



Northwood



Parish Plan

February
2021



CONTENTS

Foreword

Location of Northwood

Details of the Parish Council

Statement of Purpose

Principal Priorities

Historical Background to Northwood

Historic Sites and Heritage Features

The Present Community

Other Features of the Community

Provision of Information

Access to the Countryside

Some of the Measures taken to fulfil the Statement of Purpose
and Principal Priorities

Conclusions

Foreword

In October 2007, the Northwood Village Management Committee published a Parish Plan which set out the history of Northwood, the background to the Parish Plan, the nature of the Northwood community and various topic areas such as housing, public transport, employment and the environment.

It was an excellent and impressive document and it clearly showed the enormous amount of time and effort taken leading to its publication.

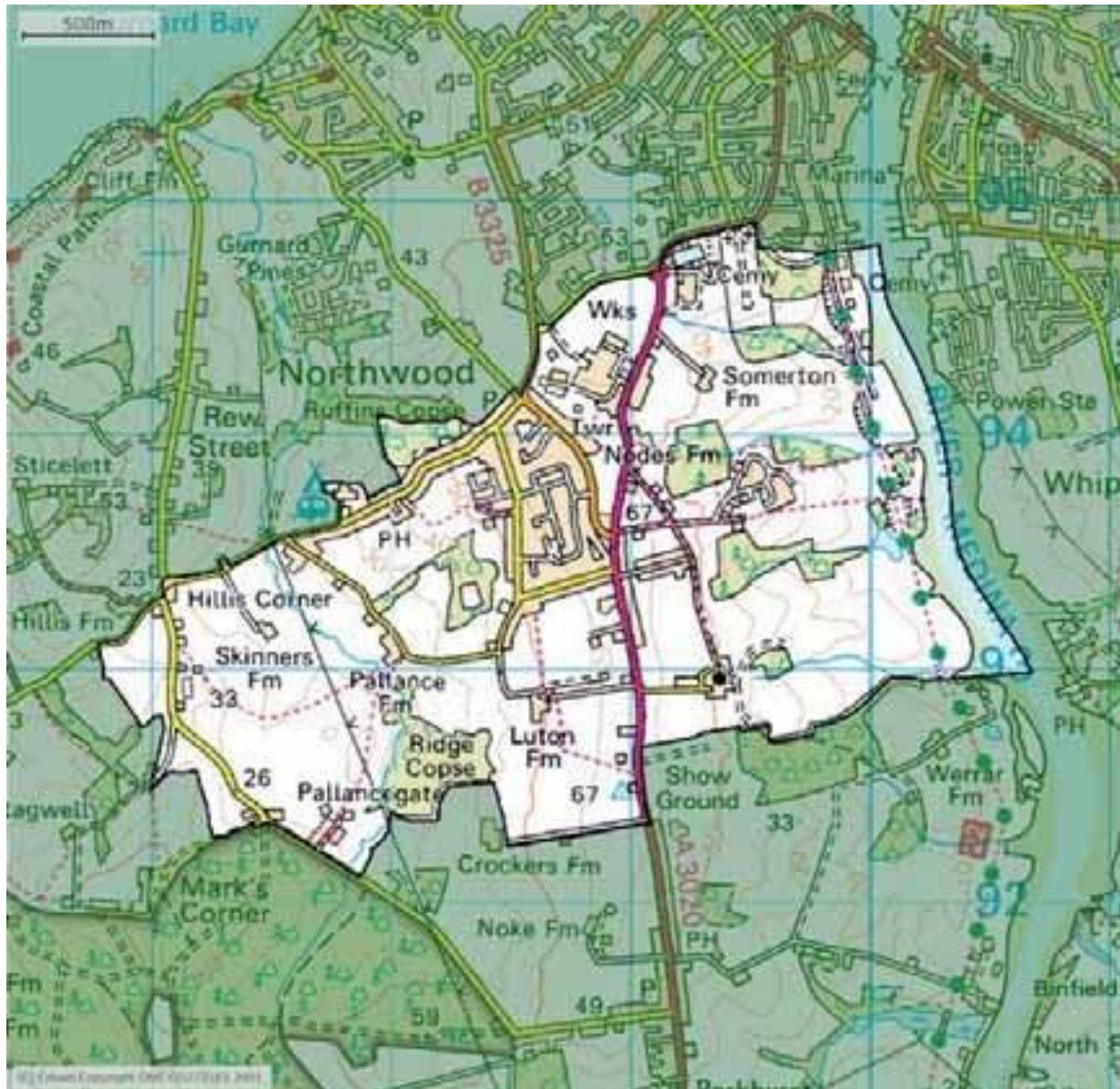
Northwood Parish Council, formed in 2008, has now decided that the Plan requires updating. However, rather than spending a considerable amount of money in producing glossy copies, the Parish Council has concluded that in this digital age the document should be published online. This will easily enable any necessary amendments to be made, particularly as the document will be regularly reviewed.

The Parish Council hopes that the Plan will be regarded as interesting and informative. Comments on the Plan are welcomed. In addition, in this version of the Plan, the photographs in the 2007 document have been deleted so that Northwood residents are able to send to the Parish Council their photographs which they feel should be incorporated into this new document. The Parish Council looks forward to receiving them for its consideration.

John Pullen – Chairman, Northwood Parish Council

Location of Northwood

The community of Northwood lies in the northern quadrant of the Isle of Wight, on the western side of the River Medina, between the towns of Cowes and Newport. It comprises an area of 556 hectares (2.1 square miles) and is shown on the map below.



Map Showing Electoral Ward Area

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Details of the Parish Council

The Parish Council comprises eight councillors who are:

Chairman – John Pullen: 86 Wyatts Lane, Northwood, PO31 8PY

Email: pullenjd@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 641362

Vice Chairman – David Jaggar: 4 The Ridge, Medham, PO31 8QN

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John Nicholson: Sunnyside, Pallance Lane, Northwood, PO31 8LT

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The Parish Council has a Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer who provides important advice on the administrative and financial rules and regulations that govern the business of the Parish Council. She is:

Mrs Barbara Herbert: 11 Wyatts Lane, Northwood, PO31 8QB

Email: clerk@northwoodparishcouncil.org Tel: 290086

The Parish Council meets every month, except in August, on the first Tuesday in the month, at 6.30pm at Northwood Primary School. If necessary, the Planning Committee meets on the third Tuesday each month, but it is usually the case that planning matters, primarily applications for planning permission, are considered at the full meetings of the Parish Council.

The last “ordinary” meeting of the Parish Council was held in March 2020 and all subsequent meetings, having regard to the COVID-19–19 virus, have been “Virtual”, using the Zoom technology. It is considered that this system has worked extremely well and on occasion members of the public have attended Parish Council meetings, successfully using that system.

Statement of Purpose

The Parish Council approved in 2017 the following statement of purpose:

Northwood Parish Council strives to maintain, and where appropriate, to improve the quality of life for all its residents, through the provision of civic leadership and quality services and facilities.

Principal Priorities

Also approved in 2017 were the following principal priorities:

To maintain and enhance where possible an attractive, clean, healthy, safe and secure environment.

To provide directly, and where advantageous with other organisations, accessible and affordable services which meets the needs of residents.

To promote the social, economic and environmental interests of residents.

To encourage investment leading to sustainable development and employment opportunities.

Historical Background to Northwood

Until 1894, the sources for local history do not always differentiate what we know today as Northwood from the history of the wider Cowes, Gurnard, Thorness and Parkhurst area, as the ecclesiastical parish of Northwood once included all these places. Its western boundary was the river at Newtown and its eastern one the Medina; its southern boundary was Parkhurst Forest and its northern one the sea. To further complicate matters, Northwood was itself a Living which the incumbent Rector held jointly as Rector of Northwood and Vicar of Carisbrooke.

West Cowes did not become a separate parish until 1894, even though a chapel (which later became St. Mary's church) had been there since 1657.

The parish boundary probably marks old Anglo-Saxon land divisions. Some of the local hedges have been dated as being at least one thousand years old. Neolithic finds have been made at Pallance Farm. A coin of Vespasian was found in Pallance Road and a coin of Marcus Aurelius in Parkhurst Forest. Near the church is an unexcavated Roman site, on top of which evidence of the mediaeval strip field system has been identified.

One local farm was mentioned in the Domesday Book - Luton (Levinton). In the 13thC Northwood was called 'Northewede' and also, in 1295, 'North Wode', becoming Northwood by 1364. Fourteenth-Century Northwood was the site of one of the string of warning beacons across the Island, our one, called 'Roghelonde' existing in 1324.

In 1770, smugglers were apprehended at Three Gates. In the 1820s and 30s, several Northwood residents were tried for smuggling and sentenced to either serve in the Navy or be imprisoned in Winchester Gaol, their main contraband being brandy, spirits, wine, tobacco and East Indian silk.

In 1777, Sir Richard Worsley bought the Manor of Northwood.

Turnpikes were erected in 1813. In 1816 they were moved from Love Lane to 'Dallimore's' - which was somewhere near Smithard's Lane. Also, in 1816, the Highway Commissioners removed the three gates on the road from the Horseshoe to Nodes Farm - the fields were to be enclosed with culverts, and drains were to be built on the 'Northwood Road'.

1875 saw a boundary dispute between Newport and Cowes. In 1876 the village was hit by a tornado: a thirty-yard-wide strip of trees was blown down in Parkhurst Forest; two houses at Marks Corner and one in Tinkers Lane (Pallance Road) were destroyed before the tornado tore through Cowes.

The Ward family began buying up farms and plots of land in the early 19thC until they owned most of the local farms. These were sold off at the turn of the 20thC when the estate was broken up.

Most of the housing development of Northwood took place during the 20th Century, with the Nodes Farm estate (Venner Avenue, etc.) being built in the 1960s. Later, farmland at Medham was developed.

Historic Sites and Heritage Features

Northwood has one Grade I Listed Building - the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist. There are several Grade II Listed Buildings, including Hope Cottage and Fryers Cottage, Tara House, Pallance Farmhouse, Wyatts Cottage, Barleyfield Cottage and buildings at Chawton Farm.

St. John The Baptist Church was a chapel of ease in the Carisbrooke Parish until the reign of Henry VIII when it obtained parochial privileges. The building is mostly 12thC and 13thC with some Victorian 'improvements' and repairs being made in 1864. Most of this restoration was financed by Miss Emma Ward. In 1874 the church bell was hung.

The Old Rectory (Tara House) was renovated and enlarged in 1736 by a very rich Rector, Dr. Thomas Troghear - a man connected by marriage to many of the landed families on the Island - but by the end of the 19thC the curate ran a boarding school in the house to supplement his stipend. The church sold the glebe lands surrounding the old Rectory to neighbouring farms in 1918 and finally sold the old Rectory itself in 1953, building the new Rectory in Chawton Lane as a replacement.

In 1855 the school was built in Wyatts Lane on land bequeathed by the Miss Ward sisters.

A certificate was issued in 1777 for a Dissenters' Meeting House and James Day built a Presbyterian chapel.

In 1837 Trustees were appointed for the Independent chapel built at Marks Corner on land purchased in 1806 by James Flux and James Clarke.

1880 the old Wesleyan chapel was deemed insufficient to meet the increase in Wesleyan Methodism in the area and a new chapel and school room were built just below the old one in Tinkers Lane (Pallance Road). This new one could accommodate 130 people. It is now a private residence.

From modest industrial beginnings with, for example, a blacksmith next to the Horseshoe in the 1820s, this part of the Island became a major source of industrial employment. In 1919 Somerton Works was sold to a manufacturer of motor scooters, in 1927 it was leased to the Vectis Bus Company and in 1935 it re-opened and was re-equipped for the manufacture of aircraft components. Somerton Works finally closed in 1966. The old J S White's sports ground was at Somerton.

Decca opened in Northwood in 1959 before becoming Plessey and going through several name changes until the current BAE Systems.

There were several brickyards in the parish including those at Medham (which was in existence in 1772), Werrar (which was then in the Parish and was pre-1884), Wyatts Lane and Marks Corner.

In 1513 there was a hospital in Northwood. A confraternity called the Brothers and Sisters of St. John the Baptist was founded near Northwood Church about 1513 and was dissolved in 1536. The building housing the confraternity, later known as Church House, was still standing in 1690 and was near St. John's church.

In 1727 and predating the one at St. Mary's, one of the earliest work houses in the country, instigated by the Revd. Thomas Troghear, was opened near the church. This supplied apprentice labour to many of the local farmers - and also the Rector himself to work his glebe land.

Land was purchased for a cemetery in 1855 (in Newport Road), with two thirds consecrated and one third un-consecrated.

The Present Community

Most of what many residents consider today to be 'Northwood' developed when part of Decca Radar relocated onto the old aerodrome site in the late 1950s. Prior to the development of the Wroxall Farm and the Nodes Farm Estates (housing many Decca - later Plessey - employees and families), there were distinctive communities in Furzyhurst close to the school and sporadic houses in Wyatts Lane and Tinkers Lane (Pallance Road). Victorian and Edwardian properties, with some later, inter-war and post-WWII buildings result in a mixed building stock in the older, linear settlements in Oxford Street, Wyatts Lane, Pallance Road, Pallance Lane, Coronation Avenue and the Newport/Cowes Road. Significant development took place in Harry Cheek Gardens and Cranleigh Gardens in the 1990s - the latter increasing significantly the social housing stock in the community. There are of course other areas of Northwood as indicated below.

The area known as Chawton, around Northwood Church, is the oldest part of the village. Chawton Farm barns have been sympathetically converted into housing.

Pallance Gate is a small community of former farm-workers' cottages, off Hillis Gate Road.

Hillis refers to the dozen or so households located from Hillis Corner to the road to Parkhurst Forest (Hillis Gate Road). The houses at Hillis Gate Road are a combination of former farm houses and cottages, forest-workers' cottages and homes to residents once employed at the local brickworks.

Medham Village is a 1990s development of seventy-one properties surrounded by open countryside at the tarmacked end of Medham Farm Lane.

Somerton is host to most of the industry in Northwood as well as being an area of housing. There is a thriving industrial estate as well as BAE Systems, Cliftongrade scrap yard, Aldi, a call centre, three large vehicle dealerships and petrol and diesel facilities. Somerton is probably most famous for having the air strip which was in existence from 1916 to 1951 (now the BAE site).

Northwood Business Estate also provides a number of units.

Other Features of the Community

The community has an excellent Primary School, a C of E church, a limited hours Post Office/shop, a hairdresser and a newsagent/shop. Two public houses, The Horseshoe Inn and The Travellers' Joy as well as Northwood Village Hall and a Scout Hall serve the community. There are significant industrial premises, ranging from BAE Systems to SMEs (Small-to-Medium Enterprises) located on Somerton Industrial Estate and at Northwood Business Park. A Health Centre, serving the greater Cowes area, lies just inside the northern Parish Boundary.

The Northwood Village Hall is usually well used throughout the year and is in a very 'public' location within the community. It was upgraded in 2005 and offers disabled access, kitchen facilities and significant car parking space. In 2018 there was installed on the outside of the Hall a defibrillator. However, the use of the facilities in the Hall has been severely curtailed by COVID-19.

The Scout Hut is usually well used by the "primary users" and is available for private hire eg ballet/tap classes held on a Wednesday. However, this is another facility whose use has been curtailed.

Northwood Primary School also hosts community groups, functions and meetings (in addition to school related activities), mostly during term time. Northwood Church can seat up to 150 persons for meetings, concerts etc. However, the use of the School premises has also been very affected by the virus restrictions.

There is ready access to the surrounding countryside, to the coast and to the River Medina shore via footpaths and a cycleway. The community is traversed by the main Cowes to Newport roads, carrying large volumes of traffic. The community is well served by public transport.

Recent residential development has been mostly through small-scale infill but there is increasing pressure in Northwood for greater areas of residential development.

Provision of Information

The community is well served with local information:

- Northwood News is a monthly, church-produced magazine distributed free to every household in the church's parish with a wide range of community news
- The local Isle of Wight Councillor produces a regular newsletter, which forms part of Northwood News
- Northwood School produces a weekly newsletter to parents which often reflects community information
- There is a village notice board adjacent to the Horseshoe Inn car park
- The local Post Office, shops and pubs willingly display community information, posters etc.
- There is an excellent village web site (www.northwoodvillage.org.uk), formed around school, church and community information. On-line copies of some newsletters above are carried in addition to much more.

Access to the Countryside

Northwood is fortunate in its location. The community has easy access to the Medina Valley by footpaths and cycle ways. Lanes and footpaths radiating to the North, South and West of the community provide access to the coast, Parkhurst Forest and open countryside. A few footpaths within the community provide convenient and pleasant shortcuts, especially around the church.

Some of the Measures Taken by the Parish Council to fulfil the Statement of Purpose and Principal Priorities

Crime and Safety

The Parish Council enjoys a very good relationship with the Police who give monthly reports to the Parish Council and occasionally attend its meetings.

There is an opportunity for the Parish Council to raise with the Police any matters of concern so that the necessary action can be taken. The Police information provided is relayed to the community via the Northwood News. From the Police statistics it is clear that fortunately Northwood has very low levels of crime compared with other areas on the Island.

Neighbourhood Watch has been a valued feature within the community since its launch in 1992. 'No Cold Calling Zones' have been established over the years but it would appear that sometimes they are being ignored. The Parish Council is looking at replacing, and indeed adding to, the lamp post signs that show we are a No Cold Calling Village.

The present Police priorities are:

Op Sceptre.... Nationwide knife crime initiative

Domestic violence.... signposting/referring to partner agencies

Drugs.... gathering intelligence and taking appropriate action.

Public Transport

Northwood is one of the best-served areas on the Island for public transport. The bus services between Cowes and Newport which run through Northwood are regarded as frequent. In addition, the Parish Council for a number of years has joined forces with Gurnard Parish Council and Cowes Town Council to support financially the provision of the Community Bus Service 32, which during part of the week runs around the three areas. This enables residents, who are not able to access easily the main route services, to get out and about.

Local Economy

The Parish Council is well aware of the importance of the businesses in its area in contributing to the Island economy. Planning applications for new businesses and extensions/improvements to existing businesses are usually welcomed and supported. The Parish Council agreed to support financially the 2018 Northwood Business Survey in order to identify economic trends and emerging issues affecting small businesses in the Parish area. Small businesses are the cornerstone of the Island's economy, serving as a hub, job creation and consumer choice. By providing a favourable business climate where the Island's economy can flourish and expand, the IW and Northwood Parish Councils hope to assist these small businesses to create jobs, bolster economic growth and prosperity, and in doing so strengthen the Island's financial position.

The Parish Council has made comments on the IW Council's draft Regeneration Strategy which sets out the ways in which the challenges facing the Island might be overcome in the next 10-12 years. Whilst welcoming the broad thrust of the document, some of the observations made challenged parts of the draft Strategy. In February 2019 the Parish Council considered the IW Council's draft Island Planning Strategy Development Plan which sets out proposals for the scale and type of development in various locations. The implications for Northwood were very closely examined and are set out later in this Parish Plan.

Traffic Measures

Northwood has much through road traffic, being on the main routes between Newport and Cowes. Pallance Road is also a main route from Cowes to the Porchfield area and increasingly to the West Wight. Many of the rural roads within Northwood do not have pavements and are regularly used for equestrian movements, resulting in safety implications.

Northwood Primary School generates significant traffic flows and parking demands around school drop-off and pick-up times. The non-resident workforce population and commuting traffic between Cowes and Newport create significant 'rush hours' twice a day. The Parish Council regularly receives complaints about speeding in certain areas and also parking abuses. Speeding along Wyatts Lane and Pallance Road is often the reason for complaints.

To this end, a new Speedwatch initiative is to be commenced. Councillors and members of the public from Gurnard, Northwood and Cowes have volunteered to be trained by the Police to use new speed monitoring equipment. The equipment will be hand held cameras, far superior to the old cumbersome indicators used before. Training will commence when Government COVID-19 restrictions have been relaxed. Anyone wishing to give some time to this important task can do so by first contacting their local Parish Councillor. The addition of double yellow lines at the top of Pallance Road has improved traffic flow and prevented vehicles backing up to the Post Office when passing parked cars. A new digital traffic speed indicator has been installed in Nodes Road. A warning sign for pedestrians in the road has been placed in Pallance Road. There is a danger for people walking along Pallance Road and Wyatts Lane where there is no pavement. The Parish Council will closely monitor the situation and continue the dialogue with Island Roads and the IW Council to try to achieve a safer outcome for all users of these roads.

Despite the endeavours of the Parish Council and Northwood Primary School, the temporary parking of vehicles in the vicinity of the School when dropping off pupils and picking them up still causes problems and potential dangers. Further consideration is being given to enforcement measures designed to solve these problems.

Approvals of large-scale housing development in adjoining parishes have resulted in additional traffic using the Newport Road junction with Nodes Road. The Parish Council constantly points out to the IW Council that this junction is at capacity and needs improvements to cope with the traffic, which may well be recognised by the IW Council but so far there seems to be no improvement plans.

Section 106 Agreements

Quite often planning permissions are granted subject to what are called a Section 106 agreements. This is a mechanism whereby the applicant/landowner agrees to provide certain infrastructure works or makes a financial contribution to certain schemes such as assisting the provision of affordable housing.

The Parish Council has identified its local priorities as follows:

creating a shadow pavement down part of Pallance Road (south side). Although Island Roads and the IW Council have advised that due to the width of the road this would not be inappropriate

providing a pavement from Four Cross junction to connect with the short-stopped pavement on the Gurnard (west) side

providing a dropped kerb in the pavement along the southern side of Three Gates Road on either sides of the small layby and at the end of the footpath along Place Road either sides of the rear entrance to BAE Systems

a pedestrian refuge across Nodes Road in the vicinity of the two bus stops near to the junction with Uplands Road, by narrowing the pavement on the south side of Nodes Road to enable re-alignment of the road

an all-weather surface MUGA on the Venner Avenue play area.

Other ideas for Section 106 monies include facilitating a rest point with seating on the green area on the corner of Place Road/Three Gates Road and the

carrying out of a yellow line and general parking audit with a view to suggesting implementations or removals more appropriate to current circumstances.

Planning and Housing Measures

The Parish Council regularly considers planning applications and makes recommendations on their determination to the IW Council. The more contentious applications relate to proposed housing development. Most small-scale developments are recommended for approval but the Parish Council has objected to larger scale development in Northwood and occasionally in areas close to Northwood. Grounds for objection to the application for up to 66 units off Newport Road included protecting the open space between Cowes and Newport, adverse traffic implications, inadequate infrastructure such as medical and dentistry services and school places, prematurity and unsustainability. Regrettably, the IW Council's Planning Committee decided to approve the application subject to a Section 106 agreement being signed setting out various matters to be implemented in order for the housing development to proceed.

The Parish Council tries to retain Northwood as an attractive village and prevent any possible coalescence with Cowes and Newport but there is no doubt that there is considerable pressure, applied by both the Government and the IW Council, for additional housing development which was set out in the draft Island Planning Strategy Development Plan published in November 2018. The Parish Council carried out its own Housing Needs Survey in 2014 which concluded that there was a need for only 27 additional units in the period 2014-2019.

The Parish Council examined carefully the IW Council's new draft planning document and made many comments on it. Having regard to the importance of these proposals, the relevant minute of the Parish Council's Planning Committee is fully set out over the next few pages:

- I. THAT Northwood Parish Council supports the request by the Island's MP to the Minister for Housing to look again at the target of 640 houses per annum, in an effort to reduce housing numbers. Councillors considered the provision of 9,615 houses over the next 15 years to be neither required nor deliverable.
- II. THAT Northwood Parish Council submit the following comments and queries with regard to the draft Island Planning Strategy:
 - Paragraphs 2.20 and 2.21 suggests that the present housing stock makes it difficult to attract professionals and management personnel and that by offering the right types of accommodation in the right locations they would be attracted to the Island. Councillors questioned as to whether there really was such a dearth of decent housing stock. Paragraph 2.20 also specifically referred to lower levels of performance in areas such as education and health provision, which the Parish Council suggested were the main concerns for professionals and management personnel in making any decision to relocate to the Island.
 - Paragraph 2.46 states that the Island is a special place and is valued by those who live here and visit. Reference is made to the quality and attractiveness of its natural and built environment and the historic nature of these is a major factor when considering why people choose to live here. Northwood councillors agreed with that statement but suggested that the enormous increase in housing provision would have a seriously adverse effect on the qualities mentioned.
 - Paragraph 3.5 set out the objectives and priorities for the draft Plan. However, the amount of housing and the suggested sites would seem to be in direct conflict with particularly Nos. 1, 3, 4 and 7.
 - Paragraph 3.35 suggests that new links to the Cowes-Newport cycle track will make it easier for people to move easier between the towns on foot and bicycles. Councillors questioned that given the population on the island was growing, mainly amongst the older age groups while struggling to retain people in the younger age bracket, (para 2.23) would such new links realistically, substantially reduce the number of vehicles on this important section of the highway network?
 - Paragraph 4.10 refers to PSDG 3 Priority Locations for Development and Growth and states that "the approach is about ensuring the right level of development takes place in the right places. The policy seeks to direct new development to settlements that are already considered sustainable (where there are services, facilities, homes and jobs and where there are the most sustainable modes of transport)". Yet in Northwood there is no capacity at Cowes Medical Centre, no dentistry services and the local primary school is at very near capacity. Councillors considered that the IW Council was not complying with its own criteria in selecting Northwood for such massive housing development.
 - Paragraphs 4.11 and 4.12 refer to settlement boundaries where development within or immediately adjacent to them will be prioritised. For a potential development site to be immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary there must be part of the red line touching the boundary unless it is the opposite side of a highway where it will still be considered to be immediately adjacent.

This definition has now been expanded to include the “opposite side of the highway” from the policy in the Core Strategy. This policy gives uncertainty to members of the public and bodies such as Parish and Town Councils. Either a site should be within the settlement boundary or not. The Parish Council contend that no other local planning authorities have such a laissez-faire policy.

- Paragraph 4.20 – Stating that the IW Council also wishes to use land effectively and development proposals should make as much use as possible of previously developed land. The Parish Council challenges as to why out of the seven Northwood sites listed only one, HA020 former Somerton Reservoir, was a brownfield site.
- PSDG 6 Ensuring Planning Permissions are delivered – Councillors accepted the premise of this policy and the intention behind it but would like to see examples of where this issue has been successfully addressed in other parts of the country. If it has been found to be effective elsewhere, Northwood Parish Council supported the policy. However, the policy should be enforced on all sites, not just the small developer. In addition, councillors suggested that larger developers should provide a timetable for the development, which formed a condition of the planning consent so to ensure compliance by the developer.
- Policy DHWN 1 Planning for Housing Delivery – Northwood Parish Council considered the planned housing supply to be both unbelievable and unachievable.
- Policy DHWN 6 Delivering Affordable Housing –Northwood Parish Council was of the opinion that the IW Council should be significantly concentrating its efforts on its own proposed Housing Development Company. According to the draft Regeneration Strategy the IW Council will proactively seek to develop out housing on its own land across a range of tenures.
- Policy EA3 Employment Allocation at Somerton Farm, Northwood –Northwood Parish Council, in theory, was agreeable for the provision of a small to medium scale employment mix on this site. However, having regard to Island Roads’ advice on the former Somerton Reservoir site for housing, councillors wondered how much consultation there had been of the whole draft Plan between the planners and Island Roads. Island Roads’ report dated 30.4.18 for Somerton Reservoir site states “When reviewing the impact of the development on the operation of Somerton Roundabout, while it is accepted that even without the proposed development the capacity of this junction will be exceeded in both the AM and PM peaks by the year 2023, the addition of the proposed development traffic will further compound this issue (+1.1%, 23 vehicle movements in the AM peak and 23 movements in the PM peak) and thus cannot be supported by this office without mitigation measures being implemented to ensure that as a minimum the proposal will retain the status-quo.

Therefore, as proposed the traffic generation associated with this application will have a negative impact upon the operation of the junction between Newport Road / Three Gates Road / Saunders Road Roundabout (Somerton Roundabout) and as there are no mitigating measures proposed as part of this application this increase in vehicle movements is contrary to policy SP7 (Travel) of the Isle of Wight Core Strategy.” Councillors noted that in the draft Plan reference was also made to a purpose-built site access but clearly this area with both new residential proposals and the employment proposals would generate even more additional traffic on the A3020 Cowes to Newport Road.

- SGOE 9 Supporting High Quality Tourism – Concern was expressed that with such a major increase in residential development, the aim of providing high quality tourism and the wish for the Island to be seen as a leading UK visitor destination would be detrimentally and adversely affected.
- BCI 1 A Better-Connected Island – The list of Key infrastructure improvements should also include improvements to all key road junctions between Cowes and Newport, given the potential for an additional over 2,500 houses being built with access on to this highway during the life of the draft Plan. There was however in paragraph 7.4 a reference to the expansion of the shared path network on the Island but Northwood Parish Council reiterated its doubt as to the amount of positive benefit to be achieved when comparing the figures which will result from the increased vehicular use of the roads.
- Table 7.2 – Councillors welcomed that the Newport Road/Nodes Road is mentioned as a junction in a list of junctions where it has been indicated that further modelling and assessment would be beneficial. This would be considered by the IW Council when determining applications in the vicinity of the junctions. Northwood Parish Council questioned as to how many applications would have to be made to justify “further modelling and assessment”. Although it was stated that this “would be beneficial” it should also be stated that works would then be undertaken. The Parish Council suggested that the following junctions also be added: The Fourcross junction, where Nodes Road/Pallance Road/Cockleton Lane and Place Road meet, which the Parish Council had highlighted many times the need for the pavement on the western side of Place Road to be extended for public safety reasons.
The Local Plan Transport Impacts study states that “congestion remains an issue, particularly on the Newport – Cowes and Newport – Ryde routes. Whilst the TITF has been made aware of plans to address some of the worst areas, keeping traffic free flowing is critical to the growth of the local economy”. The Parish Council therefore requested that the Newport Road /Three Gates Road /Saunders Road roundabout (Somerton Roundabout) and the Three Gates Road/ Place Road priority junction (also mentioned by Island Roads in the Somerton Reservoir report) should also be included in this list with the observation that Table 7.2 should be renamed so that contributions will (not may) be sought.

Councillors determined that when considering the housing proposals for Cowes and Northwood, which amounted to 978 units plus the 1805 units in north Newport, all of which would be likely to use the Newport-Cowes road at various times, it had to be asked whether this road would be able cope with the increased traffic, irrespective of whether a bridge across the River Medina might ever be built. It was clear from data in the 2017 Local Transport Plan that junctions such as Newport Road-Noke Common and Newport Road-Nodes Road would have severe capacity problems having regard to the present capacity issues.

- **CSSHC14 COMMUNITY-LED PLANNING** - The reality seems to be that the results of Northwood Parish Council's Housing Needs Survey to the effect that for the period 2014-2019 there needed to be 27 further units have been disregarded and ignored. The LPA validated and endorsed the survey, concluding that “A 44.4% response rate was achieved for this survey meaning that the findings are statistically robust”. This has been completely ignored and the exercise seems to be completely irrelevant in drawing up the housing proposals set out in the draft Plan.

- HQE 7 PRESERVING SETTLEMENT IDENTITY-** Northwood Parish Council supported the policy to maintain the separate identities of settlements, to prevent their coalescence and to maintain the separate identities of communities. Councillors were adamant that the separate identity of Northwood must be retained and requested that Northwood - Newport should also be added to the list.

It was queried as to how planners equate this policy and statement with some of the housing allocations indicated for Northwood, as settlement coalescence would surely result.
- Paragraph 3.36 of the draft plan says “***the village of Northwood will experience planned-for growth that will respect the settlement pattern and maintain its identity. It will deliver high quality design and a mix of market and affordable houses. These will help sustain the services and community activities the village currently has and benefits from***” The Parish Council welcomed that Northwood was recognised as a separate entity and described as a ‘village’ but questioned whether that was achievable if the number of new homes listed in Appendix 1 of the draft Plan were built and occupied over the next fifteen years. The proposed increase in residential units of 391 would be a 38% increase in the number of homes currently found in Northwood. A significant and disproportionate level of increase for a small village. This would have the opposite effect in maintaining Northwood’s identity. How would the services be sustained when they were not coping at the present time?
- The ‘yield’, from the seven sites identified totalled 391 units, (HA020 Somerton Reservoir, Newport Road (146) and HA022 Somerton Farm, Newport Road (80) have both been incorrectly described as being in Cowes), which seemed to be an extraordinary number for an area like Northwood, particularly when the housing needs survey undertaken by the Parish Council in 2014 concluded that the actual need was for only 27 units.

The population of Northwood was less than 2,500; even a low occupancy rate this might result in an increase of say 750 people, in addition to natural growth which would have significant implications for local infrastructure and facilities. It could be argued that an area like Northwood was taking a disproportionate ‘hit’ when compared with other similar sized villages. This figure of 391 units contributed to a total number of 978 units for the West Medina Regeneration Area, excluding Newport. Therefore, the revised figures for Cowes are 587 (including 535 units at Medina Yard) compared with 391 for Northwood. This seemed to be totally out of kilter and have a significant detrimental effect on the character of the village.

- In general terms councillors were surprised that there were seemingly no specific requirements if the land at Kingswell Dairy and land at Luton Farm (east of Wyatts Lane) were to be developed. While the LPA might have disappointingly agreed to the former in principle there were still matters to be resolved in terms of traffic generation and access arrangements. Furthermore the (crude) calculations in terms of density (i.e. the number of units on a prescribed area of land) appeared to be very low and as consequence, councillors feared the prospect of a larger number of units if each allocated site obtained planning permission and those approvals were actually implemented, even if that spanned out over the fifteen-year period. HA025 and HA026 were adjacent parcels of land with an aggregate area of 7.4 hec (18 plus acres) and even a medium density development with the specific requirements outlined above could be well in excess of 84 units, as suggested.

Councillors expressed their serious concerns regarding these two proposed developments due to access into the narrow Wyatts Lane, which had no pavement and the majority of housing pre-dating regulations on visibility display regulations. It was noted that HA025 comprised of 0.6 hectares of TPO'd woodland and 10.6 un TPO'd woodland. A new map indicating the actual site of the proposed building was requested.

- On a general point applicable to all sites in this area and elsewhere on the Island, Northwood Parish Council considered it to be dangerous to attach undue weight to the estimates made for the number of units on each individual site. The reason being that these appeared to be generally low-density projections. Viability issues would necessitate the Council wanting to encourage small/medium developers, the need for financial contributions, on/off site works and the provision of affordable housing all pointing to the need for medium/higher densities. There was also the need to ensure that foul/surface water disposal could be handled satisfactorily. Finally, in terms of Northwood itself due weight had to be given to the fact that wherever new development was envisaged ultimately virtually all vehicular traffic would feed one way or the other onto the A3020.
- **Councillors specific comments on allocated sites:**

HA020...Former Somerton Reservoir, Northwood (NOT COWES as listed in draft Plan) (146). The Parish Council had raised no objection to the principle of development but did specify certain matters which had to be resolved before further consideration could be given to the application. Concern had been raised over the excessive density of the proposal; the proposed design being completely out of character with the surrounding area in Cowes South and Northwood; the road and parking layout considered to be questionable, together with the overbearing scale, density and mass equating to in excess of 300 units per hectare, which far exceeded the density as recommended in the Island Plan, of between 30 - 50 units per hectare; Although a proposal for sheltered accommodation and affordable housing had been generally welcomed, concern had been expressed as to the compatibility of the two spectrums of society in such a limited area and highway issues.

HA022... Somerton Farm, Newport Road Northwood (NOT COWES as listed in draft Plan) (80) Northwood Parish Council considered that the number of homes would contribute to further coalescence of the gap between Northwood and Cowes and to increased traffic problems along the Newport to Cowes highway. Councillors were tentatively agreeable for the provision of a small to medium scale employment mix on this site.

HA024...Land to west of Newport Road (10). In isolation this was considered to be a strange allocation that could only lead or contribute to coalescence with the Parkhurst area to the south, effectively eroding the rural gap between the two communities. It was assumed that the basis of this allocation relied heavily on the land to the north in terms of continuity and possibly combined access arrangements; although, as yet, this was undetermined. This represented a detrimental extension of development creating

a corridor effect, increasing the distance between new homes and local facilities. At just ten units it was unlikely to be viable because of contributions and highway improvements and councillors considered that in no circumstances, should it be allowed to proceed prior to the land to the north, if indeed that is eventually approved. An isolated pocket of development divorced from the main built-up area could not be justified.

HA025...Land to rear of 84 Wyatts Lane (40). This would be an extraordinarily large area for a settlement the size of Northwood. There were a range of issues in connection with this site including the impact on neighbouring properties in Wyatts Lane and the overall access into Wyatts Lane that would require major improvement work including footways over the entire length from the school to Pallance Road. This would require an element of affordable housing, 14 units based on the projected forty units, and investment, enhancement and maintenance of the largely undeveloped area as an open community facility which represented some kind of mitigation if the land was to be released for development.

Due to scale and the possible allocation of the neighbouring land (HA026) assurances would be required that the two sites could not be released and developed at the same time; it would need to be properly phased. The Parish Council expressed their sound reasons for opposing this particular allocation

HA026...Land rear of Harry Cheek Gardens and Wyatts Lane (34). It was immediately apparent that this area, if it were to be developed, would be likely to have an adverse impact on the level of amenity currently enjoyed by residents in the higher density development. That said the impact on properties in Pallance Road was likely to be minimal because on the length of rear gardens. The phrase *proposals should not prevent adjacent sites coming forward* caused some concern because further land might be released at a later date unless there were engineered barriers or simply 'ransom strips' Once again the same criteria in terms of what might be expected of the developer lead to the real concern that more units could be required to render the land as viable.

HA027...Land at Luton Farm (East of Wyatts Lane) (15)...Councillors viewed this as an extension to the built up area which was undesirable and likely to impact on the character of the area as a village. Once again, this appeared to be a large area to accommodate as few as fifteen units with the requirements imposed on the developer outlined above in HA025 and HA026 as well as exacerbating the overall level of vehicular traffic using Wyatts Lane and the surrounding area. There would be some adverse effect on neighbouring properties along the western boundary of the site.

HA028...Kingswell Dairy, Newport Road (66). The opposition to the proposed development of this open site adversely impacting on residents in Oxford Street and potentially creating significant traffic problems had been well documented in the last six months. Permission was yet to be granted. Notwithstanding the views expressed

by the Case Officer and the Planning Committee the development of this site for up to 66 units would be quite out of context in this particular setting and should ideally be in a more sustainable location closer to the town rather than eroding the green open countryside and potentially, if approved, leading to the coalescence of built-up areas along this major distributor road. In the vicinity there was a shop, a public house and a popular school already running close to capacity. It was considered that this did not render the site as sustainable as in simple terms another 66 (20+ affordable units) family homes could not be absorbed into the local community without causing serious harm and making the area less attractive for those that had chosen to live in this kind of location. It was considered that if this site was developed, as per the current outline submission, in conjunction with the land further outside the village (HA024) then it would inevitably create a precedent for further expansion to the south, which would be very undesirable.

- Councillors questioned as to whether a settlement (Northwood village) was the best place to make a disproportionate housing contribution when due regard and appropriate weight was given to the current level of pressure on local social infrastructure; significant traffic problems associated with access onto the busy A3020 and the intrinsic character of the area that is valued highly by local residents.
 - i. That Northwood Parish Council expresses its support for the following policies:
 - DHWN 5 Maximising Infill Opportunities
 - DHWN 6 Delivering Affordable Housing
 - DHWN 8 Ensuring the Right Mix of Housing
 - DHWN 9 Self and Custom Build
 - SGOE 1 and EA 3 Supporting and Growing our Economy
 - SGOE 2 Sustainable Economic Development
 - SGOE 3 Upskilling the Island
 - SGOE 5 Maintaining Employment Sites with Water Access
 - BCI 2 Supporting Sustainable Transport
 - BCI 5 Electric Vehicle Charging Points
 - BCI 6 Parking Provision in New Development
 - CSSHC 1 High Quality Design for New Development
 - CSSHC 2 Improving Our Public Realm
 - CSSHC 3 Improving Our Health and Wellbeing
 - CSSHC 5 Facilitating Independent Living
 - CSSHC 6 Providing Annexe Accommodation
 - CSSHC 9 Supporting Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies
 - CSSHC 10 Lowering Carbon and Energy Consumption in New Development
 - CSSHC 11 Utility Infrastructure Requirements for New Development
 - CSSHC 12 Maintaining Key Utility Infrastructure
 - CSSHC 13 Providing Social and Community Infrastructure
 - HQE 1 Conserving and Enhancing our Historic Environment
 - HQE 2 Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement
 - HQE 3 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
 - HQE 4 Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces
 - HQE 5 Local Green Spaces
 - HQE 6 Protecting Our Seascapes and Landscapes
 - HQE 9 Dark Skies

The Government in the latter half of 2020 issued several consultation documents covering important planning issues, including “Changes to the current planning system”. That document set out an evaluation for each individual local authority of how the proposed number of housing units compared to current local plans, recent housing delivery and the current method. The proposals for the Isle of Wight would result in a significant 300% increase on the average housing delivered over the past three years to an expected delivery of 1,045 homes per annum, compared with the figure of 641 set out in the IW Council’s own draft planning strategy to which there was much opposition across the Island (see above).

The Parish Council considered the Government’s declared target of 1,045 new dwellings per annum for the Island to be excessive, unsustainable and not deliverable. New homes should be made available and accessible to local people first as at the present time even so-called affordable housing was out of reach of most local people resulting from the Island’s suppressed earnings. In addition, it was thought that the projected number of units would cause serious detrimental environmental problems including unwarranted housing development in the Island’s AONB and that any increase in housing units had to be commensurate with an increased provision in relevant infrastructure such as public transport, schools, medical facilities and shops.

With further regard to the Government’s proposals, the Parish Council supported the MP’s case for Exceptional Circumstances for the Isle of Wight which would mean much lower figures for housing, aimed at providing housing for local people at prices which were affordable for them. The Parish Council thought that the document was excellent, providing a comprehensive, coherent and compelling argument that had been properly researched.

Following enormous opposition from many parts of the country, it seems that the Government has discarded the algorithm which resulted in its proposed housing numbers and are reconsidering the issue, with the possibility of more housing being built in the north of England. As at January 2021 no revised figures have been published.

With regard to the IW Council’s draft planning strategy, referred to above, it appears that officers are looking at the impact of the pandemic and what the likely effect will be on the Island’s towns and communities. The IW Council have stated that the review will need to take into account the likely impact on housing needs, more sustainable links making cycling and walking easier and future proofing with sufficient electric charging points for cars, IT etc. The IW Council therefore think that the next consultation will take place sometime in the middle of 2021.

The Parish Council in December 2020 decided that it did not consider that the Isle of Wight Council as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) was able to properly represent the needs and wishes of Northwood parish residents. Reasons for the resolution included the grants of planning permission for an extension to the rear of Harry Cheek Gardens in 2017 and for up to 66 housing units off Newport Road, both of which applications received much opposition from parishioners and the Parish Council. Other reasons related to the massive housing development proposed for Northwood in the draft planning strategy referred to above, the

failure to answer questions about the status of the planning policy Core Strategy published in 2012 and inconsistency in planning decisions. A detailed response to a considerable number of questions and issues is awaited.

It is interesting to note that Cowes Town Council has recently supported Northwood Parish Council's concerns about the IW Planning Authority and agrees that the LPA is unable to properly represent the needs and wishes from residents of both Northwood and Cowes. The Town Council shares concerns regarding the lack of any traffic infrastructure and a failure to address the impact on increased traffic. The Town Council has also agreed with Northwood that the failure to give answers to direct and straightforward questions about Policy SP1 and other policies in the Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework and the draft Island Plan makes it difficult for parish and town councils to make recommendations on planning applications.

Place Plan for Cowes and Northwood

Arising out of a Business Survey carried out in the parish on behalf of the Parish Council and initiated by the IW Council, a draft Place Plan for Cowes and Northwood is being drawn up. This is a document which evidences the need for action in improving the economic, social and environmental condition of the area. It is produced from an analysis of the latest data about the area and consultations with local people, businesses and organisations about what they think are the most important things that need to change. As well as a physical document, the Place Plan approach is intended to set up a new constructive way of working on shared priorities between the IW Council, local Town and Parish Councils, local business organisations and community groups, based on mutual trust and respect.

The Place Plan is capturing information including about the regeneration vision and objectives for the local authorities and their constituents (resident and commercial) for the next 10 years, specific priorities and needs, an action plan with clear allocation of task holders and a shared steering group governance to ensure transparency, commitment and the best use of resources. Although a place plan does not have the same legal status in planning terms as a neighbourhood plan it is intended that local place plans would be referenced in any new Island Plan as needing to be taken into account when developing and submitting planning applications.

An interim report from Ian Boyd of Arc Consultancy, which is drawing up place plans for Ryde and Newport as well as for Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood, states that there is a high level of satisfaction with "life in Northwood", supported by the work of a highly competent and professional parish council

and a strong network of varied community activity made available, well promoted by key local organisations such as the church and the community partnership.

The interim report goes on to report that there are two persistent issues that come through from the data. The first is the profoundly negative impact that traffic is having on the lives and well-being of the Northwood community. The second is the limited provision of safe and easily open space for all and play facilities for younger people, and the consequent pressures on the Venner Avenue green to provide this for everyone.

According to the report, these issues have been clearly set out by the Parish Council to the IW Council/Island Roads on a frequent basis and have received a very poor service, despite the Parish Council's best efforts. The report considers that these issues feed into a third which is the scale of allocated development pressure to come and that the absolute imperative is that all and any new residential estate both mitigates additional stress in both these areas and adds new benefits.

Social Measures

The Parish Council is involved in various matters to promote the social interests of its residents. It liaises with other relevant organisations to improve social conditions and regularly gives grant aid to certain bodies. The Parish Council has signed up to the Age Friendly Island Charter, which refers to older people having the right to inclusion, participation, confidence, health and wellbeing and influencing decisions affecting all aspects of their life.

The Parish Council has appointed an Age Friendly Champion, Cllr John Nicholson, to raise awareness and consideration of issues that relate to age and focus on matters within the Council's powers that enhance the quality of life. The organisation, Age Friendly Island, formally presented the Parish Council with its Age Friendly Charter in January 2019.

Environment Measures

The Parish Council takes much pride in its maintenance of the 9 planters and 11 troughs, including the watering of them. They are rightly regarded as an integral

feature of the Village and investment was made in 2018 providing new planters. There are also 6 gardens maintained by the Parish Council

Maintenance of the Venner Avenue play area and its equipment has a high priority and it is very pleasing that the facilities are well used.

The Parish Council has appointed a volunteer Tree Warden, Cllr Mark Coventry, to have an overview as to what was happening locally in Northwood.

Asset Register

The Parish Council maintains a register of all its assets. These include planters and troughs, gateway signs, gardens, a memorial seat at Venner Avenue playground, wooden and metal benches and the wooden noticeboard by the traffic lights near Northwood Garage. In addition, the defibrillator outside the Northwood Community Hall is maintained by the Parish Council. The responsibility for the play equipment at Venner Avenue play-park rests with the Isle of Wight Council.

All the assets are inspected annually and are promptly repaired if required.

Parish Precept 2021/22

The Parish Council considered this matter in January 2021. It had regard to the predicted increases both in the Isle of Wight Council Tax and the Hampshire Police Authority tax and the consequent effect on parishioners. The Parish Council therefore decided not to increase its precept at all and approved the budget for 2021/22 which would require the precept (not including any Central Government Grant allocation) to remain at £21,368

The impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in a reduction in the IW Council's overall tax base from 2020-21 to 2021-22 due to a range of factors, but primarily to the increase in Local Council Tax Support scheme claims which were treated as discounts. In addition, any growth from new or extended properties had not been achieved to the same extent as in previous years. These matters would, therefore, have a minor implication on the Northwood Parish element of each resident's Council Tax Bill.

Conclusions

The above measures provide a snap shot of the Parish Council's actions undertaken in order to fulfil its Statement of Purpose and Principal Priorities. There will be additional actions in the future which will be set out in the regular updating of the Parish Plan. Its publication online will facilitate that upgrading.

Comments on this Parish Plan are welcomed to ensure that all relevant matters are included in it and that the Plan continues to be as up to date as possible.

