

WHERE NEXT FOR THE BIGBURY PARISH PLAN?

The Bigbury Parish Plan was commissioned by the Parish Council (PC) and adopted in May 2009 in order to identify those areas of parish development important to parishioners. The Plan was presented to parishioners in July the same year, with the invitation to everybody to help bring it to fruition. Whilst many of the recommendations were to the PC for action, others required wider participation to be effective. The entire parish should be very grateful to those people, often working behind the scenes and unknown to the majority of residents, who continue to help achieve the parish's development objectives. However, at this stage it is instructive to assess what progress has been made toward the 20 or so targets incorporated in the Plan in the two years since it was adopted. Interest needs to be re-juvenated in some areas and this article identifies some of the challenges remaining for the whole parish but especially for the newly elected PC. It also identifies several objectives for which the development of a more extensive and interactive website could be a genuine advantage and a valuable investment on behalf of the community.

The recommendations from the Parish Plan can be grouped into several categories which may overlap in some cases: many have been or are being successfully addressed, either by the PC or by others; some have been acted upon but strategies are not yet fully developed and further work is necessary; others were sympathetically accepted but are considered beyond the direct control of anybody in the parish although we can still try to influence strategy at the appropriate level; a few were not considered to have a high priority by the PC, under the prevailing circumstances.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING GOALS

1. Identify the needs of the significant numbers of older and registered disabled parishioners in all decision-making (website opportunity).. ACTION TO DATE: improvements to Memorial Hall; beach wheelchair available at BoS.
2. Increase provision of footpaths and bridleway. ACTION TO DATE: new Ringmore to St. Ann's Chapel footpath.
3. Initiate a Community First Responder scheme within the parish (website opportunity). ACTION TO DATE: collaboration is developing with Ringmore First responders & own parish volunteers have been identified; Basic Life Support training evening arranged.
4. Maintain and encourage support from all in the parish for Bigbury News (website opportunity). ACTION TO DATE: partially supported by precept; article and advertisement numbers both seem in good health.
5. Encourage the support of community activities, amenities and facilities (website opportunity). ACTION TO DATE: maintenance of playing field & children's playground; recent Royal Wedding celebrations.
6. Encourage the parish's beach and footpath management, hedge trimming policies, etc. ACTION TO DATE: active liaison with SHDC concerning beach litter at 'peak' times; provision of biannual rubbish collection skips, Millenium steps upgrade at BoS.
7. Maintain support for the Memorial Hall and St Lawrence's Church as community buildings (website opportunity). ACTION TO DATE: grant to Memorial Hall for stage improvements, formation of 'Friends of St Lawrence' (has now raised just over £9,100, and the first project is to smarten up the choir stalls and front pews).

8. Identify actual needs for affordable accommodation. ACTION TO DATE: survey commissioned by PC from Devon Rural Housing Partnership. As a basis for planning, the report identifies a need for 24 units of affordable housing within the next 5 years, made up of a mixture of rented and shared ownership of 1-3 bedroom properties.
9. Review the efficacy of existing parish information points (website opportunity). ACTION TO DATE: new PC notice boards commissioned

FURTHER WORK NEEDED TO ACHIEVE REQUIRED STANDARDS

10. Improve PC's communications to encourage greater community involvement (website opportunity).
11. Devise a local anti-litter campaign (website opportunity).
12. Devise a campaign to encourage the hygienic disposal of dog-waste (website opportunity).
13. Improve consultation with parishioners about planning applications (website/ targeted e-mail opportunity).

BEYOND PARISH'S DIRECT CONTROL; MID- OR LONG-TERM GOALS

14. Road safety improvements must be considered at the following locations: Folly Hill, Bigbury Village – shop corner, St. Ann's Chapel, Easton Junction, Bowls Cross, Pond Green, Stakes Hill (NB the purchase of several, additional, winter grit bins is underway to combat icy roads).
15. Investigate the feasibility of setting up and promoting a reliable, regular transport link between the parish and the buses serving Modbury (from Plymouth and Kingsbridge)
16. Develop alternative transport links.
17. Improve frequency and visibility of police patrols within the Parish.
18. Maintain current balance of commercial activities.
19. Improve facilities for home workers e.g. increase broadband internet speeds
20. Develop a plan to establish Bigbury as a sustainable community (job creation, housing, transport).

NOT ORIGINALLY CONSIDERED A HIGH PRIORITY

21. Commission a new parish map (website opportunity, to include footpaths).
22. Investigate the feasibility of a community-based domestic fuel oil purchase scheme (website opportunity).

Where implemented, many of these recommendations have required somebody to lead initiatives, to develop systems and procedures, and to drive progress; that will remain the case in the future, of course. Much more might be achieved relatively easily (even for low priority issues) by the use of modern communications technology (e.g. a more advanced and up-to-date parish website and targeted e-mails). If you can help in any way with the knowledge, skills, experience and motivation to meet any of these objectives but especially with developing a functional community website, please contact me or any other Parish Councillor. Similarly, if you would like your details included on a new parish e-mail directory so that you can be contacted by e-mail about specific matters of interest to you, please let me know,

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