

The Parish

Lapford is a small rural parish with a population of approximately 1000. It is situated in Mid-Devon, part of the Taw Vale Ward, and is approximately 10 miles from the small town of Crediton and 8 miles from Chulmleigh. It is an agricultural area with many farms in and around the village.



LAPFORD PARISH PLAN

In the Beginning

In September 2003 the Parish Council decided to investigate the possibility of producing a Parish Plan as a step towards gaining “Quality Council” status. This would give it more scope to take control of local issues. A Lapford Parish Study Sub-Committee was formed of three councillors, they arranged a public meeting in the village hall on 13th November 2003, to discuss with parishioners the possibility of embarking on the Parish Plan and to solicit volunteers for the Steering Committee, together with gauging public opinion. It was clear from the meeting that there was popular support for a Parish Plan and there were sufficient volunteers to form the Steering Committee, which held its inaugural meeting on 29th January 2004. The Study sub-committee were then successful in obtaining a grant from the Countryside Agency (later subsumed into DEFRA who delegated the management of Parish Plan funding to SWAN, the South West Area Network of Rural Community Councils) to help fund this activity and enable us to proceed.

The Steering Committee

Peter Lacey
Michael Hall
Zena Worters
Ralph Glass
Sue Briant-Evans
Christine Code
Jeanne Whittaker
Carol Rowland
Guiliana Brewer
Philip Menz
Julian Beanlands

Part Time Members:
Richard Chetwynd-Stapylton
George Rose
Ashley Leeds
Elizabeth Taylor
James Thorne
John Crotty

Thanks to Christopher Code who analysed the comments from the Surveys and produced a Power Point presentation from this analysis.

The Plan

This plan has taken a lead in identifying the parish needs. It should assist the service providers, statutory bodies and the voluntary sector to know what is required within the parish. Hopefully they will be able to include identified actions and works within their budgets, and/or to use this plan to assist with their future planning and with applications for grant funding.

Parish Facilities

Toddler Group

Pre-school

Primary School

Abattoir/Butchers

Hairdressers

Village Store

Post Office/Stationery, Toy & Gift Shop

Garage with integral Convenience Store

Two Public Houses

Four Churches

Village Hall

Youth Club

International Removal Companies

Limited Bus and Rail services

A large number of active clubs & societies

An Industrial Estate

Numerous other small businesses

Veterinary Centre

The Actions

The survey revealed many issues and priorities for action, which are all-important for improving the quality of life for those who live in the parish. Throughout this document possible actions to solve the issues have been identified. Some actions are already moving forward, but with others it will be up to the 'partners' indicated to initiate these actions. These partners may be the Parish Council, Mid-Devon Council, Devon County Council, the Health Authority etc., or simply groups or individuals within the parish. Assistance will be given with locating funding sources.

Methodology

It is essential that the Parish Plan should represent the views of the parishioners and to this end an exhibition was held in a removal vehicle at the 2004 Revel and visitors were asked to comment and give their likes and dislikes of the parish. This gave the Steering Committee pointers for a Parish Survey.

A further presentation/public consultation exercise was held in the Parish Church, this was well attended and re-enforced the pointers given at the previous exhibition and confirmed the questions to be included in the survey.

The survey was distributed and collected by the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and Lapford Lookout distributors, 378 surveys were given out and 288 returned answered, 76%. This is a very good return and provided a solid basis of opinion on which to base the plan.

The questions were analysed by the Community Council of Devon and the written comments by Christopher Code. The results were then displayed in the Victory Hall, this included the Power Point presentation produced by Christopher Code, and parishioners were given a last opportunity to add their comments at this exhibition. The data was collated and further analysed by the Steering Committee and this plan produced from the data.

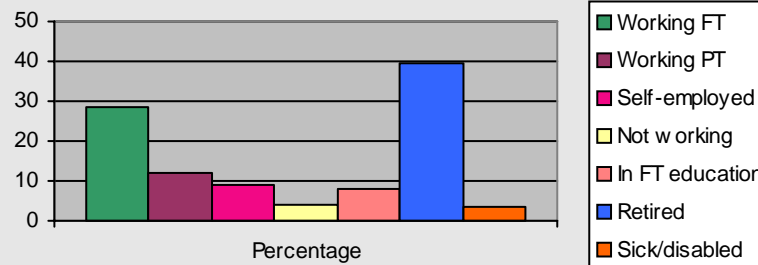
Glossary

PC	Parish Council
MDDC	Mid Devon District Council
DCC	Devon County Council
CCD	Community Council of Devon
CPRE	Council for Preservation of Rural England
ICT	Information Communication Technology
MUGA	Multi-use games area
NHS	National Health Service
WEA	Workers' Educational Association
QE	Queen Elizabeth (Community College)
SWWA	South West Water Authority

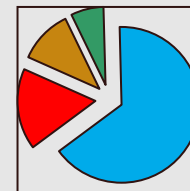
Acknowledgements

Thanks are given to the Steering Committee members who put in a lot of time and effort in producing this plan; to the volunteers who distributed and collected the Parish Surveys; to George Rose for the use of one of his vehicles for the Revel exhibition; to the Parish Church to enable the second exhibition to be held; to the Parish and Congregational Churches for the use of their meeting facilities. Also the Community Council of Devon for their guidance.

While most people in the village are working, nearly 40% are retired...



What you like about Lapford



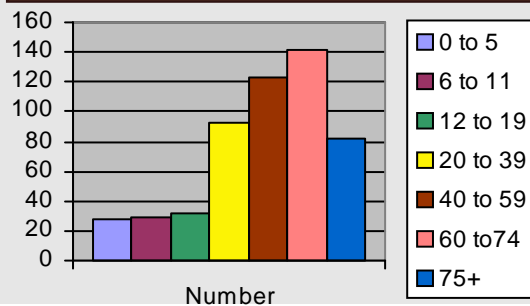
Friendly People

Peaceful

Rural with Good Access

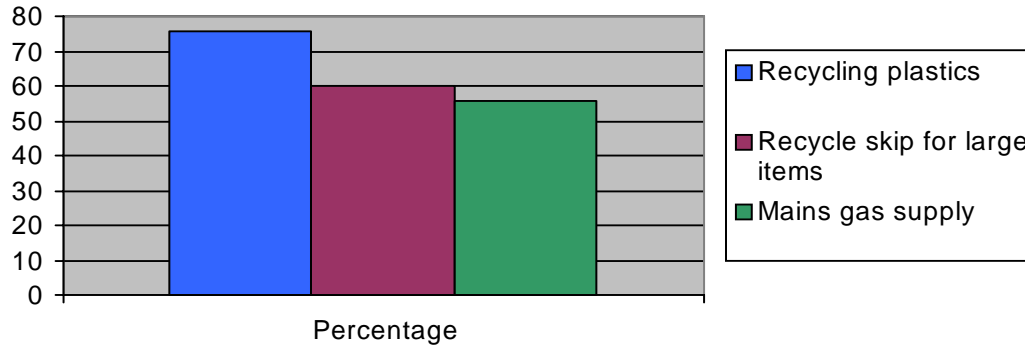
Good School

The Age Range of the Lapford Population



There were many diverse issues, best represented in chart form:

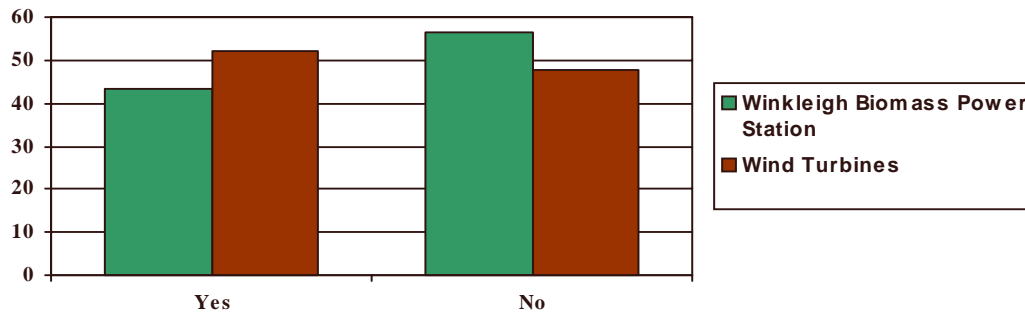
And some felt there was a need for the following...



ACTIONS:

Parish Council to ask MDDC about large skip and recycling of plastics
 Parish Council to write to Transco with regard to a village gas supply.

Villagers were split when asked if they were in favour of alternative power sources in the locality...



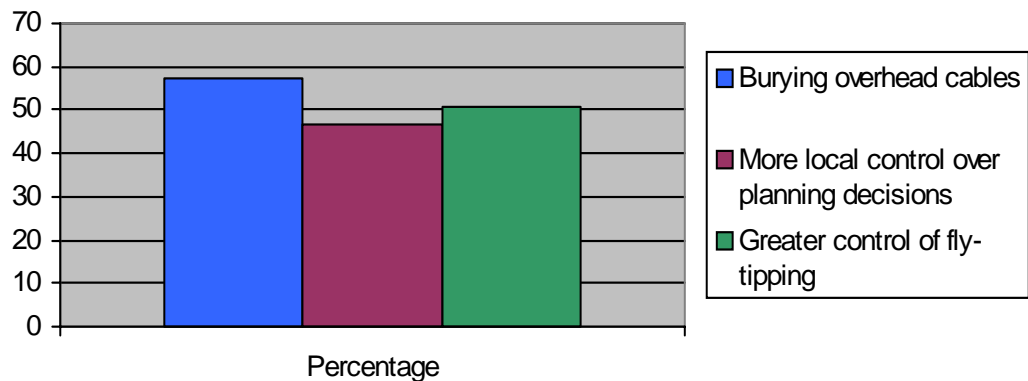
PARTNERS

Lapford Project 2000
 Parish Council
 Horticultural Society
 MDDC
 DCC
 Landowners
 Transco
 Environment Agency

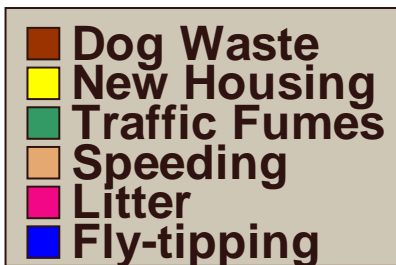
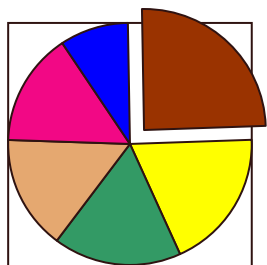
POLICY STATEMENT

Parish Council supports provision of these concerns:-
 Recycling of plastics and large items.
 Possibility of gas supply and exploration of renewable energy resources.
 Education of local dog walkers and principle of regular 'Clean up the Village Day'.
 From June 2006 Parish Council will use its increased powers in relation to dog waste.

What you think would improve the visual character of the village...



What you think is the biggest threat to the Lapford environment?



ACTIONS

- Appropriate management of hedges and banks in the parish
- Look into the provision of allotments - Horticultural Society to gauge this.
- In response to the 222 people who thought litter was a problem, arrange a litter awareness campaign.
- Arrange an awareness campaign regarding dog waste - There are sufficient dog bins, all dog walkers need to use them.
- Arrange a village “clean-up” day.
- Parish Council will enforce the Clean Environment Act.

TIMESCALE

Ongoing

THE ISSUES

The survey confirmed a need for some low-cost housing as 63.6% of respondents would prefer this type of development.

HOUSING

SOLUTIONS

The survey revealed that the majority of residents did not want any further development in the parish, but 269 people had no objection to a development of low-cost housing for local people. Such a project would be managed by a Housing Trust, with properties to rent or purchase on a shared equity basis. A development needs to be 6 dwellings in order to spread the infrastructure costs.

ACTIONS

Determine demand for low-cost housing. If there is a need, proceed with forming a Housing Trust.
Design statement to be produced for the village.

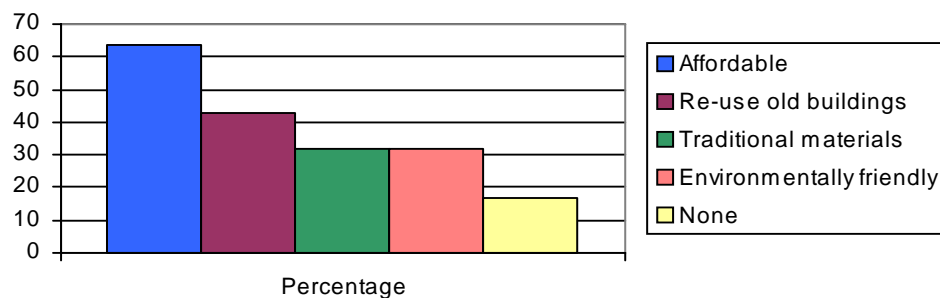
PARTNERS

Parish Council
MDDC
DCC
Possibility of Parish Housing Trust.
Environment Agency
SWWA
CPRE

TIME SCALE

Urgent due to volume of local planning applications

People were asked what kind of building development they would find acceptable in the village...



POLICY STATEMENT

Parish supports the provision of low-cost housing for local people.
Explore a low-cost housing policy.
Produce a design statement for the village.

THE ISSUES

See HOUSING and ENVIRONMENT sections for graphic representation of the Survey results. Post World War 2 development did not consider village character. Avoid ending up like Winkleigh and Copplestone.

PARISH DESIGN STATEMENT

ACTIONS

Create a working group.
Identify, list and draw up a map of key buildings, which define the overall style of the parish.

Conduct a survey.
Produce a Parish Design Statement to guide prospective planners and modernisers.

PARTNERS

Parish Council
MDDC
DCC
Local Builder(s)
Parishioners

TIME SCALE

Urgent due to volume of planning applications and need to build additional housing in the south west.



POLICY STATEMENT

The Parish Council supports the need for a Parish Design Statement and will initiate and manage the process to produce it.

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND THEIR USE

Victory Hall. Is it adequate for the needs of the village...?



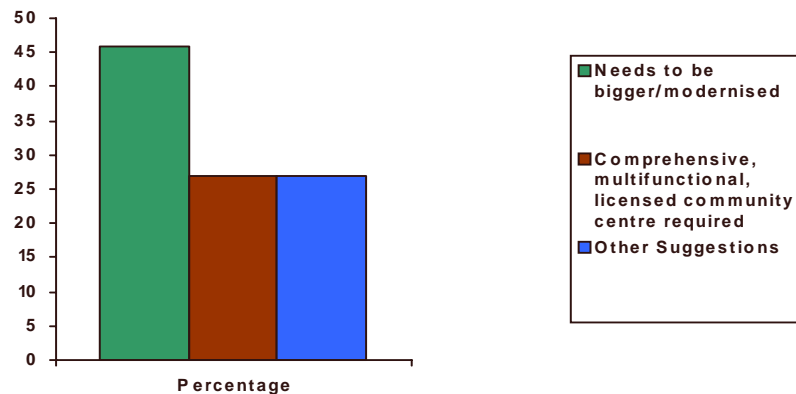
TIMESCALE

All urgent - initial meetings to be arranged within six months.

Thirty-one people thought that the church could be used for a range of community activities, with a third suggesting **concerts and recitals...**



What you think about the adequacy of Victory Hall...



PARTNERS

1. Victory Hall Committee; Parish Council; MDDC; Funding Officer - MDDC; CCD.
2. School Governors; Parish Council; Victory Hall Committee; DCC; MDDC.
3. Parish Council; Landlords; People who would use the facilities/environmental health.
4. Parish Council; Shopkeeper; Environmental Health.
5. Parochial Church Council; Congregational Church Deacons; Parish Council.
6. Parish Council; Archive Committee; Lapford 2000 Committee.

POLICY STATEMENT

Parish Council is committed to improving the community facilities within the village. Parish Council will liaise with the school regarding public use of the community hall. Parish Council will liaise with the Parish Churches regarding additional community use. Parish Council is committed to developing the toilet building.

THE ISSUES

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND THEIR USE

1. VICTORY HALL

Meetings and noise in either the main hall, small room or kitchen disturb other quieter users. Additional small meeting facilities in former toilet building will improve this situation. 23.8% saw the Victory Hall as inadequate.

2. SCHOOL COMMUNITY HALL

The Victory Hall is too small for local needs with limited facilities. The school has a large hall suitable for sports, but not available for community use. Change of permission needed.

3. VILLAGE PUBLIC HOUSES

The Village Survey highlighted shortcomings in the management of the public houses. Environmental issues should be addressed.

4. VILLAGE SHOP

The Village Survey revealed inadequacies due to lack of merchandise, animals in the shop and health issues - liaison should be held with the shopkeeper.

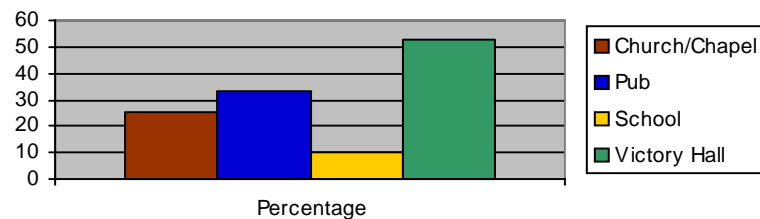
5. PARISH CHURCH & CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Church buildings should be available for community use outside church times. The Church committees/councils should be approached to explore ideas. Parish Council to take the lead. Discuss within six months.

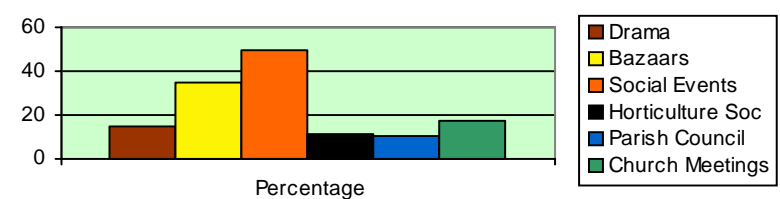
6. THE TOILET BUILDING

Uses - as a toilet, to store the Village Archive and a small meeting room. Agree hire charges. Consider housing First Responder equipment in the finished building.

Where people choose to socialise most in the village...



The main uses of Victory Hall in the last 12 months...

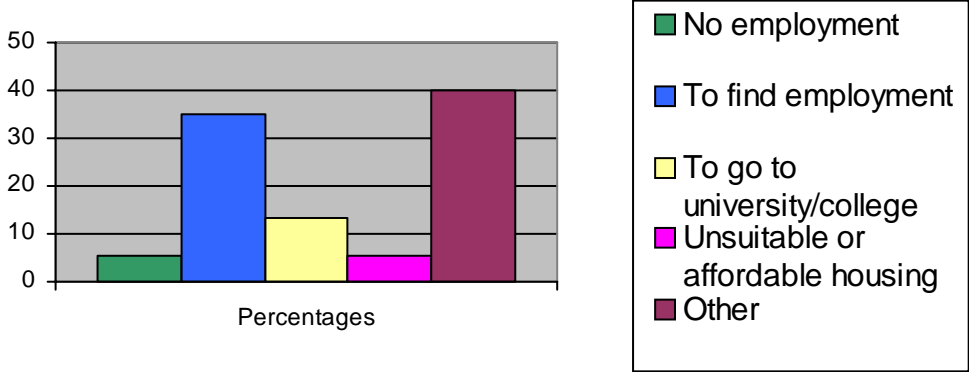


The Issues

40% of the population of Lapford is retired and we need to encourage more young people to live and work in the village.
 Local employment is important to us because essentially it is an agricultural area and 40.5% of residents said that former residents had left because of lack of employment, and the school role is falling. Land formerly used for industrial purposes is being turned over to housing, e.g. former milk factory area. In order to keep a balanced population, young families need local employment opportunities.



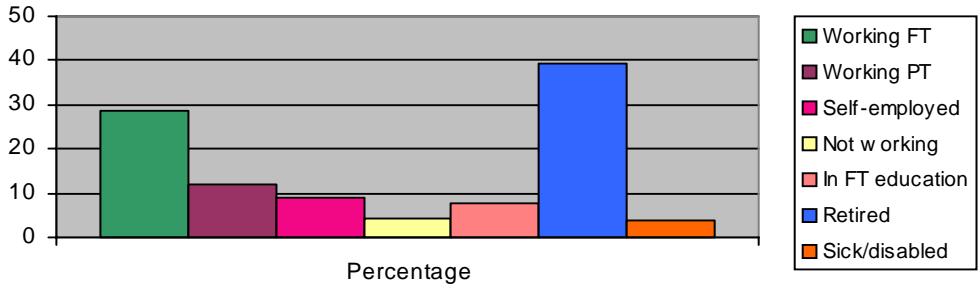
People who have moved away from Lapford in the last 10 years have moved *mainly to take up employment elsewhere...*



ACTIONS

Parish Council to maintain a watching brief on employment opportunities within the village, in order to keep a balanced population.

While most people in the village are working, nearly 40% are retired...



PARTNERS

- MDDC
- DCC
- Local Businesses
- Local landowners
- Rural Development Agency

TIME SCALE

Parish Council to revisit annually

POLICY STATEMENT

The Parish Council will continue to try and influence MDDC and DCC local planning. A percentage of new housing should be affordable.

THE ISSUES

People

YOUTH

Drop-in sessions for 9-19 year olds	36
Evening study facility with computers	45
Holiday activities	36
Skateboard ramp in park	33
Basketball ring	25
Adventure playground	34

SOLUTIONS

We already have a Youth Club building, we just need people to staff it.
 Approach school about possible use of ICT Suite by Youth Club.
 Research into possibility of employing qualified personnel.
 Provide a MUGA

ACTIONS

Grant applications

PARTNERS

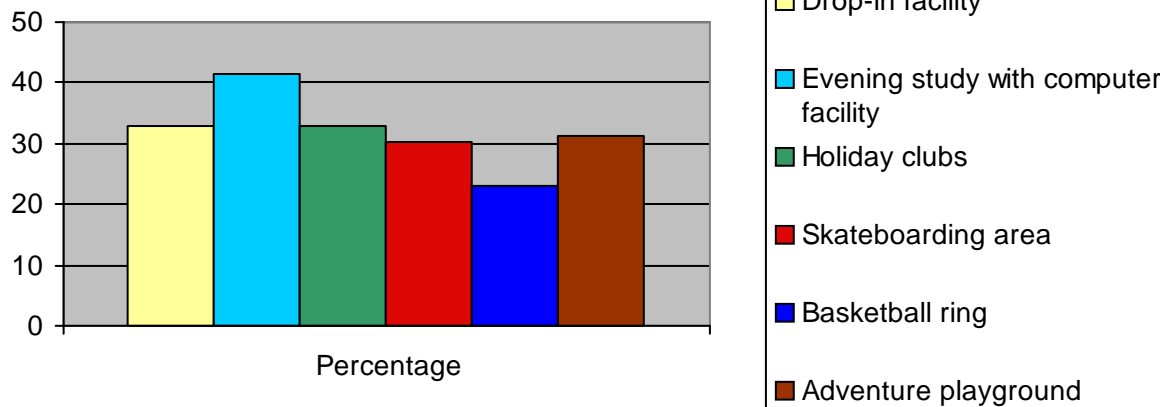
Local Schools
 MDDC
 Young people
 Playing Field Committee
 Parish Council
 Youth Club Committee

TIME SCALE

Ongoing with review in six months.

PARENTS

Young people would use the following facilities, if they were available in the village...



POLICY STATEMENT

Parish Council supports any measure for young people to grow and thrive in a safe, positive, supportive environment.

THE ISSUES

People

Speeding in Village & lanes	365
Lack of traffic calming measures	308
Road maintenance	217
Dangerous road junctions	257
Large heavy lorries through village	211
Car parking issues	266
Designated parking	35
Lack of pedestrian walkway	46

TRAFFIC

SOLUTIONS

Traffic calming measures. Investigate different types, 8 people wanted speed bumps between Post Office and school.
 Constant contact with local authority to bring roads up to standard.
 Educate drivers to proceed with caution.
 Speed restriction by calming measures.
 Parking very difficult at top end of village - no yellow lines.
 Investigate white line marking a walkway.

ACTIONS

Arrange a Road Safety Day.
 Investigate traffic calming measures.
 Contact DCC re A377.
 Investigate marked walkway along Eastington Lane to school.

PARTNERS

Health & Safety Executive
 Parish Council
 MDDC
 DCC
 School Governors
 Police
 Highways

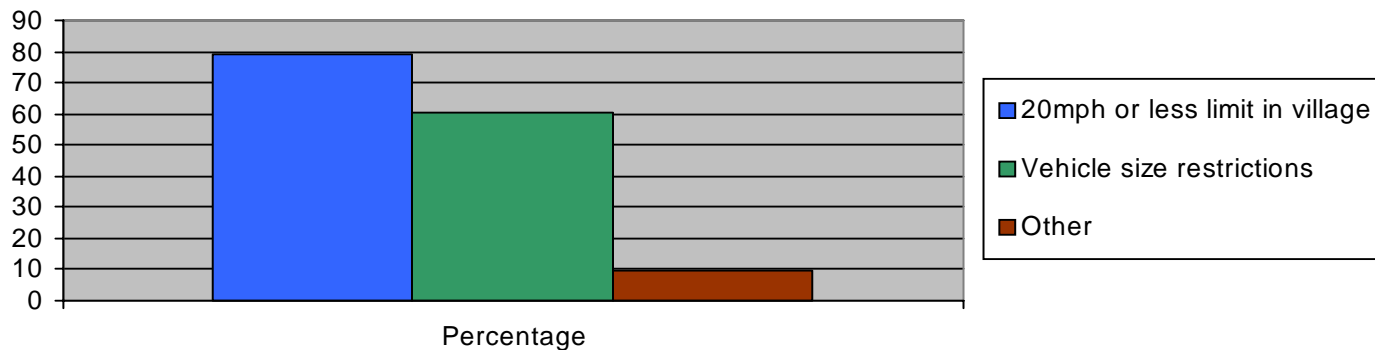
TIME SCALE

Ongoing

POLICY STATEMENT

Parish Council appreciates that traffic and parking difficulties exist in the village, and will do its best to alleviate these problems in partnership with the appropriate authorities.

The traffic restrictions you would like to see introduced in the village...



THE ISSUES

Fear of Crime:

Despite the fact that there is a very low level of crime in Lapford Parish, fear of crime exists.

Burglary	50.2%
Vandalism	53.9%
Anti-social behaviour	40.3%

Speeding traffic - 75% were concerned about the lack of traffic calming measures.

Vandalism is a perceived concern.

Police response times.

CRIME & SAFETY

SOLUTIONS

Investigate the possibility of traffic calming measures at intervals in the village. (See Traffic Section).

Provide a MUGA on the Playing Field to encourage safe play.

ACTIONS

Publicise information about community police officer.
Continued liaison with police,
Publicise Neighbourhood Watch Scheme activities in the Lapford Lookout.
Maintain list of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators in the Lapford Lookout.

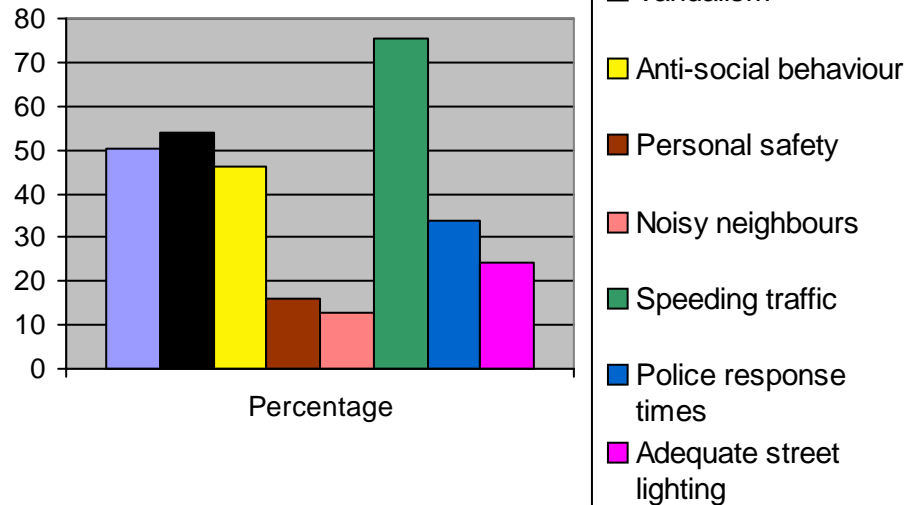
PARTNERS

Playing Field Committee
Lapford Lookout
Post Office
MDDC
DCC
Parish Council
Police
Health & Safety Executive

TIME SCALE

Ongoing

The *crime and safety* concerns of villagers...



POLICY STATEMENT

Parish Council to maintain links with community police office in Crediton.
Parish Council to investigate provision of lighting in poorly lit areas.
Parish Council will continue to liaise with Neighbourhood Watch.

THE ISSUES

SOLUTIONS

RECREATION, COMMUNITY SPIRIT & ACTIVITIES

There is a need for more:-
 Entertainment
 Shows
 Music
 Cinema

Quizzes
 Meeting with interested partners

ACTIONS
 Organise a sub-group to arrange events
 Advertise in Lapford Lookout
 Organise sub-group
 Identify premises

PARTNERS
 Lapford Project 2000 Committee
 Venue owner
 Sub-group
 Lapford School Governors
 Churches

TIME SCALE
 Long Term

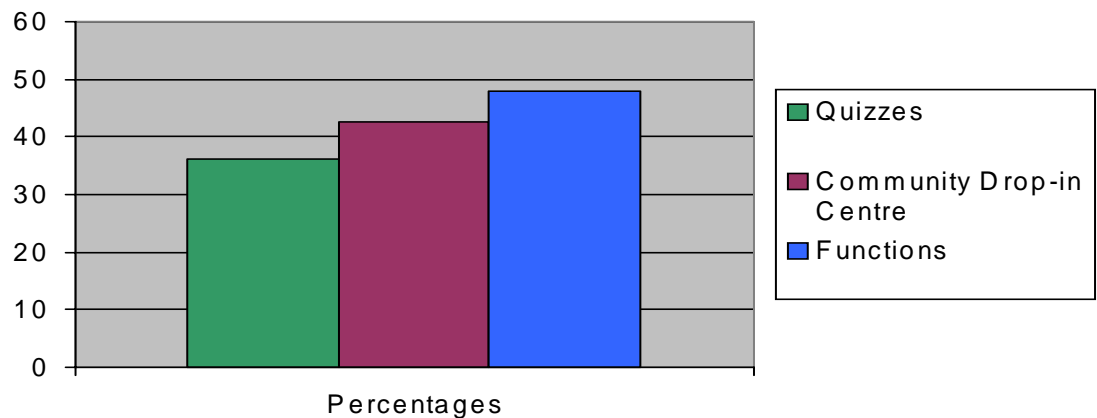
49 people said they would be interested in an allotment.

Research suitable land.

ACTIONS
 Organise sub-group to arrange and manage.
 Advertise in Lapford Lookout.
 Identify premises.

PARTNERS
 Parish Council
 MDDC
 DCC
 Landowner
 Horticultural Society

What you think would improve the community spirit in the village...



POLICY STATEMENT

The Parish Council fully supports any initiative to provide these facilities within the village.

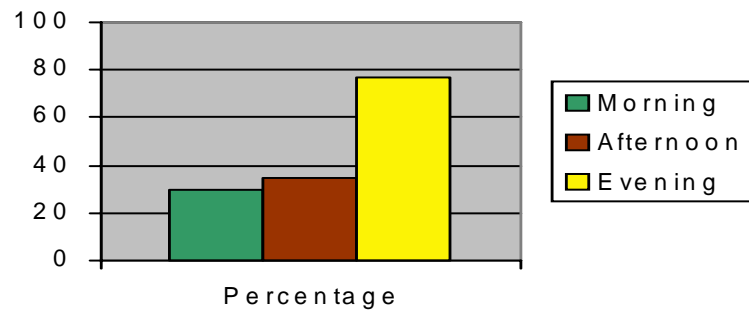
SOLUTIONS

Computer Facilities - under-use of school facilities.
41% expressed an interest in evening studies
130 people expressed an interest in attending classes in the parish.

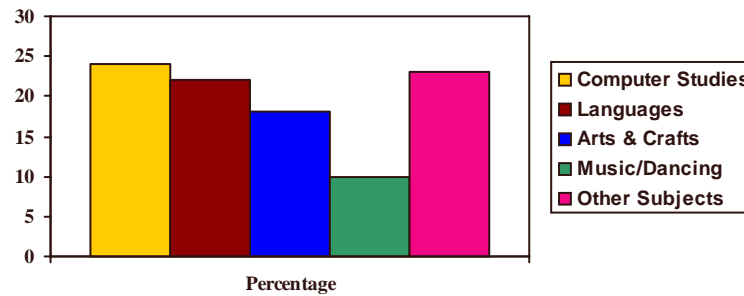
SOLUTIONS

Cost out use of school facilities
Look at alternative premises for drop-in centre.

The time of day you would like computer facilities to be available, if available...



Subjects adults would like to study in Lapford...



RECREATION, COMMUNITY SPIRIT & ACTIVITIES

ACTIONS

Do a feasibility study and cost the use of the school computer suite.

PARTNERS

Chulmleigh Community College
QE Community College
WEA
Local Tutors
Lapford School Governors

TIMESCALE

Initial meetings within six months.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Parish Council fully supports any initiative to provide these facilities within the village.

THE ISSUES

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Difficulty accessing:

Dental treatment	59.8%
Chemist	36.8%
Doctor	39.7%

Would like: dog fouling recognised as a health concern. See "Environment"

Would like:

Health information leaflets	13.2%
Complementary therapies at surgery	25%

SOLUTIONS

Work closely with Chulmleigh Health Centre to explore issues

ACTIONS

Strengthen link already established, through Parish Council.
Establish link with dental service at Chulmleigh

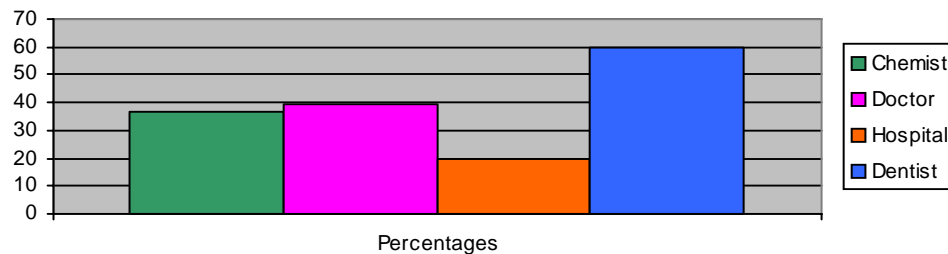
PARTNERS

Chulmleigh/Morchard/Bow Health Centres
Parish Council
Chulmleigh/Crediton dental practice
Voluntary Car Aid
Patients' Council
Primary Care Trusts
Chulmleigh Community College

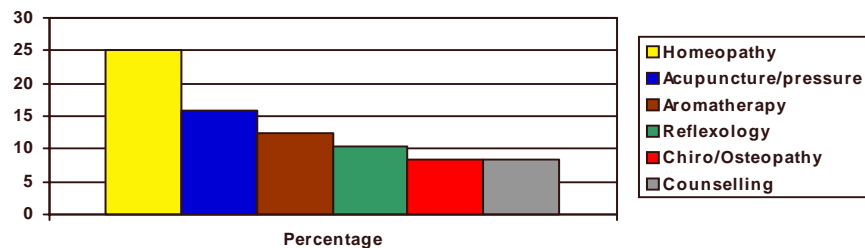
TIME SCALE

Ongoing

Villagers have problems accessing some health services...



Villagers were asked if they would like to see any complementary therapies at the surgery...



POLICY STATEMENT

Parish Council supports better provision of health services to parishioners, including links to health centres.

Parish Council will consider investigating First Responder Service in the light of remoteness of Lapford from ambulance stations.

Parish Council supports the need for first aid classes in the village.

From June 2006 Parish Council will use its increased powers relating to dog waste.

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