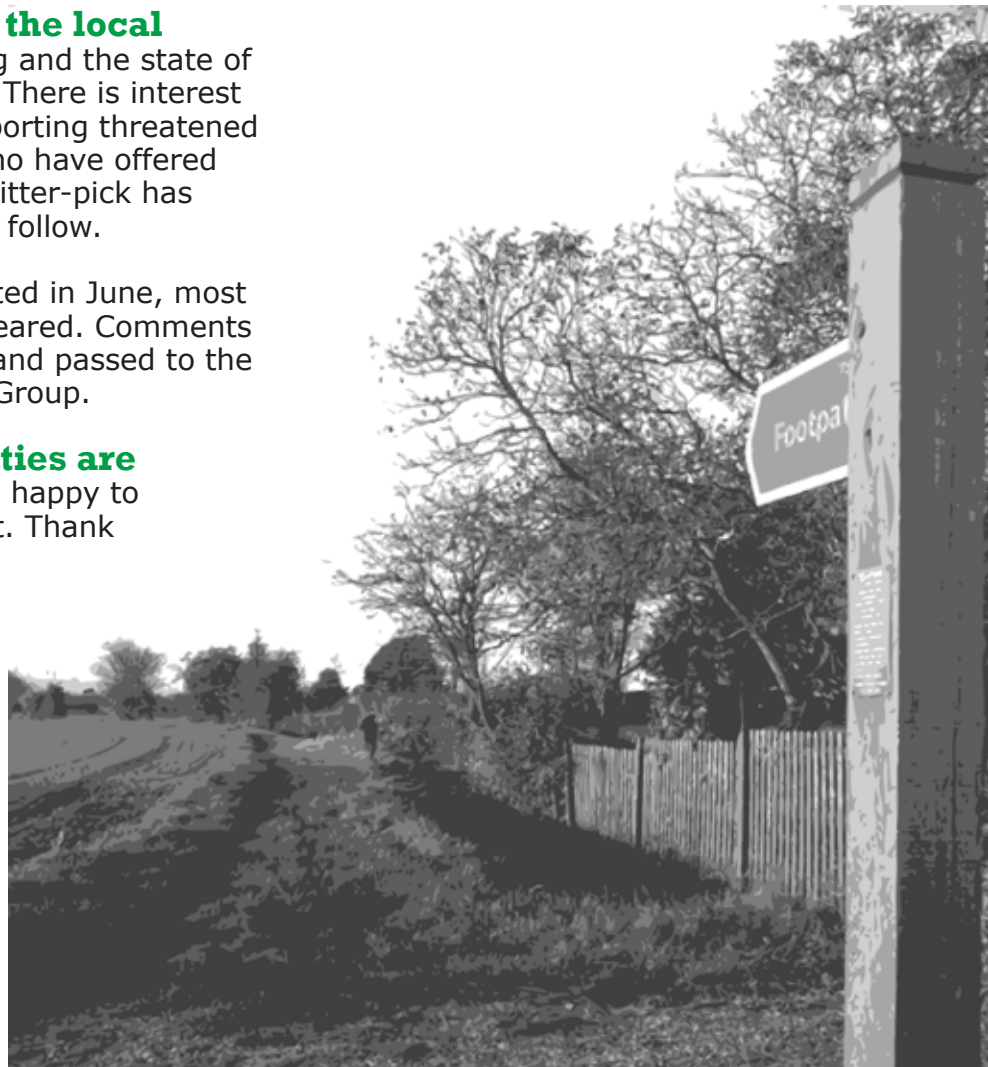
# Environment

**Stowupland residents value the local environment.** Litter, dog fouling and the state of the footpaths are major concerns. There is interest in environmental work and in supporting threatened wildlife. Our thanks go to those who have offered their time and skills. A successful litter-pick has taken place and more projects will follow.

Since questionnaires were completed in June, most overgrown footpaths have been cleared. Comments about footpaths have been noted and passed to the Parish Council Footpaths Working Group.

**Village Hall recycling facilities are well used.** Good Neighbours are happy to help those who find access difficult. Thank you to all who recycle paper and glass there, as that provides some income for the Village Hall.

There is now a collection box for used batteries at the Shell garage. Ask at the counter. Many people would like the village to have collection points for Tetra-Paks and used low-energy light bulbs. At present these have to be taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Stowmarket.



## Steps for the Future

- Hold regular litter-picks and campaign to reduce littering. Young people and the High School should be involved.
- Campaign and provide information to reduce dog fouling.
- Set up an Environment/Nature-Watch group. When possible, projects should be family-friendly and advertised well in advance on notice boards and in Telstar.
- Set up collection points in the village for Tetra-Paks and used low-energy bulbs.



## Support

After the 2005 Parish Plan, volunteers set up new Neighbourhood Watch areas, an Emergency Planning Group and a Good Neighbour Scheme. Since then Good Neighbours have helped isolated and vulnerable residents with everything from dog walking to transport for hospital appointments.

The Church and Chapel continue to provide valued pastoral care in the village.

Some people are still unaware of these support groups and of what they do. In times of need, most people turn to their friends and neighbours and appreciate the help given.

## Steps for the Future

- Set up a database of community support groups and their representatives, for publication from time to time in Telstar.
- Publicise the support information helpline run by the Good Neighbour Scheme.

## Communication

93% of residents use the village magazine Telstar as a source of information and news of events. People also check notice boards and read the Stowmarket and district free magazines.

Much less use is made of the local press or of more modern ways of keeping in touch. Many would welcome a greater use of technology for local information.

## Steps for the Future

- Review the village website.
- Set up an email information exchange.
- Set up a local information telephone helpline.
- Encourage village groups to use all media to promote their activities.



# Parish Council



## Stowupland has a very active Parish Council

made up of 11 elected members. It has many responsibilities, for example the allotments, the churchyard and cemetery, streetlights and bus shelters. It looks after The Green and the play park, provides community events and takes charge of clearing litter.

Other services are provided by Mid Suffolk District Council or Suffolk County Council. People are not always sure which of the main services are provided by each authority.

The Parish Council engages with residents by:

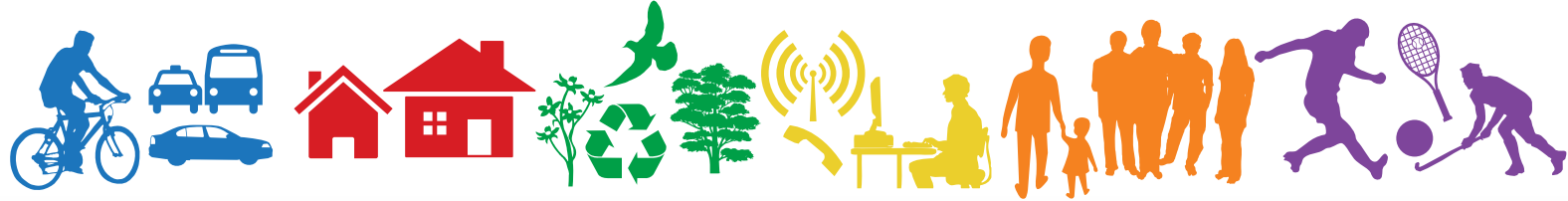
- welcoming the public at all meetings of the Council and its sub-groups
- publishing minutes of meetings on the Council's notice board (at the Village Hall) and on the village website
- reporting on Council business and decisions in Telstar
- organising public meetings and other forms of consultation on matters of particular concern
- being accessible through wide publicity of councillors' names and telephone numbers
- encouraging residents to help with community projects
- actively supporting a range of village organisations
- arranging social events.

**Most people think that the Parish Council publicises its work well and pays attention to local concerns.** A few feel that some areas of the village are not as well served as others.

## Steps for the Future

- Take action on the Steps for the Future in this Parish Plan.
- Make sure that Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council are aware of the views of Stowupland residents.
- Publicise contact details for the main local authority services in Telstar and on the village website.
- Encourage residents who have problems to get in touch with the Parish Council at an early stage.





## 9-16 years old

**Thanks to all of you who filled in the questionnaire. We now have lots of positive ideas.**

Most of you go to Bacton Middle and Stowupland High Schools. Almost all catch the bus to the Middle School and walk or cycle to the High School. You feel that traffic in the village is dangerous and would like more, safer, routes for walking and cycling.


After-school activities have become more popular. Twice as many of you go to them than 5 years ago. More would like to go but cannot, cost and transport being the main reasons.



There are already some clubs and activities in the village but you would clearly like more, especially a youth club, skate park and regular discos.

Since the last questionnaire, concerns about smoking, drinking and bullying have reduced. However you are still worried about alcohol and antisocial behaviour.

## Steps for the Future

- 
- Talk to local schools about cost and transport for after-school activities.
  - Continue to create safer routes for walking and cycling in the village.
  - Look into setting up a youth club.
  - Set up a group to progress plans for a skate park.
  - Set up a partnership between the schools, police and young people to reduce concerns about alcohol and antisocial behaviour.





## Leisure

The main venues that offer events and activities are:

- Village Hall
- Church and Chapel
- Sports and Social Club
- Stowupland Community Sports Centre
- Stowupland High School
- Freeman Community Primary School
- Stowupland Pre-School and Mighty Oaks
- Steeple View and Jubilee Court.

**Since the last Parish Plan the Community Events team has been set up.** It regularly organises events such as quizzes, bingo and the annual Music on The Green. Several village organisations offer indoor and outdoor activities. Some facilities, like the Village Hall and the Sports and Social Club, are still under-used.



There is a lot of interest in each of the activities listed in the questionnaire and other ideas have been suggested. A web cafe and/or Wi-Fi hotspot interest some. Others would like to join a silver surfers group, which would introduce older people to the internet and email. People have offered to help with setting up particular groups, such as gardening, local history and amateur dramatics. There is some interest in inter-village events.

We asked what could be done to improve the community spirit in the village. Residents have given a wide range of ideas for special events and activities for the whole family, also for younger and older people. One resident put that Stowupland is **“A great place to live.”** Another wrote **“This village has a wonderful community spirit.”**

Look at the centre pages of Telstar for your diary of events for the month and look out for news of new groups and more opportunities to volunteer. To discover the wonderful community spirit of Stowupland – and make it even better – get involved!

## Steps for the Future

- Keep an up-to-date list of leisure activities and events in the village.
- Improve promotion of all activities and local venues.
- Encourage people to set up new groups and make more use of local facilities.
- Encourage the setting up of a web cafe and/or Wi-Fi hotspot and a silver surfers group.



# Volunteers

Our thanks go to all who have volunteered to help with a wide range of groups and activities. Drama, Local History and Environment are **just a few examples.**



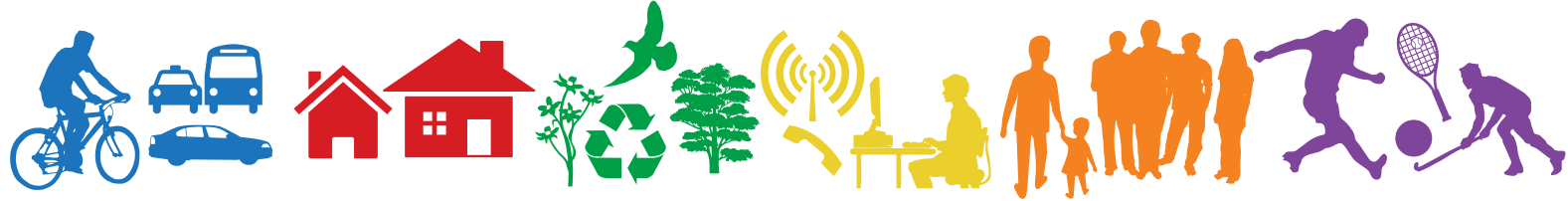
## Drama

## Local History



## Environment

**Please keep a look out in Telstar for an announcement of a meeting for volunteers and all who are interested.**



# Acknowledgments

## Special thanks to:

- Members of the Parish Plan Action Group
- Volunteer deliverers of the questionnaires
- Stowupland Parish Council for its support
- Telstar distributors for delivering the Plan
- Holy Trinity Church for the use of the Church Hall



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