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# **SHOREHAM PARISH PLAN REPORT**

## **1 An Introduction to Shoreham Parish**

Just North of Sevenoaks in rural North-West Kent lies the parish of Shoreham, the largest by area in the Sevenoaks District. The village of Shoreham lies in the Darent Valley straddling the river Darent as it flows north to the Thames at Dartford.

To the east of the A225 there are still a number of working farms and associated cottages; East Hill has now been developed from holiday chalets; Romney Street has the only Public House in this area, and there is a nearly permanent caravan site.

To the West lie the Well Hill and Badgers Mount areas bisected by the M25 motorway.

The whole of the Parish lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding National Beauty.

There is evidence of unbroken inhabitation of the Darent valley for at least 2500 years to the present day. In the first century BC the valley was sparsely inhabited by Celts, the Cantiaci (from which the word Kent was derived). Shoreham seems to have been derived from the local words for "ham[let] at the rocky slope".

The area was invaded in turn by Saxons and Normans. One wall of the village Church of St Peter and St Paul dates from the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

From the Middle Ages onwards Shoreham and the rest of the Darent valley, as part of one of the Archbishop of Canterbury's large manors, developed into a stable and busy agricultural community. It was protected to a large extent from overdevelopment over the last hundred years by the local large landowners who valued this way of life even if they did commute to work in the City. The adjoining areas have been developed piecemeal over the last hundred years. Badgers Mount was once a farm which was permitted to be developed in 1901. This progressed slowly until the 1930's when the provision of mains water and electricity led to more rapid development. It was finally designated a ward of the Parish in 1954.

Nowadays the agricultural value of the Darent valley has diminished in line with similar land elsewhere but its rural appeal to visitors and its attraction to London commuters has increased and property values are high even by local standards.

After the passing of the large landowners careful defence of the local landscape and character has been continued by the local community.

With the help of post-war planning policies they have acted vigorously and mostly successfully against overdevelopment, mineral extraction, and incursion of motorways. Strenuous efforts are still necessary to defend this area against speculative developers attracted by the high profits available.

The different parts of the Parish have distinct characters and they have recently sought to express their separate identities. The more rural areas have claimed that the largest community, Shoreham village, has had more than its fair share of public expenditure. There is a movement in Well Hill that has called for it to secede from the Parish and proceed on its own. Further evaluation of the Parishioner's views is in progress.

Excellent relations have developed with our neighbouring Parishes. Together we form a Darent Valley consortium to all our mutual benefit. We are in the process of developing joint local policing assistance and local wardens to address a relatively high crime rate.

This Parish Plan has attempted to gather all the views of our Parishioners. These views will powerfully support our plans for the future.

## **2 Background to Parish Plans and the Questionnaire**

The idea of parish plans was launched in the Rural White Paper *A Fair Deal for Rural England* in November 2000. The aim was to give local communities a say in their future. Parish plans should:

*"identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how the distinctive character and features can be preserved."*

Shoreham was introduced to parish plans at a public meeting arranged by Kent Rural Community Council in 2001. KRCC, now known as Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK), explained how a plan would be prepared and how the process might be funded, principally by a grant from the Countryside Agency. The reaction was positive and a number of people at the meeting volunteered to act as a steering group to get things started. It was stressed they would be acting independently of the Parish Council but it was recommended that as the PC would be important in delivering the eventual action plan it should also be represented on the group.

The Shoreham Parish Plan Group held their first meeting in June 2002. Several months were then devoted to identifying the key issues. There

were meetings and consultations in every part of the parish; distribution of the leaflet 'We have a Cuning Plan' to all households and a mailing to every known club and organisation. All this activity was to ensure that literally everyone knew about the Plan and had the opportunity at that early stage to help set the agenda by identifying the concerns and hopes which would then be explored through the questionnaire.

It became clear that things were not the same in all parts of the parish, nowhere, for example, has such a traffic and parking problem as Shoreham village or such a speeding problem as Badgers Mount. The Group worked on the principle that every community's problems or aspirations should be included in the questionnaire, however unique to a particular locality they might be. It was decided to colour-code the questionnaires for the five parts of the parish – Shoreham village, Badgers Mount, Twitton, Well Hill and East Hill - so that when the responses were analysed the breakdown by area could also be recorded.

772 questionnaires were distributed and 486 were returned, an average response rate of 62.9%, ranging from 71.9% in Shoreham Village to 50.7% in Well Hill. Altogether 1004 individuals responded, aged between 11 and 75 or over. The Questionnaire can be viewed at [www.parishplan.org.uk](http://www.parishplan.org.uk).

The Group were very fortunate in having access to expert help at the University of Surrey with the drafting of the questionnaire and the data analysis. As most of the questions produced responses from all five communities, the printout of the analysis ran to 221 pages. This is available on the Parish Plan Group website at [www.parishplan.org.uk](http://www.parishplan.org.uk). For this report responses to every question have been studied and evaluated, first to record the overall parish view and draw attention to minority opinion where it seemed significant, and then to review the responses area by area to make sure that issues of particular local importance were noted. The key issues emerging from this report will form the basis of the action plan.

### **3 Questionnaire Analysis**

**BM, EH, SV, WH**, respectively refer to Badgers Mount, East Hill, Shoreham Village, and Well Hill. In view of the small numbers of replies Twitton has been considered with Shoreham Village.

## SECTION ONE

### **1 Numbers and ages of respondents:**

Overall the distribution across the age groups is unremarkable.

### **2 Years lived in Parish:**

Generally stable community as a whole - 35% over 26 years, 65% over 11 years.

### **3 Vehicle usage:**

High rate of car ownership, 85% of households, so up to 15% of households have no car (but may have other means of transport).

### **4 Type of accommodation:**

High rate of home ownership: 85% in those responding.

### **5 Affordable housing:**

13% of respondents know family members who have had to leave the Parish for lack of affordable housing.

### **6 Village school:**

Good usage (85 in school, 67 come from Shoreham)

## SECTION TWO

### Part 1 – Community Life

#### **Usage of facilities in Parish:**

Often or very often: allotments 8%, church 18%, local shop 83% (NB closure of BM shop will make big difference there, lower EH usage probably due to access, sports facilities 8% (but see remarks regarding need for more facilities), toilets 12%, village Hall 50%.

#### **Contribution of facility to quality of life:**

Somewhat or more: allotments 19%, Church 50%, Local shop 84%, Public houses 27%, Sports facilities average 50% (SV 62%), Toilets 27%, Village Hall 64%

**Main improvements suggested:**

Church – better facilities including access for the disabled, Sports facilities – 37% want an increased range of facilities, Toilets – 29% overall want increased opening times (41% in SV), Village hall, local shop and public houses – no major comments.

**Improvements by area:**

Number of requests for improvement

<b>FACILITY</b>	<b>SV</b>	<b>BM</b>	<b>WH</b>	<b>EH</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	34	37	12	1	74
<b>TOILETS</b>	26				26
<b>CHURCH</b>	20	2		1	23
<b>SPORTS AND RECREATION</b>	84	32	1	3	120
<b>PARKING</b>	43	12	6	1	62
<b>POLICE</b>	14	4	1		19
<b>POSTAL SERVICE</b>		16	2		18

## **General comments on the following local services:**

Road Cleaning: overall 24% dissatisfaction with the service mainly involving the hedges and verges especially in more rural areas (SV 15%, BM 26%, WH 55%, EH 57%)

Refuse collection: )

Recycling facilities: ) General satisfaction

Postal service: )

Street lighting: satisfied, significant minority dissatisfied.

Medical services: Some dissatisfaction – 20% overall (25% SV) with inadequate local service

Main gas supplies: not available for 65%.

Road repairs: 45% dissatisfied (24% very dissatisfied, especially WH EH – see 'road cleaning' above)

Bus service: a very high degree of dissatisfaction in all areas

Telecommunications: in general fairly satisfied but local problems in Twitton and WH (? Broadband availability)

Electricity and water supplies: general satisfaction

Main sewage: unavailable to 13%, satisfactory for the rest

Gritting: Overall the least satisfactory service in all areas particularly EH (60% dissatisfaction) and WH

Train services: Moderate dissatisfaction (25%) except for those living near Shoreham station

## **Concern about crime:**

Home - 82% average (91% WH, 88% BM)

Public property - 82%

Personal safety - 54% (64% BM)

## **Victims of the following over the last 5 years:**

Car theft - 16% (25% WH)

Burglary - 24% (43% WH, 35% EH)

Vandalism - 21%

Antisocial behaviour - 27%

Intimidation - 15%

## **Police response:**

Some concern regarding availability and effectiveness of police assistance after an incident.

### **Measures to reduce crime:**

A moderate to big improvement suggested by:

More police presence including local Community officers was enthusiastically called for, on foot in village areas, and in cars in more rural areas (74%).

Neighbourhood watch schemes were popular, 69% (in theory)

CCTV had less support, 59%

### **Parish Council effectiveness:**

Overall: 87% satisfied, 13% dissatisfied

WH: 77% satisfied, 23% dissatisfied

BM: 87% satisfied, 13% dissatisfied

### **Improvement of Parish Council effectiveness:**

Suggestions included improvement in "attitude", improvement in dealing with concerns in particular areas including maintenance and planning concerns.

### **Re-drawing of Parish boundaries:**

BM: 14% satisfied with SPC, 55% would like to leave

WH: 34% satisfied with SPC, 40% would like to leave

### **Levelling part of Shoreham recreation ground:**

There was a small majority in favour of levelling Shoreham recreation ground to provide a football pitch.

(This plan has been found to be impracticable and has been shelved).

### **Adequacy of social and recreational facilities:**

A third of respondents wanted more facilities (BM 42%, WH 48%), particularly for youth activities and sport reinforcing the need reflected in other replies.

## Part 2 – Environment

### **Maintenance:**

Road Verges 25% dissatisfied (WH 48%, EH 41% BM 38%)

Pavements: 18% dissatisfied overall.

Recreation Ground: more bins requested.

Street Lights: 22% dissatisfied overall (28% BM), SV – more requested, BM – better maintenance requested.

Hedges: 22% dissatisfied overall (WH 41%) more frequent cutting requested.

Public Footpaths: 28% dissatisfied overall (BM 39%, WH 64%)

Overgrowth is main complaint.

Road Surfaces: Main problem is poor maintenance with 36% dissatisfaction overall (WH 75%, EH 64%)

### **Provision for particular users:**

Pedestrians: 33% overall were dissatisfied with the provision and maintenance of footpaths (SV 33%, BM 33%, WH 37%, EH 21%).

Cyclists: 22% would like to see more facilities.

Horse Riders: 12% overall would like to see more facilities.

### **Adverse environmental impacts:**

On-road Parking: 40% affected overall (SV 53%), more off road facilities requested.

Parking on footpaths: less of a problem - 21% very badly to moderately affected.

Speeding: 67% affected overall (BM 81%, WH 87%), lower speed limits should be considered, especially in the Old London Road.

Litter: 56% affected overall.

Dog fouling: 51% affected (SV 58%, BM 57%)

Inappropriate Lighting: 42% affected 16% severely overall (WH 32%)

Fly Tipping: 31% affected badly or very badly (EH 70%, BM 40%), Redman's Lane mentioned in particular.

Vehicle Dumping: 23% affected badly or very badly (WH 38%, EH34%), Badgers Mount mentioned particularly.

Overdevelopment: 12% Affected badly or very badly (BM 32%), a planning problem.

Illegal Settlement: 14% affected badly or very badly (BM 38%).

Noise Pollution: a problem due to road traffic particularly in Well Hill.

Light Pollution: Surprisingly 76% of respondents are apparently unaffected.

## Part 3 – Transport

### **Usage of Modes of transport:**

Trains: only 14% never use trains. Of the users 61% are generally satisfied with them but only 40% of regular users, presumably commuters, are satisfied.

Buses: 70% of respondents do not use buses. Of the users only 26% are satisfied with the services.

Taxis: 69% of respondents use taxis sometimes.

Cycles: 70% of respondents never use cycles

### **Difficulties with travelling:**

There is a small but significant proportion of the respondents (12% overall, 15% WH) who have difficulty in making important journeys such as to and from hospital, doctor, dentist, bank, or personal business. There is clearly a problem with Public Transport for the Community.

### **Parking:**

36% of respondents thought that there was a problem with parking in their part of the Parish (SV 54%, BM 16%, WH 9%, EH 9%). There numerous proposed solutions. The most popular request was for more public car parking facilities.

### **One way system in Well Hill:**

56.5 % of Well Hill respondents were not in favour.

## Part 4 – Development and Planning

### **Do you think that more housing should be built in the Parish?**

There was a three to one reply against any further housing with no pronounced local differences. Of those in favour the majority were in favour of low cost housing for young people and families with a preference for rented accommodation.

### **Handling of planning matters:**

Parish: 81% were very to moderately satisfied. 19% were dissatisfied, 8% very dissatisfied (BM 15%, WH 10%).

District: 64% were very to moderately satisfied. 36% were moderately to very dissatisfied, 21% very dissatisfied (BM 34%, WH 32%).

Comments: A lack of professionalism and efficiency particularly with regard to communication. Unpopular planning decisions particularly with regard to overdevelopment. Lack of co-operation between Parish and District with regard to planning generally.

## Part 5 – Employment and local business

### **Employment in the parish:**

13.5% of respondents (regardless of age) were employed in the Parish – a surprisingly large number.

### **Shopping, usage and satisfaction:**

There was a very high rate of usage and satisfaction of the two (at the time) local shops/sub-post offices.

### **Jobs from spare land and buildings:**

There was opposition (2:1 overall, 4:1 BM) to the use of redundant spare land and buildings for business use to generate more employment opportunities.

## **Action Plan**

### **Notes**

The action points in the action plan are in random order; no priorities should be implied by that order.

The points outlined in the action plan have been identified as matters of concern to people in the various wards of the Parish, but they are not exclusive, and as they are addressed it is expected that other issues needing action will become apparent.

Many of the points identified are already being addressed.

The abbreviations used in the report are as follows: -

### **Abbreviations**

ACRK – Action with Communities in Rural Kent (formerly Kent Rural Community Council)

BM – Badgers Mount

BMRA – Badgers Mount Residents Association

EH – East Hill

ML – Mark Lintell

NW – Neighbourhood Watch

PC – Shoreham Parish Council

PCSO – Police Community Support Officers

SV – Shoreham Village

SDC – Sevenoaks District Council

SRA – Shoreham Residents Association

TW – Twitton

WH – Well Hill

WHRA – Well Hill Residents Association

WI – Womens Institute

SHOREHAM PARISH PLAN : ACTION PLAN – JANUARY 2005

Where action is needed	Action Points	Action by Whom	Date	Review
To reduce crime and improve security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure supporting personnel (community P.C.,PCSO, Rural Warden) are in post</li> <li>- support Neighbourhood Watch and link to police surgery</li> <li>- consider setting up crime log for public information</li> <li>- report dumping and fly tipping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parish Council (PC)</li> <li>- PC to link police and Neighbourhood Watch (NW)</li> <li>- police, PC ?Village Stores</li> <li>- PC to encourage residents to monitor and report</li> </ul>	<p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Feb 2005</p> <p>Feb 2005</p>	May 2005
To assess need for affordable housing and act on findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conduct housing needs survey</li> <li>- respond to needs identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC, Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK)</li> <li>- PC/ACRK</li> </ul>	In progress	May 2005
To encourage use of local shops for their important role in community life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- keep residents aware of opportunities to support local shops</li> <li>- investigate possible retailing in BM and WH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- publicity campaign by PC in newsletter</li> <li>- PC to take advice from ACRK</li> </ul>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Feb 2005</p>	May 2005
To address speeding problems throughout the parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reinstate speedwatch scheme on Old London Road(BM)</li> <li>- seek lower speed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC to liaise with police</li> <li>- PC to review with BMRA</li> </ul>	<p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>	May 2005

SHOREHAM PARISH PLAN : ACTION PLAN – JANUARY 2005

Where action is needed	Action Points	Action by Whom	Date	Review
	limit on A224 (BM) - extend 30mph limit to south of Water Lane (SV) - seek 30mph limit through Well Hill	and police/highways authority - PC (in progress) - PC to review with WHRA, police/highways authority	Feb 2005 Feb 2005	
To consider existing and future parking provision	- review off-road provision and consider further opportunities - consider parking restrictions and residents' parking areas	- PC - PC to consult in affected areas	Feb 2005 Feb 2005	May 2005
To improve and maintain roads, footpaths and pavements	- lobby highways authority to improve road/verge cleaning and maintenance (all areas) - review gritting priorities - create new footpath on Station Rd (SV) - recruit volunteer Parish Footpaths Officer	- PC to identify worst cases and press for action - PC - Grant application for 2006 - PC to appoint voluntary footpaths officer and helpers	Feb 2005 Feb 2005 2006 Feb 2005 Feb 2005	May 2005

SHOREHAM PARISH PLAN : ACTION PLAN – JANUARY 2005

Where action is needed	Action Points	Action by Whom	Date	Review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- campaign against dog fouling and supply of more dog bins, where appropriate (WH)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC NW involvement suggested</li> </ul>		
<p>To address lighting needs, improvements and inappropriate lighting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- install low-level lighting in Station Road when footpath is built (SV)</li> <li>- replace existing street lighting in Station Rd (SV)</li> <li>- reduce light pollution on Polhill</li> <li>- encourage property owners to use appropriate lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- highways authority</li> <li>- PC, concurrent with footpath</li> <li>- ML to initiate and advise</li> <li>- Local publicity</li> </ul>	<p>2006</p> <p>Feb 2005</p> <p>Feb 2005</p> <p>Feb 2005</p>	<p>May 2006</p> <p>May 2005</p> <p>May 2005</p> <p>May 2005</p>

SHOREHAM PARISH PLAN : ACTION PLAN – JANUARY 2005

<b>Where action is needed</b>	<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Action by Whom</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Review</b>
To address transport deficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- seek grant to study use of public transport in relation to users' needs, including sustainable transport opportunities</li> <li>- consider ways to provide links to existing facilities</li> <li>- consider co-operation with neighbouring communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC to approach ACRK for grant under RTP scheme</li> <li>- PC to set up working group to explore new solutions</li> <li>- PC and Darent Valley Consortium</li> </ul>	Feb 2005	May 2005
To improve range and scope of leisure/recreational facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- investigate installing half pipe on recreation ground (SV)</li> <li>- resurface tennis courts (SV)</li> <li>- Investigate the possibility of providing a village green (WH)</li> <li>- recruit youth club leader/organiser</li> <li>- support existing/new sport and leisure clubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC to research feasibility and cost</li> <li>- PC to apply for grant</li> <li>- PC to work with WHRA</li> <li>- PC to consider minor grants</li> <li>- PC to take advice from parishioners</li> </ul>	In progress  Feb 2005  In progress  Feb 2005  Feb 2005	May 2005
To improve parish	- improve links with	- PC through liaison	In progress	



SHOREHAM PARISH PLAN : ACTION PLAN – JANUARY 2005

<b>Where action is needed</b>	<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Action by Whom</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Review</b>
telecommunications provision	areas to be identified (eg WH, TW)	questionnaire data		
To improve PC effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Produce key information for residents and revise regularly</li> <li>- Improve relations between the various wards of the parish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC</li> <li>- Closer liason between PC BMRA and WHRA</li> </ul>	<p>Feb 2005</p> <p>Feb 2005</p>	May 2005
Improvement of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate the provision of mains gas where currently not available (WH)</li> <li>- Investigate the causes of the unacceptable rate of electricity failure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC</li> <li>- PC</li> </ul>	<p>Feb 2005</p> <p>Feb 2005</p>	May 2005
Reduction in noise pollution (WH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lobbying for low noise surface for adjacent M25</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PC, WHRA</li> </ul>	Feb 2005	May 2005

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