

ST GILES IN THE WOOD



PARISH PLAN 2008

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THE PURPOSE OF THE PARISH PLAN

1. To establish the requirements and expectations of the residents of the Parish of St Giles in the Wood with regard to the future of their community.
2. To highlight key facilities and services and identify problems that need to be addressed. This Parish Plan incorporates an action plan setting targets for the next 10 years, with a proposed annual review by the Parish Council to assess progress.

The Plan is only the beginning. It is now up to the residents to support and assist with implementation along with items such as housing and transport which will largely be under the control of other authorities.

We must recognize that change is inevitable. It is hoped this Plan will help give us the change we want.

The 1997 Community Appraisal highlighted areas of need such as providing a Playing Field with children's play area in the Village, Dental facilities in Torrington, all of which have been accomplished.



THE PARISH OF ST GILES IN 2008

St Giles Church

“St. Giles” is the French form of the Latin St. Egidius who lived in the 6th or 8th century near the mouth of the river Rhone in the south of France where St. Gilles is situated. He is the patron saint of beggars, blacksmiths and cripples; his day being 1st September.



The Parish Church which we see today stands on the site of a much older one, the origins of which take us back into the past some six hundred years. An interesting description of its beginnings is handed down to us by our local venerable gentleman and historian, Tristram Risdon, whose mansion was at Winscott. In his SURVEY OF DEVON, written there early in the seventeenth century, he states: “That owing to the largeness of the lands of the Parish of Torrington and the far distance from the Church there, caused some of the remotest inhabitants in 1309 to petition Walter, Bishop of Exeter that they might found another church, which was granted and that the inhabitants purchased a piece of land to build a

church, which was consecrated to the honour of St. Giles. The benefactors to the new foundation to be, Sir William Hereward of Dodscott, Pollard of Waye, Barry of Winscott, Stevenston of Stevenstone and Dynant of Whitsleigh, the five resident manorial holders.”

The restoration of 1862-3 was almost a re-building, for only the outer walls and the tower remained the same. The old chancel was thrown into the body of the church, and fittings in the best Victorian taste installed. St. Giles Church, if not architecturally beautiful, is solid and enduring, a good example of the best of Victorian building.

St Giles Parish Hall.

In the 1930's Colonel and Mrs James of Stevenstone asked the parish if they would like a new school or a new village hall. The parish chose a hall and Colonel and Mrs James kindly paid for it to be built in the centre of the village. Since then the hall has been, and continues to be, used for a variety of purposes. Today these include parties, wedding

receptions, dances, dinners, pantomimes, youth club and other outside events. Since the recent addition of the playing field adjoining the hall, it is now also being used by the village cricket team.

St Giles Sports Club

In 1954 money was raised by many volunteers within the village in order to build a new club room to adjoin the existing skittle alley. In 1976 the cricket club applied for a liquor licence and built the bar. Since then other extensions have included the lounge, snooker room and more recently the toilets, giving us the club we know today. The club offers a variety of facilities to the parish including skittles, snooker, darts and pool. It is also used by some groups as a meeting place and the bar is open most nights for the use of the community.

St Giles Players

The idea of performing a village pantomime to celebrate the millennium was enthusiastically taken up by many parishioners and the pantomime performed in February 2000 was an outstanding success. The group is now made up of adults and children from each end of the age spectrum and every individual is considered as important as the other. It is a great opportunity for young people to work with adults on an equal footing, which improves their confidence, self worth and social skills, and for the adults to see that young people can be committed, polite and fun to work with.

The St Giles Players are a significant part of the village and indeed have contributed by donating considerable amounts of funds to many of the different projects and causes within the village. However its biggest contribution is in bringing people together for friendship, fun and community spirit.

St Giles Youth Club

St Giles Youth Club was started in 2001. A volunteer run group, it meets fortnightly during term time to provide the children of the Parish with opportunity to meet up and play games or sports, do craft activities, listen to music or just chat, in an informal yet safe environment. The club caters for children over eight and the oldest members tend to be around thirteen years. Currently there are fifteen members. It is self funding from subs paid each session, fundraising when necessary, plus donations such as recently received from the proceeds of the Summer Fayre. As well as the regular meetings the club aims to organise outings such as bowling or swimming and seasonal events at

Halloween and Christmas for example. These events are often opened up to the younger children not yet attending Youth Club, to become more of a Parish event. It would be good in the future to perhaps expand youth provision to include something for the older teenagers.

Recreation Field.

With the help of a generous grant from Devon Waste Management, the Parish Council purchased approximately four acres of land adjacent to the Parish Hall in September 2001.

The land was fenced and trees were planted. Play equipment was purchased and to the delight of everyone, a cricket pitch was laid and games have been played throughout the summer (2008). This is a major asset for the whole Parish.

Seekers

Seekers meets on the second and fourth Sunday morning each month in term-time at St. Giles Church. This has traditionally served the parishes of St. Giles and Roborough, but is open to all. With the new grouping of churches Seekers looks forward to welcoming children from High Bickington and Atherington as well as Beaford. At the moment about 8 children between the ages of 4 and 10 years old generally attend.

Tiddlers

Tiddlers is a new group for toddlers and babies and their carers. It was originally intended to meet in different homes in St. Giles, High Bickington and Atherington, but higher than anticipated numbers has led to the decision to meet at the Meeting Point in High Bickington. Tiddlers has a Christian focus, introducing little ones to Bible stories and offering support and fellowship for carers. It is hoped especially to support those families who have brought their children to baptism at St. Giles and the group of churches. Tiddlers meets monthly at present, on the second Wednesday of the month from 10 - 12 am.

RHS Rosemoor

Originally the property of Lord Rolle, a local landowner and mill owner, the house, dating from the 1780s, was bought by Lady Anne Berry's father in 1923 as a family fishing lodge to be used only from March to May. Following the death of her father in 1931, Lady Anne



moved to Rosemoor and with the help of her mother began some landscaping of the garden. However it was only in 1959, while recuperating from measles in Spain, that she met Collingwood "Cherry" Ingram, who opened her eyes to the possibilities of plant collecting and starting a garden of her own at Rosemoor which she generously presented to the RHS in 1988. The bequest comprised 8 acres around the house and a further 32 acres of pastureland.

The new garden area at Rosemoor is still in the early stages of development. In the garden's first 10 years, the emphasis has been upon relatively intensive and highly ornamental gardens, with roses, shrubs, perennials and bulbs, stream and bog plants and produce of all kinds. In years to come, visitors to Rosemoor will find a garden consisting of natural woodland hinterland surrounding more open arboretum, parkland and woodland garden areas, themselves enclosing the jewels at the heart of the garden - the Formal Garden, Anne's Garden, the Stream Garden and Lake and the Fruit and Vegetable Garden.

Deep Moor Landfill

Planning for the refuse tip was originally granted in 1974. Since that time various amendments and extensions have been granted to the site operator. Use of the current site has been granted until 31 December 2017, and the site to be restored by 31 December 2018, this will be by means of grassland, trees etc.

There is currently under construction alongside the road, an in-vessel composting facility. This is designed to take all green wheelie bin collections, garden waste, cardboard and kitchen waste which will be processed and after a series of treatments be utilised as garden compost or used on farms

THE SURVEY

The Approach

In 2007 the Parish Council held a meeting and a Parish Plan Steering Group was formed. With suggestions raised by parishioners, including children and young people a Questionnaire was produced and distributed to each household.

Of the 244 Questionnaires sent out 120 were returned (just under 50%*)
Of those households that completed the questionnaire 46.2% were male and 53.8% were female.



The following is a breakdown of males and females in 120 households.

Age	0-4	5-10	11-16	17-21	22-39	40-59	60-64	65-74	74+	Tot
Male	3	11	11	4	12	39	14	24	8	126
Female	10	12	5	7	17	49	11	21	15	147

*Percentages in the Plan reflect the number of households which responded to the Questionnaire and are included only as an indication of the views of the parishioners.

In General

The majority stated they would like St Giles in the Wood to develop as a balanced community. 28% wished it to remain as it is with 22% as a working community. Although the Parish has no shop or Post Office, it has a Parish Hall, Social Club, Public House, a fine Church and Recreation Field. A mobile library serves the Parish weekly.

A Housing Survey was carried out in 2007, the results of which are detailed within this Plan.

Being some distance from larger towns and employment centres places a high level of dependence on reliable transport. The survey results indicate that the car is the primary means of transport for most households within the parish.

There is a good up take of the use of the buses though reliability and timetable are shown to be inadequate. A review of bus services is necessary to determine the most suitable routes and timetable to satisfy the needs of residents and encourage more usage of public transport.

Any revision of the transport provisions must take into account the residents for whom private transport is not an option.

Traffic Issues

The results highlighted the general opinion that 65.7% of respondents felt speeding was a problem throughout the parish. The following areas were identified as specific concern.

- St Giles village
- High Bullen
- Leighty Water
- Kingscott
- Stevenstone

Issues

- Speeding
- Parking
- Public Transport

Possible calming measures

- 20/30mph signs
- Permanent slow signs
- Speed ramps / cameras
- Flashing signs
- Warning signs at entrance to built up areas

Not all of the above are appropriate in a rural setting. It is recognised that there are severe limitations on the extent to which road widths, visibility and other hazards can be

Vision

- Improved traffic calming
- Considerate parking
- Better Public transport

improved due to the structure of the village/hamlets and the cost of making these changes. The most benefit will be obtained by raising driver awareness of the hazards and limitations of the roads.

Traffic related

General opinion was very evenly spilt with concerns on parking, and animals roaming free causing potential risk to drivers.

Parking could be improved by encouraging parishioners to park more considerately so as not to obstruct roadways and other users, though the questionnaire has shown that 84% of vehicles are parked off the road or in garages over night.

Bus services

A regular bus service was not considered important for the majority of respondents, however for 33% the bus is an important form of transport; most using it for shopping and medical visits rather than that of work or social visits, whether this is down to the concerns people have is to be seen.

Concerns reported:-

Timetable

Route

Reliability

Cost

Given the apparently inadequate timetable perhaps this has an impact on how little the service is used.

Action Plan

- Further investigation into services
- Identify users needs
- Investigate alternative transport arrangement
- Implementation of suitable calming measures
- Drivers to be encouraged to park in areas which do not obstruct roadways

Most of the children of primary school age live within the catchment area of Beaford community primary school, with a small minority living within the catchment of Torrington Bluecoats Infants. Both Beaford and Torrington schools provide nursery and primary education.

Children of secondary school age living in the parish fall in the catchment of Great Torrington Community School and Sports College.

Issues

- No transport from after school clubs for Primary aged children.
- Inadequate Vocational training

Beaford and Torrington Primary Schools.

The survey results stressed the importance of the primary schools to the local community. They provide nursery care and primary education as well as after school clubs. The survey also showed that a small proportion of parents found it difficult to collect children from after school clubs resulting in them not being able to attend. This was mainly due to a lack of public transport between the parish and the schools.

Vision

- Improved transport links between parish and primary schools for children attending after school clubs.
- More provision for Vocational training preferably in Torrington but could also be Bideford or Barnstaple.

Vocational Training.

The survey showed an interest in more vocational training being provided in the area. The interest came in the areas of Skilled/Craft, Professional/Managerial and New Technology/ Computing.

It also showed that the majority of people interested would prefer the training to take place in Torrington / Bideford / Barnstaple.

Action Plan

- Approach transport service providers regarding interest in links between schools and parish
- OR
- Set up parent car share scheme for collection of children from after school clubs.
 - Approach local authority offering local facilities for vocational training.

According to the survey 55% of residents are in employment, with other groups being 31% retired and 8% in education. A significant number of those in employment work locally and are in full time employment.

Issues

- Increased employment in the local area.
- Provision for small-scale light industrial or craft workshops.

A large number of people would like to see employment growth within the Village/Parish. With the greatest interest being in agriculture, forestry and fishing, transport and communication, manufacturing and building services.

Over half of residents would be in favour of a few small-scale light industrial or craft workshops being made available within the Village/Parish.

Vision

- Improved local employment opportunities through growth of small businesses as appropriate for the area and nature of our community.

Action Plan

- Encourage and support local small scale business development.
- Seek information on small business start up grants and support.
- Encourage and support existing local businesses and services.

It's pleasing to find that 90% of residents have no difficulty getting to local shops.

Issues

- Interest in Farmers Market
- Access to Citizens Advise Bureau

There appears to be a large majority (93%) in favour of a local farmers/produce market. The 1997 Community Appraisal questioned whether a "Community Managed Shop" was needed. Although 35 people were willing to help run the shop the venture did not proceed.

Over 60% attend the church, use the Sports and Social Club and Recreation Field, whilst 12% use the Mobile Library.

23% of respondents feel there is a need for a Citizens Advice Bureau session. A visiting service could be investigated.

Vision

- Farmers Market
- Access to Citizens Advise Bureau

Action Plan

- Investigate provision of Farmers market and venue
- Contact CAB to establish visiting service

Existing Facilities

The Parish has a Parish Hall and a Sports & Social Club which are currently under utilised, with only 7% of the respondents visiting the Hall on a monthly (or better) basis and about 20% using the social club. The recreational field, which was opened



in 2005, is getting reasonable use by the young and now that a cricket team has been formed, the use of the field would seem to be on the increase.

Issues

- Increase use of Parish Hall
- Improve standard of facilities in Parish Hall

Opening of Recreational Field
30th July 2005

Requirements

Opinions on the current provisions were very mixed with over a third of respondents having no opinion. Whilst the remainder were very much split across the options, with a slight preference for reasonable facilities being provided. The younger members did not feel that there were sufficient activities for their age group.

Just under half of people felt that the Parish required additional activities, while a quarter felt that there were sufficient things to do. Of the 35 different activities requested, the following activities attracted 15 or more votes each: archery, bingo, badminton, clay pigeon shooting, a book club, football, history club, painting club, photography club, tennis facilities and by far the largest vote was for keep fit / tai chi and yoga which attracted 42 votes.

Vision

- Provision of activities identified by survey
- Improvement of existing facilities
- A Parish web site
- Maximising usage of the current facilities

The use of the Parish Hall came in for some comment over and above the set questions. The Hall itself is not well used at the moment with 66% using the Hall less than once a month and 30% never using the building. Many felt that some of the many activities suggested could take place in the Hall, and despite the fact that 50% of respondents felt that the Hall was adequate, there were calls for upgrading the toilets and heating system.

Over 100 people felt that a parish web site was a good idea and there were many suggestions of what should be included, but it was noted that for it to be effective it would need to be updated regularly. Amongst the suggestions were obvious items such as local news and information (upcoming events, bus timetables, mobile library visiting times, & church services), but also items such as a car sharing scheme, births / deaths and marriages, sports results (snooker, skittles and cricket), message board, local clubs/ societies, Parish Council minutes, parish and local councillor details, history of village, local planning applications, local advertising and in respect of the Parish Hall, hire charges and availability.

Action Plan

- Increase advertising
- Modernise Hall
- Provide more activities in Parish Hall
- Investigate set up of Parish Web site

GENERAL

The importance of the farming community in maintaining and preserving the character of the landscape is acknowledged.

A large majority of the residents place a high importance on our local environment – its care and preservation.

Issues

- Litter
- Dog mess
- Ragwort

The survey identified the particular importance in:

The regular removal of litter – especially the verges from High Bullen to Belle Vue being a priority (the road past Deep Moor).

An annual clean up of the village was seen as a good idea by 64%.

As a safety issue the majority still feel it important to keep the roadside verges mown and tidy.

A large number of the younger generation wished to see more trees planted in the countryside.

In accepting the need for signing the bridleways and footpaths, the parish council co-operate with Devon County Council. .

Ragwort has significantly increased along our roadsides. This is covered by the Dangerous Weeds Act 1959 and, the responsibility should be undertaken by Devon County Council for its removal. Awareness of the dangers of this plant should be widely circulated.

A small majority considered that dog mess was a problem – probably in the built up areas. The sighting, installation and maintenance of bins will cause problems and there will be an additional burden of cost to parishioners for this service.

It was felt in general that the services provided by Ambulance, Fire and Police were of a reasonable standard bearing in mind the remoteness of some of the Parish.

Vision

- The removal of litter, particularly near Deep Moor Landfill.
- Awareness and responsibilities of controlling ragwort by all concerned.
- Removal of dog mess
- Maintain character of local landscape
- A litter free village

There appear to be no issues with regards to electricity and water services within the Parish.

Overall the view regarding winter weather i.e. gritting, was just adequate or poor. The parish does of course include some main roads and these were seen to be adequately provided for; however with numerous rural lanes for which there is no provision for gritting by lorry.

Action Plan

- More signs regarding dog mess and provision of dog bins
- Regular removal of ragwort
- Arrange removal of litter on a regular basis especially the road past Deepmoor
- Set up a "Clean up our Village Day"

There are now 3 different recycling/refuse collections provided to the majority of the parish, the standard of these services is felt to be good by the households that responded.

St Giles being a short distance to the two health surgeries at Torrington, the survey results showed no difficulties.

A small number would have liked home visits from a chiropodist and physiotherapist and were also prepared to donate blood should the service visit the village.

Issues

- Lack of provision of paramedical services

Vision

- Adequate medical emergency response provision.

First aiders /first responder seemed to be of interest; however this would be tied up with the out of hours primary care provision. Responsibility for provision of primary care between 6pm – 8am and weekends rests with the Primary Care Trust based in Barnstaple. In future it is anticipated

that this care will be provided by nurse with support from paramedics from the West Country Ambulance Service.

Action Plan

- Response times for St Giles area need to be monitored in order to know that we are receiving a rapid response time
- Provision of First Responder training

Executive Summary

The executive summary forms part of the **Local Housing Needs Report** dated June 2007 and is included to cover areas of concern not incorporated in the recent survey

Findings

The survey was commissioned by St Giles in the Wood Parish Council and carried out as an independent survey by the Community Council of Devon in April 2007. It is considered that the survey should remain relevant for at least 3 years subject to significant changes in the condition of the housing market.

- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. 253 surveys were delivered and 89 survey forms were returned. The response rate of 35.2% which is good.
- 86% of those replying said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. 14% were not.
- There is demand for social rented though shared ownership homes is a strong aspiration of those in need.
- Three households in need did not meet the local connection requirement of Torridge District Council.
- Income levels are low and very few respondents could afford a private rent if this was available.
- The survey has not identified any issues regarding key workers accommodation.

- Of those in need four were single people, 3 couples and two families with children.

Recommendations

- A provision of affordable houses to meet needs should be made at St Giles in the Wood.
- The survey results support the development of suitable small site or sites (less than 0.5 hectares) at St Giles in the Wood.
- The need is for social rented accommodation.
- The preferred housing mix is seven two bedroom houses or flats and two three bedroom houses. This should be subject to a pre-development refresher survey.

Principal Conclusions

The survey identified need for 9 affordable homes within the next 3 years:

- Backlog: 1 household
- Forecast within 3 years: 8 households

ACTION PLAN

Short term = 6 - 12 months

Long term = 3 - 5 years

	Action	Responsibility	Now / Ongoing	Short Term	Long Term
TRANSPORT	Further investigation into bus services	Parish Council		✓	
	Identify users needs	Parish Council		✓	
	Investigate alternative transport arrangements	Parish Council		✓	
	Implementation of suitable calming measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20/30 mph signs - permanent slow signs - speed ramps / cameras - flashing signs - warning signs at entrance to built up areas 	Parish Council		✓	
	Drivers to be encouraged to park in areas which do not obstruct roadways	Parish Council		✓	

	Action	Responsibility	Now / Ongoing	Short Term	Long Term
EDUCATION	Approach transport service providers regarding interest in links between schools and parish	Parish Council		✓	
	Set up parent car share scheme for collection of children from after school clubs	Residents		✓	
	Approach local authority offering local facilities for vocational training.	Parish Council		✓	
EMPLOYMENT	Encourage and support local small scale business development.	Parish Council		✓	
	Seek information on small business start up grants and support.	Parish Council		✓	
	Encourage and support existing local businesses and services.	Parish Council		✓	
RETAIL SERVICES	Investigate provision of Farmers market and venue	Residents		✓	
	Contact CAB to establish visiting service	Parish Council		✓	

	Action	Responsibility	Now / Ongoing	Short Term	Long Term
SPORTS, SOCIAL & LEISURE	Increase advertising	Parish Hall Committee		✓	
	Modernise Hall	Parish Hall Committee			✓
	Arrange for more activities	Parish Hall Committee / Residents		✓	
	Set up Parish Web site	Residents / Parish Council		✓	
ENVIRONMENT	More signs regarding dog mess	Torridge District Council	✓		
	Addition of dog bins within Parish	Parish Council		✓	
	Set up "Clean up our Village Day"	Residents / Parish Council	✓		
	Regular removal of litter (especially on road by Deepmoor)	Torridge District Council	✓		
	Regular removal of ragwort	Torridge District Council	✓		
HEALTH	First Responder training	Residents		✓	
	Response times for St Giles area need to be monitored in order to know that we are receiving a rapid response time	Parish Council	✓		

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The volunteers in the steering group for all their time and effort.

The residents who responded to the Survey and those people who contributed information and ideas to the Plan.