

WHADDON



VILLAGE PLAN

2006

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Followed by copy of the village hall recommendations (Appendix I) a footpath map (Appendix II), and a map of the village envelope (Appendix III).

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The current committee who have steered the production of the plan are:

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Tony Gardner	01223-208064
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Thank you also to:

- * Whaddon Parish Council who initiated the plan process and provided some of the funding.
- * Stan Rees of Cambridgeshire ACRE for his advice and support.
- * DEFRA and Cambridgeshire ACRE for the grant, which enabled the plan to come into being.
- * Four village businesses, which generously made donations towards the cost of publishing the plan.
- * Paul Ray, Chairman of the Meldreth Parish Plan Steering Group who passed on some valuable experiences learnt during the preparation of the Meldreth Plan.
- * Tony Gardner for producing all the photographs.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Andrew Lansley CBE MP

I am grateful to have this opportunity to write in appreciation of the Whaddon Parish Plan. This five-year plan is a valuable document; it will be of great help to residents and local councils in setting out how the community would wish to see the village evolve and how they would wish to respond to pressures arising from housing development and increased traffic. Whaddon is one of the smaller villages in South Cambridgeshire, with a warm sense of community, which was very evident when I attended the fete on the occasion of the village's celebrations to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

This Plan is very helpful in illustrating that Whaddon is a lively community, who are working to ensure that housing and other facilities are available for all those who wish to live, work, and participate in village life here, without any loss of its village ethos. The Steering Group have performed a very important service in producing this document.

Linda Oliver – County Councillor

One of the joys of south Cambridgeshire is the individuality of its villages. In the short time I have represented Whaddon it has become very clear to me that Whaddon residents do not wish to see its identity diluted or evidence of its history taken away.

Residents change – new families join the community and some move away – it is therefore very important for this Parish Plan to have taken a realistic and long term view. Retaining a village environment and ambience is sometimes very difficult in times of speeding traffic. The call for speed reduction schemes has become a frequent request throughout Cambridgeshire. I believe we have to find ways of providing effective controls on speeding traffic without creating creeping urbanisation. In the meantime, we can work more closely with the police on speed checks or on a County Council initiative with the police called Community Speed Watch. Clearly another area for improvement is the bus service and the detail provided in the Village Plan is clear evidence towards achieving improvements via the bus companies and the County Council. I look forward to working with the Parish Council and residents in achieving benefits for Whaddon.

Nigel Cathcart – District Councillor

I fully support this initiative as it is a way to identify what needs to be done to improve the amenities in the village for the long term and by carrying out a detailed survey and extensive consultation with all the residents it ensures that everyone has the opportunity to voice an opinion in order to give as much weight as possible to the findings and to maximize the likelihood that the improvements which are needed will actually happen. It is clearly important that the Parish Council are closely involved in this as they have worked hard and successfully on most of these local issues over the years.

All the villages of the District are different from one another and this diversity should be welcomed and encouraged. The village plan for Whaddon is a way to ensure that the village remains distinctive and unique long into the future and I am encouraged by the number of people who have been involved in this project and are determined to make it a success.

Funding is clearly a problem especially with the District Council but I am sure that the proposals, which emerge from the Whaddon village plan, will receive very serious consideration by the Authorities responsible for financing village projects and I look forward to future developments. "

SUMMARY

Nick Shaw, Chairman of the Whaddon Village Plan Steering Group.

Although my wife and I have only lived in the village since January 2003 it took us only a few months to realise that we had come to live in a village with many attractive features. I was delighted therefore to be able to become much more involved locally when Ted Webb, Chairman of the Parish Council asked me, towards the end of 2004 if I would consider heading up a group that would prepare a plan for the future of the village. As a newcomer I was naturally ignorant about the village and I am very grateful to all the Group Members and other Villagers who have helped me to understand the fascinating history of Whaddon and what can be done to improve life over the coming years.

The first thing that became quite apparent, was that the majority of people living in Whaddon are very happy here and want the village to remain essentially the rural village that it is and has been for many hundreds of years.

However, the overwhelming issue that came out of our enquires was how the advent of traffic, speeding cars and thundering lorries taking a short cut through the village have had an adverse effect on the long history of enjoyment of the rural way of life.

The most positive outcome was the obvious interest expressed by the majority of residents in the ecology of the village and the surrounding countryside.

The plan process has highlighted the many good features of village life enjoyed in Whaddon. There is, as I have mentioned, the issue of control of the traffic in the village and there are a number of other issues that can be addressed to make the village safer and life more enjoyable with better facilities, without detracting from what is valued in the village.

I hope that you will find this document informative and helpful and that over the years the Parish Council, with the help of other bodies, will be able to bring about most of the improvements which many of the residents of the village have asked for.

Finally I would like to thank the Members of the Steering Group for all their help and support in preparing this document. It has been a long haul, but I think it has been worth it.



INTRODUCTION

Why create a Whaddon Parish Plan?

In 2001 the government devised the concept of parish plans and to date more than 1000 villages across the nation have already completed one. The preparation of the plan is not compulsory, but Whaddon Parish Council was keen to acquire 'quality status' in order to be certain that the parish was not bundled up as part of another neighbouring parish, and development of a plan is one of the components of this process.

That is not the only reason. To quote the government white paper, the purpose of a parish plan is also:

'..... to set out a vision of what is important, how new development can best be fitted in, the design and quality standards it should meet, how to preserve valued local features and to map out the facilities which the community needs to safeguard for the future'

Thus, creating a Parish Plan allows the people who live in the village to decide how we want Whaddon to be in the future and how to achieve it.

Without a clear sense of what the village wants and why, the Parish Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council cannot provide Whaddon with the right resources focused on the right priorities. We live in a world where we have to compete for resources and so we must make sure that we get our share from government and that we use those resources wisely.

HOW DID WE INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY?

We hand delivered a questionnaire containing 63 questions to 170 households. We then went back to every home to collect the completed forms and in some instances help with the completion of them.

We got back 124 forms. These represented 73% of all the homes surveyed. We were less successful in getting completed forms from homes outside the village; in Cardiff Place and New Farm Caravan Site for instance, being outside the village, there is not surprisingly less of a feeling of belonging. The 114 forms received from the core part of the village represented 84%.

We manned a stall at the village fete where we were able to answer many queries about completing the forms.

Every form had a separate business section which was completed by 12 businesses. Please turn to the section on business for more information.



We held a public meeting, attended by 60 residents with wine and cheese on offer, to inform residents how much information we had gleaned from the questionnaires. This meeting was combined with a display of the history of the village and an additional talk from the South Cambridgeshire Ecology Officer and was deemed a great success.

Finally we have met with the organisers of the clubs and social activities held within the village.

We believe that every person living in the village has had the opportunity to contribute their thoughts and opinions to this process.

WHO HAS DONE THE WORK?

The work in preparing this Plan has been done by the Steering Group. In setting up this group we have tried to ensure that there were Members from each part of the village.

The Group met for the first time in January 2005. Having established what we were trying to achieve, we were able to obtain some software prepared by Gloucester University, which included over 300 questions, but more importantly the means of analysing the answers electronically.

Whaddon is a small village with minimal facilities and many of the questions were not relevant to us. However the Group selected 63 questions that were relevant.

Funding for this project was obtained from Cambridgeshire ACRE who provided £1500. The balance of the cost has been covered by the Parish Council, four local businesses and time given free by the Group Members

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Now that it is complete the Plan is the property of the Whaddon Parish Council. It has been circulated to all relevant local Government offices at the district and county level and will be scrutinised by the Cambridgeshire strategic group who will report back to the Parish Council.

The Steering Group will finalise the accounts for the project, and the Members will then make themselves available to the Parish Council, which will, hopefully, set up action committees to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Group. Some of the proposals have considerable funding implications. It may be that grants can be obtained, but if not it may take several years for all these proposals to come to fruition as otherwise the local precept will rise to an unacceptable level.



DESCRIPTION OF WHADDON

LOCATION

Whaddon is a rural parish surrounded by high quality grade 2 agricultural land in South Cambridgeshire. The village lies within the Area of Restraint to the east of the Old North Road, 12 miles southwest of Cambridge and a mile south of the river Cam or Rhee. The parish covers 622 hectares. Within the village there are one grade I building, two grade II* and twenty-two grade II buildings.

HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT

The parish of Whaddon is triangular in shape; the northern boundary following the River Cam or Rhee, the Old North Road on the western boundary and the Hoback stream on the southeastern boundary. Most of the parish was part of the Wimpole estate (formerly the Hardwicke Estate). Along the Hoback stream lie seven or eight moated sites, one at Dyers Green, four in the village, two near Whaddon Green and one at Hoback Farm, all possibly associated with former manors. There are three centres to the village with a gap between Whaddon Green and the village. The original village lanes and tracks survive today as footpaths. Large flocks of sheep were kept in the parish and Dyers Green may have had connections with a weaving industry.

The parish church of St Mary dating from the 13th century, clearly shows a break in its building in the 14th century. It was restored in

the late 19th century. Several farmhouses have early medieval origins, showing substantial timbers in their construction. These include Green Farmhouse, Meldreth Road; The Grange, Dyers Green; Chestnut Tree Farm, Meldreth Road; and the Rectory Farmhouse, Meldreth Road, which was originally an aisled hall. Late 17th and 18th century buildings were traditionally built of timber frames, plastered, with thatched or pantiled roofs. Brick, slate and pantiles were introduced in the 19th century. Some cottages were remodelled as estate cottages.

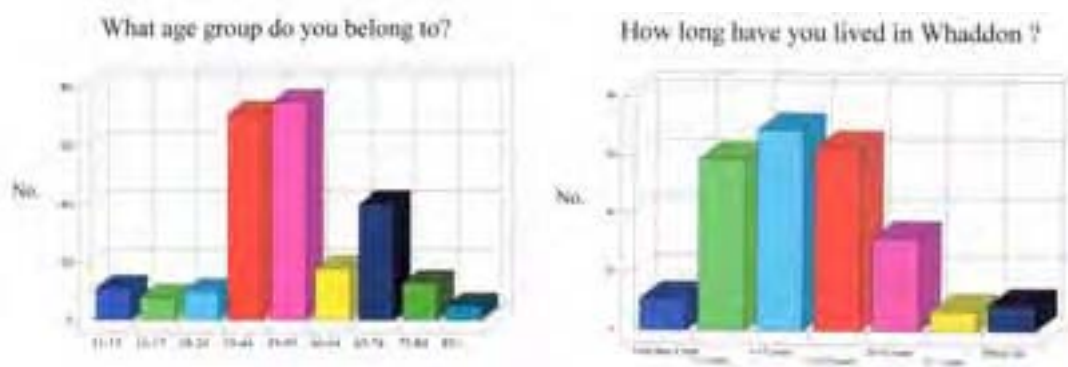
Lord Hardwicke enclosed much of the open fields and commons informally in the 18th century. Most of the remaining land was enclosed by 1830.

RECENT HISTORY

Local Authority and private dwellings were built on Bridge Street between the wars, and since 1945 other houses have been completed, including several on Meldreth Road. A large number of servicemen's houses were built in Cardiff Place during the first half of the 20th century for Bassingbourn RAF station. In 1972 a group of bungalows for old people was built at Ridgeway Close. With these exceptions development has generally been limited to single dwellings. The village remains scattered and still very rural in nature. A number of dwellings were constructed in the 1990s to maintain the village population.

In 1951 Whaddon had a population of 310. It is now approximately 460 (including children), of whom 307 live in dwellings that responded to the questionnaire.

In answer to personal questions put to them most residents seem to be very happy living in Whaddon. Only 14 people would like to move house, and of these 7 want to stay in Whaddon. Of 374 people who answered the question about what they liked about the village 251 said they liked the environment or the situation and 88 liked the community. The following two graphs show the length of time residents have lived in the village and the age profile.





SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Whaddon has a low level of facilities, apart from basic utilities, which excludes a gas supply. There is a village hall, which is much in need of refurbishment, and a recreation ground. There is a weekly post office, a fortnightly library, a preschool nursery catering for about 100 children, a golf centre with a driving range and 9-hole course and a number of other small enterprises.

Whaddon has mains sewerage linked to the treatment works in Melbourn since the 1970s. A much more detailed history of the village can be found in the excellent booklet produced by the Parish Council and issued to all homes entitled **'Whaddon, a Brief History'**. The historical element was written by Stan and Jean Ralls.

HOUSING

The South Cambridgeshire structure local plan of 2004 identifies Whaddon, with its low service level, as an infill-only village where infill developments may be appropriate on suitable sites within the defined village framework – please see attached plan of the village envelope (Appendix III). Residential developments in such villages are restricted to not more than two dwellings per approved site. In very exceptional cases a slightly larger development may be permitted if this would lead to the sustainable recycling of a brownfield site bringing positive overall benefit to the village. The District Council will resist development beyond these boundaries to protect the countryside.

The Parish Plan Steering Group strongly supports this policy.



The questionnaire posed 6 questions about future housing needs in the village. The responses were equally split between residents who felt Whaddon could accommodate new houses and those who felt that it could not.

When asked what residents thought about the number of houses built in Whaddon in the last 10 years, they replied as follows:

About right	93
Too much housing	42
Too little housing	20
Too expensive	51
Too big	40
Too small	1
No opinion	51

When asked what kind of accommodation Whaddon needs, residents answered as follows:

Homes for young people	83
Large family homes	29
Small family homes	95
Executive homes	7
Homes for people with disabilities	17
Homes for single people	35
No further homes are needed	59
No opinion	10

Finally, when asked what type of housing development would be acceptable in Whaddon, the answers were as follows:

None	60
Single dwellings in controlled locations	92
Small groups of less than 10 houses	67
Carefully designed large groups	5
Conversion of redundant buildings	65
Expansion on the edge of Whaddon	24

There is a proposal that the Parish Council enter into an agreement with the Bedford Pilgrims Housing Association to build 6 affordable homes at Church Corner. Building could start in 2006/7 providing the Parish Council can reach agreement with BPHA and with South Cambridgeshire District Council to allocate these homes to Whaddon residents in need.

The Parish Plan Steering Group strongly supports the proposal to build affordable homes.

Apart from affordable homes, there seems to be no likelihood that any substantial building would be permitted in Whaddon.



Residents comment:
Whaddon should be preserved as the fine parish that it is. Only limited well-planned infill should be allowed. The heritage of the village should be maintained.

HOUSING RECOMMENDATION

The Parish Council should prepare a design statement as a guide to those proposing to build on infill sites in future years.

HIGHWAYS

Apart from Ermine Way and the Cardiff Place Estate, Whaddon has only two roads, Church Street/Meldreth Road that run through the village from the A1198 at Whaddon Gap to Meldreth, and Bridge Street, which is a No Through Road ending in a byway at Dyers Green.

It is clear that as a rural village with virtually no public transport, cars are vital for survival. The residents who answered the questionnaire own 199 cars (1.6 cars per home), 176 bicycles (which includes children's bikes), 19 vans, 11 motorbikes and one lorry.

Although many of the surrounding villages have a limit of 30 mph on their roads, there is 40 mph speed limit on the roads in Whaddon. This was imposed in 1987 after much campaigning.

Since then the volume of traffic has increased enormously and there are now cars greatly exceeding the speed limit at certain times of day and there appear to be cars and heavy lorries using the village as a 'rat run'.

Many residents feel at danger from traffic at the following places:

- 123 at the junction of A1198 and Whaddon Gap. It is particularly dangerous turning right into the village when travelling north.

- 82 are worried by speeding traffic on Bridge Street and danger on the corner.
- 83 feel that Town Farm Corner is dangerous.
- 57 are worried by the speed of traffic at Church Corner and 87 are worried by the general speed of traffic on Meldreth Road.

In answer to the question as to what should be done about the traffic problems the following measures were suggested:

- 98 felt that a reduction of the speed limit on A1198 would help.
- 100 supported traffic calming of some sort.
- 66 want 'Children at play' signs.
- 68 want more road warning signs.
- 164 felt that a reduced speed limit throughout the village would help, together with some control over heavy lorries and other through traffic.

194 people have no parking problems in Whaddon, whilst just 16 do have a problem from time to time. However, 95 people felt that street parking is a problem. Of particular concern is the parking on the pavement outside the church, and the absence of a church car park.

An additional area for concern is the school bus pick up/set down point at the bus shelter by the Triangle at Ridgeway Close. Apart from an inadequate standing area on the opposite side of the road, the school buses create a major parking hazard on this very busy bend in the road.

HIGHWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Create a traffic management scheme that will relieve the danger at the junction of Whaddon Gap with A1198.**
- 2) Reduce the speed limit throughout the village to 30mph, as in other surrounding villages, and encourage regular speed checks.**
- 3) Introduce a traffic control system of chicanes or similar, but not speed humps, at either end of the village and in the middle.**
- 4) Initiate a survey to monitor the number of heavy lorries that cut through the village prior to a request for the erection of weight limit signs.**
- 5) Remedies should be sought to alleviate the dangers of parking on the pavement outside the church. A church car park should be created to keep parking off Church Road.**
- 6) Investigate safer bus stopping arrangements at Ridgeway Close, possibly by creating bus lay-bys.**



PAVEMENTS AND FOOTPATHS

FOOTPATHS

The majority of Meldreth Road/Church Street through the village has a tarmac pavement. The Highways Department has included in its budget for 2006 the cost of installing the final section of this pavement from Rectory Farm to the Church. There is a small section of pavement on the east side of Bridge Street.

The map at Appendix II shows the extensive network of footpaths and bridleways in the village and a byway to Kneesworth. Permissive footpaths and bridleways are those for which private landowners have given public access for a given period. It is always possible therefore that the right of access for these might be withdrawn at the end of any agreement period.

The last full survey of rights of way was instigated by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. This was completed and agreed with the County Council in 1952. It was at this time that paths were re-designated as byways, bridleways and footpaths. Whaddon has 14 public rights of way, which include one byway, one bridleway and twelve footpaths.

All rights of way within the village are passable but some have Kissing Gates. With fields having been made larger, hedges removed, field gates and stiles removed, it has never been easier to walk the paths in Whaddon. However, people with wheelchairs or buggies still find many paths impassable at some times of year, as they have soft surfacing, which is to be expected in a rural area.

As mentioned above some of the footpaths have kissing gates, which renders them unusable for wheelchairs. This is thought to be discriminatory and all footpaths that do not allow such access should have additional gates installed, fitted with a universal 'RADAR' lock (approved by The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation).

Finally it was reported that the byway leading to Kneesworth was regularly abused by unsuitable traffic and that this should be prevented. However as this byway is in Bassingbourn, the issue should be taken up with Bassingbourn Parish Council

It would be possible to have a Parish Paths Partnership where the Parish Council takes over the maintenance of all public rights of way within the parish. Many residents, 60 of whom declared themselves prepared to help maintain the footpaths, would support this.

The majority of residents know where the footpaths are, think they are well signposted, and can use them without difficulty.

PAVEMENTS

In answer to the question about facilities for pedestrians, 168 felt they were good or reasonable, whilst 58 thought they were poor. Similarly in answer to the question as to whether the pavements were user friendly, 71 thought they were good or reasonable and 79 thought they were poor.

It is felt that completion of the pavement on Meldreth/Church Road will substantially ease some of these concerns, and those of the 90 people who wanted more pavements. 68 people wanted more footpaths, but it is hard to see how the extensive footpath network could be extended. It may be that there was some confusion between footpaths and pavements.

However, there is certainly a need for a pavement around the corner at the north end of Bridge Street, where there is no protection from traffic for the many pedestrians, and particularly mothers and children. A way should be sought to solve this problem, as it is already dangerous enough for cars going too fast.

42 people wanted more cycle paths. This is likely to be difficult given the width of the roads. The Parish Council should examine whether local byelaws allow bicycles and horses to use the pavements in the absence of cycle lanes.

56 people wanted more street lighting, however there were others who were vehemently against more lighting, as they are keen to retain the rural nature of the village. When the nature of the refurbishment of the village hall is determined, it should be ensured that there is adequate lighting around the hall.

PAVEMENT AND FOOTPATH RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Request that a pavement be designed and developed to alleviate the danger for children, in particular, around the corner at the top of Bridge Street.**
- 2) Establish whether local byelaws allow pavements to be used by cycles and horses in the absence of cycle lanes.**
- 3) Ensure that all footpaths can be used by wheelchairs, installing additional gates where necessary with RADAR locks (see page 13).**
- 4) Discuss with Bassingbourn Parish Council the installation of a ‘ voluntary ‘ gate with keys issued to users, or a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on the byway leading from the end of Bridge Street to Kneesworth.**
- 5) Review outside lighting at the village hall**



CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT

Almost all respondents felt that small woods, hedges, meadows and green fields, streams and ponds, wild flowers, birds and animals and traditional farm buildings, in fact every aspect of the rural environment, was important or very important to them. 30 people were less enthusiastic about traditional farm buildings.

Equally most people felt that the management of woodland, the preservation of trees and the planting of more hedges and trees was very important or worth doing.

As far as hedges were concerned there was a mixed message. 126 people thought the hedges should be kept short and tidy and 49 did not agree. Conversely 109 people felt hedges should be allowed to grow naturally and 41 did not agree. It was felt that this issue is best left up to individual landowners.

Cambridgeshire County Council is developing a project called 'Living Land', the aim of which is to work with Parish Councils to identify the quality and quantity of biodiversity within parishes.

There were many reports of disturbance to the rural way of life as follows:

		Comments
Motor cycle noise	92	Not surprising in the light of the level of traffic on Whaddon roads
Motorcycle scrambling	21	
Low-flying aircraft	75	Not very much we can do about this problem which occurs in many lightly populated areas
Military exercises	29	Not much we can do about this either, being so near the barracks in Bassingbourn
Cycle scrambling	4	
Noise pollution	28	Mostly from traffic
Light pollution	25	Mostly from Eternit at the eastern end of the village
Litter	41	It is recommended that the Parish Council initiate litter pick-ups. It would also be helpful if dog walkers were to be armed with a plastic bag and were to pick up litter as they see it.

Most residents have no problems with flooding, but 4 reported many problems and 18 have occasional problems. There is evidence that rainwater is running into the foul drains, and this is unlawful. Cambridge Water have examined this issue in the past and confirmed that the rainwater and foul water drains are running separately. This should be re-examined.

The Parish Council has been offered as much land on Chapel Field as the Council would like to purchase, at agricultural land cost by a generous local landowner. It is strongly recommended that the Council accept this offer and purchase the land for the long-term benefit of the village.

Whaddon has been extremely fortunate to benefit from the far-sighted enthusiasm of a few individuals, an inspired countryside policy at Cambridge County Council and the generosity of local farmers. This resulted, with the support of the Parish Council and the use of a grant from the Forestry Commission, in the creation in 1997 of several acres of new woodland near the Ermine Street bridleway.

During the same period in the mid 1990s, volunteers from the village planted a hedge of natural species supplied by South Camb's District Council the full length of Whaddon Gap. Finally, land was donated by Leyhill Farm for the permissive footpaths and bridleways in that area.

A condition of the Forestry Commission grant was the creation of a car park within the new wooded area, which remains the property of County Farms Estates. Sadly, over the last few years this car park has become an eyesore with extensive rubbish dumped and the rubbish bin stolen. Early in 2006 Cambridge County Council have replaced the rubbish bin.

We must remain vigilant and we urge Residents to remove or report litter and fly tipping to the Parish Council

CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Organise regular litter pick-ups in the village, either by community workers, village volunteers, or the youth action group.**
- 2) Prepare audit of flooding drains, and check for rainwater in main drains**
- 3) Take up the opportunity of working with the 'Living Land' project to carry out a biodiversity audit of the parish.**

SPORT AND RECREATION

Several people commented that more use should be made of the existing recreational ground and that it should provide more sport and play facilities.

When asked what additional activities they would like to participate in, the responses for outdoor sports were:

- Bowls – 51
- Tennis – 60
- Football – 6
- Cricket – 17

And one or two each for swimming, netball, softball, archery, horse riding, rugby.

A bowls pitch would be a possibility on either the recreation ground or Chapel Field but it would be very expensive to maintain and as we report elsewhere there are several bowling greens near by.

A tennis court could be built on the Recreation Ground, but it would have to be funded by grants or private donations and run by a tennis club.

As there are so few footballers in the village it is felt that the existing football pitch could be reduced to a kick-about goal and, if required, a new pitch could eventually be created at Chapel Field.

In answer to a question about the playground facilities, 20 people felt they were good, 96 reasonable and 23 thought they were poor. If space was created on the Recreation Ground, more play activities could be created, together with picnic benches and playground fencing.

19 people expressed an interest in having an allotment. These too could be incorporated in the Chapel Field site. Grants specific to allotments are available – see website www.farmgarden.org.uk.

SPORT AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Buy 2 acres on Chapel Field. This can be used for allotments, football or cricket, play area and would serve to unite the two halves of the village. Initially it could be fenced until grants can be obtained for sports facilities and allotments. This would serve to free up land on the recreation ground for additional activities there.**
- 2) Increase play area on the Recreation Ground, reduce football to a kick about goal, add a picnic area and fencing around the play and picnic area.**
- 3) Consider other sports for the Recreation Ground such as tennis, which could be funded by a new tennis club.**

VILLAGE HALL

Whaddon village hall, a typical Victorian building, was built in the late 19th century and was used as a village school until the school's closure in the 1950s. Whilst some improvements have been made to the original building it is now in a poor state of repair and having been built as a school is not an ideal shape for a village hall. Thus it does not adequately serve the needs of the local community.

The hall is used regularly for a wide variety of social and public events and is managed by a Management Committee which is responsible for management and funding of minor repairs, whilst the Parish Council, being owners of the building, are responsible for major works.



When asked about use of the hall, 135 residents said they have attended at least one function in the hall in the last two years, whilst 97 have not.

We asked a question about what should be done with the hall in response to which 86 people felt the hall should be modernised, 56 said that only essential maintenance work should be done, whilst 66 people felt that the building should be sold and a new hall built on Chapel Field.

At the beginning of 2004 the Parish Council set up a Village Hall Redevelopment Committee to consider the future of the hall and to make a recommendation to the Parish Council. This report was finally completed in October 2005 and a copy of it can be found in APPENDIX I

We urge the Parish Council to accept this Committee's recommendations.

THE COMMUNITY

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

215 people responded to the question about environmental services in Whaddon. As follows:

Service	Good	Reasonable	Poor	No opinion	Comment
Mains water	133	50	11	3	Any problems are caused by small-bore pipes.
Electricity	120	69	8	5	This is an insoluble problem exclusive to Dyers Green.
Refuse Collection	94	82	27	3	Most problems are caused by overfilling of bins.
Winter weather Service	29	89	59	20	There is so seldom snow due to climate change that it seems that contractors are not ready when it does come
TV reception	90	68	39	1	All sets will soon become digital and will probably require aerial boosters

Radio reception	70	69	48	8	
Mobile phone reception.	49	60	75	5	Discussions should be held with mobile phone companies to see what can be done to boost the local signal
Roadside care, Verges etc.	38	113	42	10	The Parish Council should be sensitive to the rural nature of the village.
BT services	69	77	46	5	
Broadband	33	51	22	26	Now available through several suppliers including BT and Trilogy
Postal services	59	106	32	3	Complaints are generally due to late or wrong delivery.
Mains drains	75	70	16	1	See previous section on conservation and environment.

Several people requested an additional post box at the Bridge Street/ Church Street junction. This would not seem to be achievable, but residents should be reminded that the postmen will collect mail when delivering if left out in mailboxes.

There is no mains gas supply in Whaddon. When asked if residents would like to have mains gas, 146 people said they would, and 76 did not want it. Perhaps we should not have asked this question, as mains gas is very unlikely to be achievable, and is now almost as expensive as oil. Many homes have bottled gas, which when used just for cooking, is very economical indeed.

115 residents thought that the number and location of litterbins is good or reasonable. 58 people thought otherwise.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The Parish Council should consider whether one or two additional litterbins would be appropriate.**
- 2) Hold discussions with mobile phone companies to establish how phone reception can be improved in the village.**



VILLAGE SERVICES

Apart from the Church there are limited public facilities in Whaddon.
Use is made of the services that do exist as follows:

	Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Seldom	Comment
Mobile Library	-		9	5	9	
Thursday Post Office		8		3	15	
Fish & Chip van		11		9	44	
Golf Centre facilities	14	25		25	67	It is certain that although this is the numbers who claim to use the golf centre that actual number is much larger.

Comment from one resident ' Villagers do not make enough use of the few services on offer to them'

When asked what other services were thought to be useful to the village there were the following suggestions:

45 people suggested a convenience store, and 31 a pub – these are clearly impracticable in a village with fewer than 500 residents. Sadly, the rise of the supermarkets has made village stores very hard to run profitably. There are many pubs serving excellent food within a few miles of the village, and existing convenience stores in Meldreth, Melbourn and Bassingbourn.

There were other suggestions including a Post Office (5), Social Club in the village hall (5), and one or two each for a café, a school, and bank or cash point, and a recycling centre and a new park for Cardiff Place.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE VILLAGE

Residents comment:
'We have to be realistic about what is sustainable with a small population!'

Information in the village is disseminated as follows:

	Number of residents that use this facility	Comment
4 village notice boards	125	Some of these boards have space for private as well as Parish Council notices.
Free paper	21	Not now delivered to all homes.
Local papers	46	There are several.
Parish newsletter	180	The editor of this is to be congratulated for producing an excellent newsletter read by the majority of the village.
Post office	6	
Mobile library	1	Obviously many more people use the library.

197 residents reported that they felt that they were well informed about what was going in the village, 17 did not.

105 residents claimed to have attended Parish Council meeting and 128 have not.

PARISH COUNCIL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS

	Well	Reasonably well	Poor	No opinion
Number of residents who have an opinion as to whether the Parish Council publicise their decisions and activities well	34	123	36	34
Number of residents who think local religious groups contribute to community life	113		24	88
Number of residents who think the places of worship publicise their activities sufficiently	122		17	91

One resident's comment: *More action – less questionnaires!*

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

There are a number of residents who have problems with getting to medical facilities as follows:

	Often	Occasionally	Never
Hospital	7	12	181
Doctor	9	6	185
Chemist	6	5	184
Chiropodist	3	2	161
Optician	5	10	176
Dentist	11	8	177

There were 5 people who had difficulty finding childminders and 8 people who need full day care.

84 residents said that there is a need for a Good Neighbour scheme in Whaddon. 52 people felt that there was no need.

For almost 20 years there has been an organisation called The Heron Scheme covering all the villages served by Bassingbourn Village College: Arrington, Orwell, Litlington, Shingay-cum-Wendy, Kneesworth, the Mordens etc.

This group was formed out of a Community Lunch Scheme, which endeavoured to get community groups together, such as Brownies, Guides, Health Practitioners, Police, Schools and Church. A steering Group was formed to find out what the community was missing and to answer the needs with self-help.

Today this Group is mainly concerned with transport, helping people to get to the medical facilities, shops etc. The scheme has not run in Whaddon for over 5 years. However, bearing in mind the figures above there could well be a future for such a scheme in the village, though as ever there may be difficulty in finding volunteers.

COMMUNITY SUPORT RECOMMENDATION

The Parish Council should consider a trial appointment of a Good Neighbour Coordinator for a period of one year, to help with shopping and health visits, child minding, day care and other good neighbour requirements.

CRIME AND SAFETY

Whaddon is a very low crime area. However when asked what crimes and anti-social behaviour residents were worried about, 126 people are worried about theft, 46 about vandalism and one or two about muggings, drunkenness, graffiti, dog fouling and dangerous driving.

It is not surprising that people are worried in particular about theft and vandalism in the society in which we now live. The fact there that there have been virtually no instances of these crimes in the village in the last few years is no reason to reduce vigilance and security.

The questionnaire asked if residents believed that police coverage of the village was adequate. 134 believe it to have been poor, 53, reasonable, and 7 good. This level of dissatisfaction is not surprising as there has been no beat officer responsible for the village for the last few years. However, as of October 2005 the local force has been reorganised and the 'Melbourn Neighbourhood Team', which includes three Community Beat Managers and two Police Community Support Officers, now supports Whaddon. Within that team a beat officer and local coordinator focus on Whaddon.

Whaddon has an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme, which was re-launched in 2003 after a series of shed, outhouse and car burglaries. This was so successfully launched that Whaddon won the South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Competition at the end of 2003. There are 12 coordinators at present, who meet at least 4 times a year. This number will increase in due course to 16 in order to provide complete coverage of the village.

In 2004 a Youth Community Action Group (YCAG) was set up. The principal aim of this was to give the young people of Whaddon a sense of belonging by becoming involved in projects, educating young people about crime and other key social issues and encouraging responsibility and safety.

The YCAG is a partnership linking Neighbourhood Watch, the Parish Council, the police and local businesses. Typical projects include a sponsored walk, daffodil planting, car washing, a poster competition and bicycle anti-theft marking. There are presently about 10 young people involved in the YCAG.

The Parish Plan Steering Group strongly endorses this project and suggests that every means possible should be used to involve more young people. The YCAG should be highlighted on the parish web site, in the quarterly newsletter and in the 'Whaddon History'

HEALTH

There are no health facilities in Whaddon. Residents have the option to register with doctors' surgeries in Melbourn, Bassingbourn and Royston. This means that residents could be referred to Stevenage or Cambridge for hospital appointments. Dental facilities are available in Melbourn and Royston. Private physiotherapists, chiropodists, and osteopaths are available in Melbourn. As mentioned, above some residents have difficulty getting to these facilities.

It is recommended that the full details of all the above facilities be included in the Newsletter, Whaddon History, and on the web site.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

BUS SERVICES

A typical comment by many respondents to the questionnaire was 'what bus service' and they could be forgiven for not knowing that any existed in Whaddon at all.

In fact there is a poorly publicised Wednesday only bus route 15 –one very slow journey to and from Royston that only 13 people use for shopping trips and most of them only occasionally.

Residents of Cardiff Place and New Farm Caravan Site have route 127 from Bassingbourn Camp Gate that gives 5 buses a day to Royston and 6 to Bassingbourn and The Mordens. We have little knowledge about usage of this bus because of the low return of forms from these residents.

With so few buses it is not surprising that 88 people said they often or occasionally have public transport difficulties in Whaddon. 87 people said they would like improvements to routes, 115 said they would like more frequent buses and 39 wanted better reliability. Little detail

exists about where they wanted the services to run and further work will have to be done to ascertain this. Probably most people would want better links with Royston as well as Melbourn, Meldreth Station or Cambridge.

It is unlikely that any bus operator would be able to run a new local service at a profit. Cambridge County Council, however, have a statutory responsibility for drawing up local transport strategies and plans but need to be convinced that there is sufficient demand before they consider requests to provide a bus service. If they agree, they largely arrange services by paying subsidies to local bus operators.

An initial approach to Cambridge County Council suggests they are happy to discuss improvements with us and they were very interested to hear that our parish plan has revealed evidence of demand.

The County Council aim is to provide a minimum service of one bus a week to the nearest market town from communities of 100 people or more. This is fulfilled by our Wednesday bus to Royston. The 127 bus from Bassingbourn Camp is also run with a Cambridge County Council subsidy.

Stagecoach Bus 27 runs through Kneesworth via Mettle Hill to Cambridge at 7.35am, returning late afternoon. With very little extra time added to its timetable, this bus could easily be diverted to run through Whaddon to give a very useful link with Cambridge at times to suit workers, students and possibly even shoppers. This may give the bus more passengers than use it from Mettle Hill, where far fewer people live. The service is run commercially by Stagecoach and they may respond favourably to a suggestion to its re-routing.

We cannot pretend that the demand for better bus services in Whaddon is huge but there may be enough to build a case to convince the County Council of our need for improvements, not just for the young and old but also as a real alternative to the car for some journeys.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

A community transport scheme previously covered Whaddon but no longer exists – please see page 24.



TRANSPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Carry out a further work to determine likely bus usage and travel objectives from Whaddon.**
- 2) Use these figures to build a proper business case to convince Cambridge County Council to provide improved services.**
- 3) Discuss with Stagecoach the diversion of bus 27 to run via Whaddon to and from Cambridge.**
- 4) Investigate the likely provision/demand for community transport.**

EDUCATION

The responses to the questionnaire indicated the following children in education:

Play group	7	Sixth form college	6
Nursery school	10	University	10
Primary school	24	Training course	1
Secondary school	11		

The only educational facility in the village is 'Bumpkins' which is a nursery and pre-school facility. This is a business which was started in April 2000 and in 2004 won the 'Best Local Business Award' and in 2005 the 'Royston Crow Business of the Year Award'. It operates at two sites at Leyhill Farm and in the Old Methodist Chapel. There is a staff of 37 in all, catering for about 100 children.

Most of the young children shown above attend either the nursery or the playgroup. Additionally, Smarties at Bumpkins runs children's art classes on Thursdays (a facility that 13 residents said they wanted) and baby signing classes on Tuesdays. There is a holiday club for 4-14 year olds.

When asked in the questionnaire about educational facilities 6 people wanted additional nursery places, 15 more play group facilities, 21 needed an after school club and 15 needed holiday play schemes. Space is available for all of these at Bumpkins and residents should ring Bumpkins to book a place.



ADULT EDUCATION AND RECREATION

51 people said they thought there should be some adult education available in Whaddon. More specifically a number said they would attend the following classes and activities if they were available:

Education		Recreation	
Computing courses	48	Gardening club	52
Language classes	42	Rambling club	31
Craft classes	29	Drama club	14
Woodwork classes	14	Music society	11
Art classes	33	Band	4
Yoga	40	Young peoples' drama group	10

Additionally a few people would like classes in pilates, dog training, communication, cookery and dancing.

Care should be taken with these figures as people do not always participate in everything they say they will. **Of the above the Parish Council should consider whether somebody could be found to organise and run a gardening club.**

There were also 41 residents who were interested in badminton, but this would only be possible if a new village hall were to be built. 59 people would like to take part in local keep fit class.

There are a few formal and informal clubs in the village, which include a line dancing group and friends covering baby-sitting for each other. More formal groups include:

- Over 60s club called the Whaddonians. This was founded in 1968, has 8 members of whom 5 live in Whaddon and they meet in members houses.
- For the last 15 years there has been a Thai Boxing club meeting in the village hall on a regular basis. It has about 25 members of whom 2 live in Whaddon.

There is an active Parochial Church Council for St Mary's church, part of the benefice of Bassingbourn and Whaddon.

Contact details for the formal clubs and any new ones should be included on the parish web site, in the quarterly newsletter and in the 'Whaddon History'

Apart from the above clubs which already exist and possibly the gardening club, all the sports, educational facilities, and other recreational facilities are readily available within the South Cambridge or North Hertfordshire area, and would not be worth recreating for such a small community.

The Parish Council is to be commended for the current initiative in setting up a village website.

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The new web site should include details of where adult education and sport facilities can be found in the South Cambridge and North Hertfordshire area, such as Bassingbourn Village Community Education Centre, Royston Recreation Centre etc.**
- 2) The Whaddon Village History should be updated to include all services offered by companies within the village, such as aerial supplies, pest control, building, gardening etc. and all local clubs such as line dancing, kick boxing etc. This information should also be available on the web site.**
- 3) When expanding the Newsletter to include advertisements, the above information should also be included.**

BUSINESS IN WHADDON

At first glance there appears to be very little business in Whaddon, but a closer examination indicates that the village is commercially very active.

We received back 12 business questionnaires, but anecdotal evidence suggests that there are at least a dozen more enterprises run from home and 5 farming enterprises based in Whaddon. We are lucky to have on the outskirts of the village 2 nationally known companies. Maple Street dolls house enterprise is the largest distributor of dolls houses in the UK, visited by enthusiasts from far and wide, and the Barn Shop was recently voted the Retailer of the month by an equestrian magazine.

The questionnaires identify 44 people employed full time in Whaddon with a further 33 working part time. The Barn Shop, Bumpkins and The Golf Centre are expecting to expand their activities over the next 5 years with a corresponding increase in staffing levels.

A few companies offer work experience or are prepared to do so in the future. Very few employers, apart from those who run businesses from home, employ workers from within the village, and thus almost all employees travel by car.

All the enterprises that responded have been in business for a long time, ranging from 7 to 40 years with an average of 23 years and have been in Whaddon, including several generations for an average of 31 years with 4 businesses having moved into the village from elsewhere in the last 10 years.

There appears to be little difficulty finding employees in the area, even though they all come from outside the village. Visitors generally have little difficulty finding Whaddon addresses.

There was general satisfaction with all the public services though there were some specific comments

- The postal delivery is too late for businesses
- Rubbish collection on the edge of the village was expensive and unsatisfactory
- Electricity supply was unsatisfactory on the edge of the village

There was general satisfaction with the help supplied by the Parish Council. 8 companies expressed an interest in having their names included in any directory or website being published.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the support given and thank the following companies who generously contributed to the cost of printing the plan:

The Barn Shop
John Bishop – Plumbing & Heating
Whaddon Golf Centre
M G Radford & Son – Garden Landscape Construction

APPENDIX I

WHADDON VILLAGE HALL REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 141 Bridge Street, Whaddon, SG8 5SP

Wednesday, 26 October 2005

The Clerk
Whaddon Parish Council
112 Meldreth Road
Whaddon

Dear Yvonne

In accordance with the terms of reference set by the Parish Council, this committee has reviewed the options for the future of the village hall over the past 21 months and as a result of these deliberations, the gathering of all available evidence and as a result of two questionnaires, is able to make the following recommendations.

The unanimous recommendation of the committee is that the Parish Council should proceed with the sale of the existing building and the construction of a new purpose built hall on land available on Chapel Field.

The budget for this work would be as the attached document ‘ Village Hall Budgets’

The rationale for this decision is

- i) It is not worth investing almost £200,000 in such an old building that was built as a school and not as a village hall, and is therefore, understandably, in inappropriate shape.
- ii) The existing building is expensive to heat, and new building would be much more economical
- iii) A new building would be an investment for the future of the village for many generations.
- iv) A new building would be more suited to generating income to cover running costs
- v) The old building will need continual investment in the infrastructure, and thus a drain on Parish Council funds forever more.
- vi) A new hall on Chapel Field would unite the two halves of the village
- vii) All VAT would be reclaimable on a newly built hall.

This Committee recognises that the Parish Council may feel that it does not have a mandate to build a new hall in the light of the Village Plan response as on the attached sheet. If this be the case the Committee recommends that that the Parish Council

undertakes total refurbishment of the hall at the earliest opportunity. The required works are shown on the attached sheet headed 'Village Hall Costs'.

The rationale for recommending that the works be undertaken as one whole in 2006 are as follows:

- a) Apart from the fact that many aspects of the building are in a poor state of repair, works are essential to bring the building into compliance with health and safety and disability regulations.
- b) It is likely that the estimates costs listed will escalate over the years with inflation.
- c) There is no guarantee that the existing grants of 40% of the costs will always be available.
- d) In the event that the work is done piecemeal there are likely to be many occasions when the hall is closed, rather than one long initial period.
- e) The momentum for refurbishment is likely to diminish over the years, as other financial pressures emerge and new Parish Council Members have different opinions.

In the event that the Parish Council decides that the work should be carried out over a number of years, this Committee recommends that a sum of no less than £25,000 be made available each year, which together with a grant, if still available, of 40% would allow £35,000 worth of VAT inclusive work to be done annually.

This Committee would be prepared to advise on priority of works to be undertaken annually within the agreed budget, and to provide such other assistance as may be required by the Parish Council or the Management Committee.

Yours faithfully

N M Shaw
Chairman

APPENDIX II



APPENDIX III

