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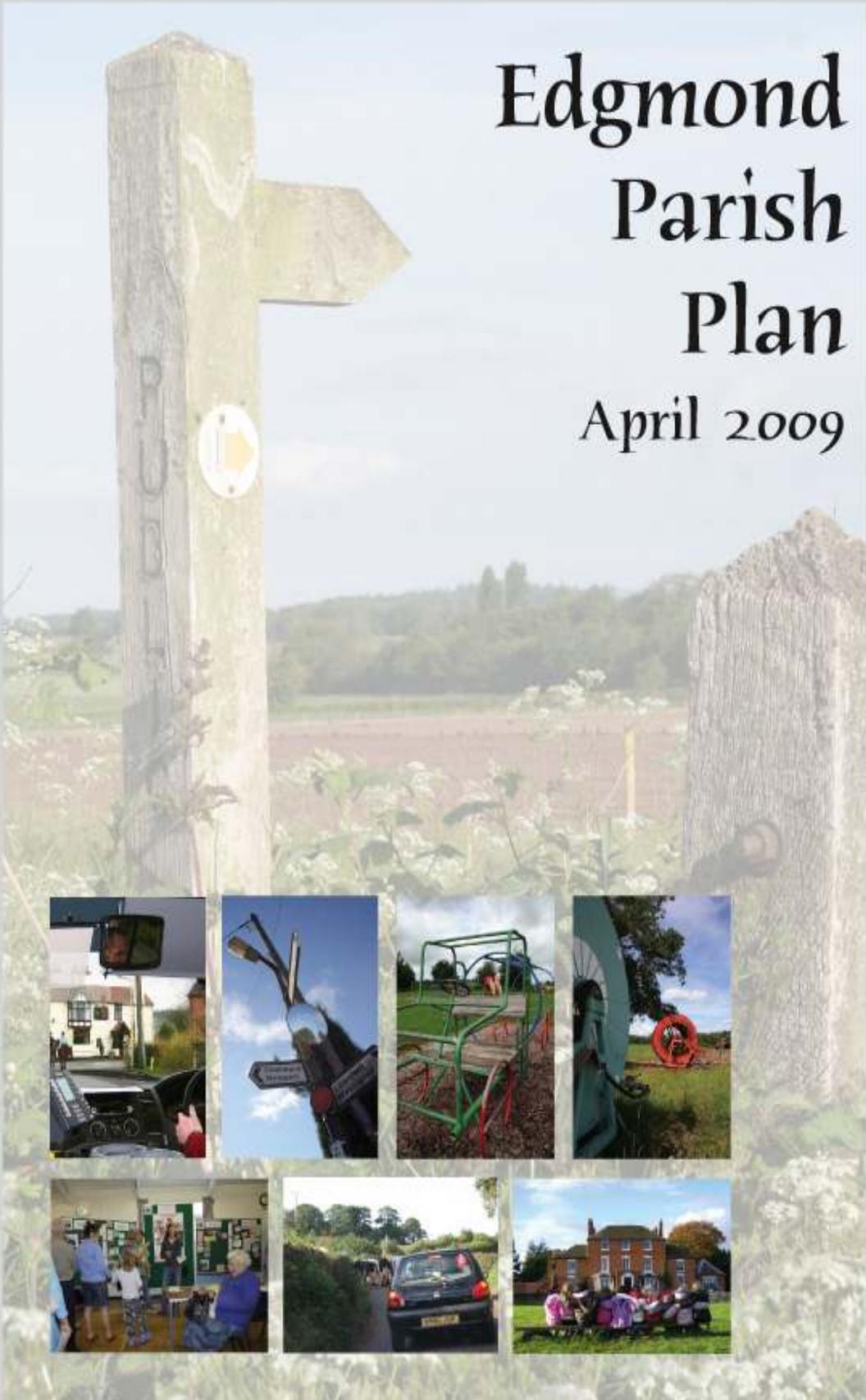
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Edgmond Parish Plan

April 2009



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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this document.

Harper Adams University College:	Harper Adams
Edmond Hall Outdoor Education Centre:	Edmond Hall
Edmond Parish Council:	Parish Council
Telford and Wrekin Borough Council:	T&W Council
Telford and Wrekin Local Development Framework:	LDF
Campaign for the Protection of Rural England:	CPRE

Acknowledgements

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I. Summary

In 2007, Edmond Parish Council decided to develop a **parish plan** in order to determine what future actions were required to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. Volunteers, including two Parish Councillors, formed the Parish Plan Steering Group to start the process.

This Parish Plan includes a brief review of the location and landscape of the Parish, its history, features of special interest, people, community, facilities and institutions. It also includes a description of the process through which the plan was formulated.

Issues of importance to the community were first identified through an open day (the '*Village Voice*') held at the Village Hall in September 2007 and attended by almost 300 people. A questionnaire, designed to gather wider opinion on all these issues, was then circulated to every household in the Parish. A second questionnaire designed by and for young people between 11 & 17 was also distributed. The response rates were 53% and 43% respectively. After analysis, the results were reported back to the community at another open event ('*Village Views*') in March 2008.

A majority of respondents agreed that:

- ❖ there is a strong sense of community in the Parish, although many wished to see a revival of former village activities;
- ❖ communication - especially in relation to the Parish Council - should be improved;
- ❖ the level of crime is low;
- ❖ the Shop and Post Office, Garage and pubs are important; Harper Adams is an asset.

To reflect the views of respondents it is proposed that the Parish Council should **initiate** action to:

- ❖ improve communication;
- ❖ provide additional social and sporting activities;
- ❖ establish a steering committee to plan the development of a new Village Hall which will provide for the needs of the whole community;
- ❖ provide local employment through support for home working and the provision of business units at Harper Adams;
- ❖ review and define the need for a limited number of affordable houses to help local people on low incomes remain in the community;
- ❖ form community groups to protect the environment, wildlife and green open spaces and increase biodiversity;
- ❖ improve footpaths and bridleways, provide maps and proper signage;
- ❖ improve safety by reducing vehicle speed, limiting access by heavy vehicles, extending some pavements and providing safer cycle routes;
- ❖ increase the use of public transport through improved bus timetables.

Actions required to achieve these aims, developed after wide consultation, are presented. Success will depend on community involvement.

2. Introduction

Edgmond Parish is one of a small number of rural parishes in the Borough of Telford and Wrekin in Shropshire. In 2007 the Borough Council adopted a Local Development Framework (LDF) document, the purpose of which was to provide a long term development vision of the Borough through to 2021. However, most of the Borough residents live in **urban** areas and whilst their aspirations, opinions and needs are naturally of great importance to the Council it is vital that the voice of rural communities is also heard. To ensure this, Edgmond Parish Council decided in 2007 to develop a parish plan.

The concept of parish plans was established in the Rural White Paper published by the Government in 2000. The purpose is to seek out the views of the community and, from these, to develop a vision of how a parish should develop over the next decade. Although the plan must conform to local and national policies, it is based on community opinion and developed to ensure that these views influence both the parish and borough councils in their deliberations and decisions.



Communities who have developed such plans have found that they help to identify local needs, influence planning decisions and provide evidence for funding opportunities. But at least as importantly, the process brings people together, strengthens the community, and engages residents with previously undiscovered interests and skills in projects within the parish.

This Parish Plan document includes a description of the parish of Edgmond, an account of the parish planning process, the results of the surveys of opinion that were carried out and the visions for the future that these opinions have generated in a range of topics. Finally, action points are tabled together

with the suggested timescale, the organisation responsible for initiating action, and the names of those partner organisations and sources of funding that can help this community achieve our aims.

3. The Parish of Edgmond

3.1 Location and landscape

The parish of Edgmond is located in Northeast Shropshire. It includes the village of Edgmond as well as the hamlets of Adney, Calvington, Caynton, Edgmond Marsh and Sidlington.

Eighteen thousand years ago Shropshire was covered by an immense sheet of ice up to 1000m thick. As this moved south-east it ground the surface of the solid bedrock to a fine "flour" known as *glacial till*. At the end of the Ice Age, sand, gravel and small boulders were washed out over the surface. The landscape was further moulded into hummocks and hollows which resulted in the combination of well drained agricultural land and poorly drained clay soil we have today. Outcrops of the Triassic sandstone bed rock have been quarried in several places in the Parish for stone which has been used in many local buildings.

3.2 History

The Domesday Book recorded Leuin or Lewin Celt as the Saxon lord of Edgmond, which at that time was of greater local importance than Newport. After the Norman Conquest, Edgmond was held by Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury. The Church of St Peter owes its origin to Earl Roger, who gave it to the Abbey of Shrewsbury. It is thought that the name Edgmond was originally 'Ekmund-es-dune' or 'Ecmund's Hill'.

The Parish has always depended on agriculture, and had important fisheries located along the River Strine. Harper Adams Agricultural College, established in 1901, reflects this local interest and has since become a University College concerned with food, farming and the rural environment.

3.3 Features of special interest

The rural character of Edgmond Parish is one of the key features valued by the residents. The presence of open grassland opposite the Village Shop and near The Lion public house adds to the feeling of space in the village. The surrounding areas are mostly farmland and this extends to the west over the Weald Moors towards Kynnersley where wetland habitat has been re-created as part of a government funded environmental scheme.

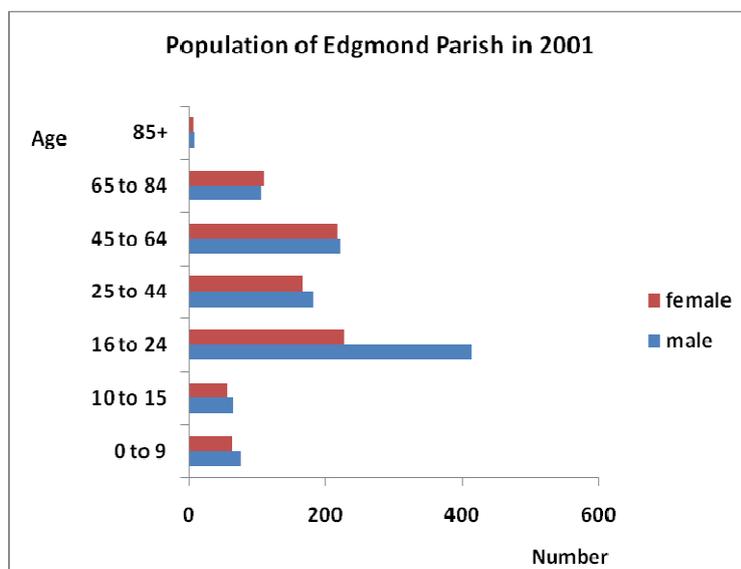
The Newport canal to the southeast of the Parish has been designated a *National Site of Special Scientific Interest* by Natural England and a quarry locally called the Rock Hole, which was created by excavating sandstone for building, has been identified as a *Regionally Important Geological Site* by the Shropshire Geological Society.

There are buildings of architectural and historical note in the Parish. These include St Peters Church (circa 1246), which provides the historical focus for Edgmond. Also of interest are the Old Rectory, Edgmond House and Caynton Mill. Listed buildings include Provost’s House, Manor House, The Haven and Egremont House. Turners Lane, an example of a Saxon thoroughfare, has black and white cottages and a Victorian drinking fountain at the High Street end.

Most of these buildings are located in the Edgmond conservation area. More details of this area, and a full character appraisal of it, can be found at www.telford.gov.uk by inserting ‘conservation area’ in the search box and clicking on the link to Edgmond on that page.

3.4 People, community and employment

Edgmond is the most extensive parish in Telford and Wrekin, but has the smallest number of households. According to the Borough Council, the most recent census, in April 2001, recorded about 580 households and approximately 1530 inhabitants. There were a lower proportion of children and a higher proportion of 16-24 year-olds compared with the Borough as a whole. The figures for the number of young people in the Parish are, of course, affected by the inclusion in the census of students from Harper Adams.



The census reported that 10% of the people worked in agriculture with 30% employed in public services. The proportion of people employed in managerial and professional roles (46%) was much higher than in the Borough as a whole (35%). The age structure of the population over 45 was very close to that of the Borough. Further details can be obtained from www.telford.gov.uk by inserting 'Edgmond Parish Profiles' in the search box.

Harper Adams University College is the largest employer within the Parish and in the Newport area, with around 450 employees. There are several small family businesses, such as skilled builders and electricians, and other professionals working from home in the Parish, in addition to those employed in the facilities and institutions listed below.

3.5 Facilities and institutions

Edgmond Parish is fortunate in the wide range of facilities and institutions which help to foster a feeling of community amongst those who use them. These are listed below.

Edgmond Shop and Post Office

Churches

St Peters Church
Primitive Methodist Chapel

Sporting facilities

playing field
children's play area
multi-use games area
football pitch
cricket pitch and pavilion
crown-green bowling club
Church Field

Lea Brothers Garage

Educational institutions

Edgmond Owls
St Peters Primary School
Edgmond Hall Outdoor Education Centre
Harper Adams University College

Meeting places for public use

Village Hall
Methodist Chapel Hall
St Peter's Church

Public Houses

The Lamb
The Lion

4. Edgmond Parish Plan: the process

4.1 Steering Group

After deciding to initiate a plan, the Parish Council sought volunteers from the community to help with the work. This was done by circulating leaflets to all houses in the Parish to ensure that anyone who wished to be involved in this democratic process could join in. A Steering Group was then formed which included two councillors and 17 other volunteers. The names of the members and of those who subsequently joined planning groups are listed in **Appendix I**

A strategy for gathering opinion and developing the plan was then agreed. This involved a '*Village Voice*' event, a questionnaire, feedback through a '*Village Views*' event, and the formation of planning groups to translate opinion into action plans. These were reviewed at a final public event '*Parish Plan Review*' before submission for approval by the Parish Council.

4.2 The '*Village Voice*'

The first step in the development of the Parish Plan was to identify the important issues for the community as a basis for a detailed questionnaire. A '*Village Voice*' open day was therefore held on Saturday 15th September 2007 in the Village Hall.

In order to attract interest, a photographic competition was arranged on the subject of **'the good, the bad and the ugly' of Edgmond** and there was a picture competition for the younger children. Organisations and clubs in the Parish were also invited to provide displays to promote themselves – those who did so are listed in **Appendix II**



On the day, members of the community were shown displays of entries to the photographic and picture competitions and supplied with post cards, drawing pins and message boards so they could say what they would and wouldn't change about Edgmond. They were asked to record their memories of 'Edgmond past' against a time line of historic events and provided with refreshments over which they could discuss the issues.

Nearly 300 people came to the 'Village Voice' and their comments and suggestions were used as the basis for the development of the questionnaire.

4.3 Questionnaire

A wide range of issues was identified at the 'Village Voice'. These topics formed the basis for the first draft of the questionnaire which was tested on about twenty volunteers. After revision the questionnaire was distributed to every household in the Parish with extra copies for each adult. A different questionnaire was developed **by** young people **for** young people between 11 and 17.

In order to maximize the return rate, members of the Steering Group personally collected many of the completed forms whilst others were deposited in a collection box at the Shop. The results were analysed by the Business Management and Marketing Department at Harper Adams. Written comments to the open-ended questions on the questionnaire were collated by members of the Steering Group.

4.4 'Village Views'

Results of the analysis were reported to the community at a second consultation event - the 'Village Views' open day - which was held in the Village Hall on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th March. Well over a hundred people attended and members of the Steering Group noted their comments and also took the opportunity to recruit more volunteers to join the planning groups.

4.5 Consultation and planning

Planning groups were then established to carry out further consultations and to propose the actions required to fulfill the wishes of the community. The topics dealt with by each of the planning groups were as follows.

- Group A** Cultural, Social, and Communication issues
- Group B** Footpaths and Bridleways
- Group C** Roads, Pavements Traffic and Travel
- Group D** Housing, Amenity Buildings, Employment and Business
- Group E** Environment

The terms of reference of these groups was to consult widely with those with expertise and responsibility in these areas, to take note of Borough Council policies expressed through the Local Development Framework (LDF) and to propose actions to reflect the wishes and opinions of the community. A list of the organisations and individuals consulted is at **Appendix III**.

4.6 Final consultation and submission to the Parish Council

Once the action plans had been drawn up they were the subject of a consultation with members of the Parish Council in early October 2008. After provisional approval of these, a full draft report was prepared for a final consultation with the community. A 'Parish Plan Review' event was held in the Village Hall on the 22nd and 23rd November 2008 which again attracted nearly one hundred residents. Written comments were invited and although these comments represented the views of a small number of individuals, they were reviewed by the Steering Group and incorporated into the plan where appropriate. A final draft was then prepared and submitted to the Parish Council.

5. Questionnaire results: a summary

5.1 Response rate

Four hundred and ninety seven people replied to the adult questionnaire and 48 to the young people's one which represents response rates of 53% and 43% respectively. As in many cases the returned forms included the views of more than one member of the household a good proportion of the community had their say. This section provides a *general summary* of views about the Parish as a community; detailed responses on a wider range of topics are given in section 6. A full analysis of the results and copies of the collated written comments can be made available on request.

5.2 Who responded?

Most of those who replied to the adult questionnaire were over 50 years old and almost half were over 60 (see first bar chart). The age distribution of those who responded corresponds quite closely to the actual age distribution of **residents** of the Parish as reflected in the census returns. Harper Adams students returned very few forms. Each of the age groups between 11 and 17 were fairly evenly represented.

Almost half of those who replied have lived in the Parish for more than 21 years and two thirds for over 10 years.

The age distribution of the respondents is reflected in the large number of retired people. This was the same as the number in employment, although another 45 were self-employed. Only one respondent said they were unemployed at that time.



5.3 Community views on the community

- ❖ Many people said they would like to see a revival of community activities such as a summer fête, to bring together people of different ages and social groups.
- ❖ Opinions were equally divided on whether young people and the elderly are well provided for, although in each case there was a large number of people who did not know.
- ❖ Of those who replied:
 - 98% agreed that the Village Shop and Post Office are important to the community;
 - 91% considered that the level of crime is low;
 - 88% thought that the pubs are important to the social life of the Parish;
 - 88% believed that the Garage provides an important service;
 - 70% felt that Harper Adams is an asset.
- ❖ Despite requests for improvement in roads, pavements, cycleways, street lights and so on, most people who commented wished to avoid “*creeping suburbanization*”. One young person asked that there be “...*no more street lights as it will make the village look silly in the day and too bright and suburban at night*”.
- ❖ More housing to help people on lower incomes stay in the community was supported by most of those who replied but only if it was low cost, in very small groups and sympathetic to the character of the village.
- ❖ Most of those who answered would support increased local employment to reduce travelling and create a stronger community.

6. Issues and proposals

6.1 Communication and the Parish Council

What have we got?

Communication within the community mainly involves the Parish Magazine, notice boards, the village shop, posters on telegraph poles and a weekly letter for parents from St Peter's Junior School.

The monthly Parish Magazine is run and funded by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) with occasional grants from the Parish Council. The distribution area is not the same as the civil parish and there may be a few households in the civil parish who do not receive a Parish Magazine.

There are notice boards at several locations: the Village Hall, the Methodist Chapel, outside the Village Shop (only for the Parish Council), inside the Village Shop and at St Peter's Church. Telegraph-pole posters are popular throughout the Village.

The Parish Council has six general meetings a year as well as an Annual Parish Meeting and an AGM. Residents are invited to attend all meetings and a list of forthcoming meetings is posted on the Council's notice board and also in the Parish Magazine.

'Village Views'

When people were asked how well informed they felt about what is happening in the community, more than half said they were *well* or *quite well* informed. When asked what means of communication they use to find out what is happening, most said they use the Parish Magazine and find it *good* or *excellent*. The Parish Magazine also generated the most comments – mainly positive and seeking to expand its scope to ensure that it was seen as more than just a church publication.

Word of mouth (especially amongst young people), newspapers, the shop notices and telegraph poles are the other most popular means of finding out what's happening. The notice boards are notably less popular. When people were asked at the 'Village Views' event where a new community notice board should be positioned, the unanimous response was "*outside the shop*".

Regular access to the internet is available to 71% of respondents and when asked if they would use a parish website most said that they would. The percentage of those saying that they would subscribe to a newsletter was roughly the same. Just over half of the respondents to the youth questionnaire said they would be interested in an emailed newsletter.



When people were asked if they knew how to contact the Parish Council there was an approximate 50:50 split. When asked how well informed they felt about the Parish Council, a large majority of respondents replied that they were either *not at all* or *not very well* informed. Comments about the Parish Council were generally negative, reflecting general concerns about powers, representation, and especially communication. There is obviously great scope for improving people's awareness and understanding of the Parish Council and improving the way it is perceived.

After the 'Parish Plan Review' it was suggested that a means of alerting the Council to the arrival of new residents was needed. The publication of Council minutes on the Notice Board was welcomed but it was suggested that a brief descriptive summary would be valuable.

Vision and aims

- ❖ To maintain a strong community by ensuring that everyone has access to information about local facilities and activities and the work of the Parish Council.
- ❖ To encourage participation in the work of the Parish Council by encouraging feedback from the community.
- ❖ To ensure that newcomers to the village are made welcome and guided to information that will assist integration and encourage involvement in local activities.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 18)

6.2 Social, cultural, sporting activities and facilities

What have we got?

The existing social, cultural and sporting activities in Edmond are of three sorts. There are the groups that are part of national organisations which include Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Brownies and Guides, Women's Institute, Mother's Union, Foresters. There are locally organised groups that include Toddler Group, Youth Club and Seniors Social Club, Karate, Snooker, Bowling, Darts and Dominoes clubs, Choir, Bell Ringers and Flower Guild based at St Peter's Church. Thirdly, there are classes organised by independent organisations. These include an upholstery class, occasional arts and craft workshops, line dancing and pilates. The groups meet either in community buildings (Section 6.3) or in the Lion pub.

Also important to the social life of the village are the regular Open Mic nights at the Lion pub, occasional events in the Village Hall and churches, and a bonfire and fireworks display at the showground organised by the Scouts.

Facilities available for recreation include the playing fields with children's play area, Multi Use Games Area and the Church Field. Harper Adams University College has a wide range of facilities and services, but there is little evidence that the Parish benefits from these. In fact the proximity of, for example, the tennis courts, means that the Parish would find it difficult to access grant-aided funding to develop a provision locally.



'Village Views'

Many people expressed enthusiasm for more opportunities to get involved in new classes and activities within the community and wished to discover exactly what is already available. An overwhelming majority said they would like a list of existing clubs and societies (Appendix IV). There were frequent references to wanting more "community" events.

When asked about participation in new clubs and classes, many suggestions were made for additional activities. The most popular were dance classes, theatre and music clubs and a gardening club.

When asked what new facilities they would use, a significant number of people of all ages said they would use tennis courts. This was also a popular activity raised at the 'Village Views' open day. There was also significant interest in the provision of allotments. Almost half of all respondents to the youth questionnaire gave a positive response to a drop-in café.

Almost half of all respondents said that they would use Harper Adams' facilities, with suggestions that included shooting, swimming, using the gym and the library.

The aspirations of the community revealed through the surveys are important in relation to the Local Development Framework (LDF). This states that key requirements for a sustainable rural community are a **strong local culture** and **shared community activities**.

Vision and aims

- ❖ To strengthen the sense of community and belonging through opportunities for cultural, leisure, community, sport and other activities for all ages.
- ❖ To use improved communication as the key to developing, accessing and participating in cultural and educational activities.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 19)

6.3 Community buildings

What have we got?

All the community buildings are located within the village and include the Village Hall, the Methodist Chapel and Hall, St Peters Church, the Bowling Club and the Sports Pavilion. These buildings provide facilities for different activities, functions and events within the Parish and are all run independently of one another. A mobile library also visits every two weeks.

The Village Hall has three rooms, one of which includes a stage. There is also a kitchen and a room reserved for members of Edgmond Snooker Club. The Methodist Hall has one room that includes a kitchen. Both halls are available for private hire.

St Peters Church itself is available for social or cultural use and the Rector is keen for the community to make more use of the church. The Bowling Club has one main room with a small bar and kitchen.



The Sports Pavilion was home to the Edgmond Owls pre-school play group for many years but this is now housed in a new building adjacent to St Peter's School. The Sports Pavilion is used by football and cricket teams. However, apart from the Lion Football Club, these teams are from Tibberton, Newport and Telford, not Edgmond. Harper Adams offers a wide variety of meeting and residential rooms which may be hired if available.



Inspection of the Village Hall bookings revealed plenty of availability during the day but most weekday evenings are booked. Although there are three rooms for hire, the layout of the current building is often very restrictive for hiring to more than one group at a time because of the very thin walls and access to the toilets.

The Village and Methodist Halls are both redundant army buildings dating from around the time of WWI. They require constant maintenance which is funded by users of the facilities or by grants.

'Village Views'

During the last year, 58% of respondents had used the Village Hall, 32% Harper Adams, 27% St Peters Church (for social functions), 14% the Methodist Hall, 6% the Mobile Library and 4% the Sports Pavilion.

Several people commented that there was a lack of information on what was available for hire, what the hiring charges were and who to contact. A calendar of events was also requested. One respondent was not aware that a mobile library visited Edgmond every two weeks.

It was generally agreed that the Village Hall and Methodist Hall were important amenities but that they needed extensive refurbishment. The poor state of the Sports Pavilion was also highlighted.

Vision and aims

- ❖ To foster community activities and communication through the provision of a single, modern, purpose-built community hall that can be accessed by a variety of groups at the same time and meet the needs and expectations of the community for years to come.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 20)

6.4 Housing

What have we got?

Recently, most new homes built in the Parish have been individual detached houses on infill plots in the village centre or barn conversions in the more rural areas. There are only a small number of infill plots and conversion projects with planning permission still available within the Parish. These few are concentrated within the centre of Edgmond.

Telford & Wrekin strategy for rural areas is to concentrate new housing in High Ercall, Tibberton and Waters Upton. However the Borough Council has also undertaken a strategic housing land-availability assessment to identify the capacity for new housing development over the next fifteen years.

A draft Housing Plan was produced in 2008 and the most significant implications of it for the Parish are that permission for any additional building should not be granted within the first ten years of the Plan unless there are special local circumstances.



A number of potential building sites have been identified within the Parish, some of which are outside the development limits set out in the LDF and **none of which have planning permission**. These include land adjacent to Flatt Pit Farm, on Longwithy Lane, behind Egremont House and between Chetwynd Road and Newport Road. There are also infill sites in grounds off Manor Road, and at the corner of Robin Lane. Harper Adams also plans further development.

A significant proportion of Edgmond Village near the Church and alongside the High Street is designated as a Conservation Area “of special architectural or historic interest” (see section 3.3). Such areas are designated by T&W Council to protect their special character and appearance.

‘Village Views’

Of those who replied, 69% thought there was a need for more houses to enable local people on lower incomes to stay in the Parish. Most (77%) respondents also believed that development should be limited to individual or very small groups of housing. This corresponds with the type of development proposed in the LDF over the next ten to fifteen years.

When asked to identify any area of land that so contributed to the character of the village that it should be **protected** from development the most common responses were:

- ❖ the field opposite the shop (92)
- ❖ the playing field (70)
- ❖ the Church Field (65)
- ❖ ‘greenfield’ and farmland (28)
- ❖ Village Hall land (20).



Many who replied stressed the importance of maintaining the character of the Parish and of planning decisions sympathetic to village character and design.

Vision and aims

- ❖ To maintain Edgmond village and its hamlets as distinct rural communities with any further development sympathetic to the local character.
- ❖ To sustain a community of mixed age and income groups by limiting further development to small groups of affordable housing.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 20)

6.5 Employment

What have we got?

Just over 50% of the respondents to the questionnaire were in employment with 18% of these self-employed. Although many people come to work in Edgmond (see table below), more than 90% of **residents** who are in employment actually work outside the Parish.

Parish employers and approximate number of employees

Harper Adams University College	450
St Peter's School and Edgmond Owls	27
Edgmond Hall Outdoor Education Centre	14
Lea Brothers Garage	9

In addition, the two pubs and the Village Shop employ part-time staff and there are several local businesses such as builders, carpenters, gardeners, a plumber and an electrician. A number of other people work from home but the total is unknown. Whilst employment in agriculture has declined it still supports a number of farm workers and accounts for a large financial turnover.

Telford & Wrekin do not encourage expansion of business activity in the Parish. However, the LDF identifies Harper Adams as a major employer in the rural area and a major contributor to the rural economy. Appropriate development within the campus, including employment-related development, will be encouraged. The College is keen to establish a science or business park on the campus.

'Village Views'

The five businesses identified in the questionnaire received overwhelming support (section 5.3) but the proposition that employment should be expanded was supported by only half the respondents. Many people were worried that more employment would damage the character of the Parish but fewer than 10% were against more home working.

Although only a third of respondents favoured the establishment of suitably sited commercial units in the village, two thirds would support such units at Harper Adams.

There was general support for the publication of a register of local service providers.

Vision and aim

- ❖ To maintain a vibrant and healthy community by encouraging local employment whilst protecting the rural character of the Parish from unsuitable development.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 21)

6.6 The natural environment

What have we got?

Most of the Parish is open fields with only a small number of woods, copses, wind breaks, ponds and streams (see map) and comprises approximately:

- 75% commercial farmland,
- 20% Harper Adams land of which 65% is farmland,
- 5% Edgmond Village and other hamlets.



There are no local nature reserves or dedicated monitoring systems in the Parish but a large amount of information about local biodiversity is available from variety of sources (Appendix V). In addition, the Rock Hole quarry appears on a County list for Shropshire as a Regionally Important Geological Site.

Close to the Parish boundaries there are nationally significant sites such as Aqualate National Nature Reserve, the Weald Moors/Wall Farm Wetland and Newport Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest. These are under long-term management.

'Village Views'

At the *'Village Voice'* and in the questionnaire most people who expressed a view demonstrated that the open spaces and the rural environment are very important to them.

"community open spaces are a wonderful resource to be preserved and maintained"

"protect green open spaces"

"a stronger community spirit is required and opportunities are available through environmental group activities".

Many people suggested ways in which the local environment could be improved. These included tree planting, landscape and wildlife management, control of pollution (including local recycling facilities and control of dog fouling) and reduced energy use. Of those who replied, 83% said they would support the formation of a community action group to improve the local environment. And, whilst only 48% said they would join such a group, this represented 184 individuals.

Concern about the cost of energy and carbon pollution is reflected in responses to questions on these issues. For example 81% would support the installation of domestic solar panels and only 33% would object to the use of domestic wind turbines. Whilst only 38% would like an energy survey on their houses this means that 171 people would welcome it.



Vision and aims

- ❖ To sustain a healthy rural environment, increase biodiversity and strengthen the sense of community by engaging its members and local educational institutions in conservation activities and projects.
- ❖ To foster a pollution-free environment by improving opportunities for waste disposal and providing advice on energy conservation.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 21-22)

6.7 Footpaths and rights of way

What have we got?

Over 14 miles of rural footpaths and public rights of way in Edmond Parish provide a valuable means of access to the local rural environment:

5.9 miles of footpaths used only by walkers (including pushchairs and wheelchairs);

1.6 miles of bridleway used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders;
6.9 miles of restricted by-ways used as rights of way by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers.

Pedestrians thus have 100% of the network available to them, with cyclists and horse riders having 58% and carriage drivers 47% respectively.

'Village views'

Most people (56%) agreed that the paths close to the village were *excellent or good* for ease of use; however this figure dropped to 42% when asked about paths more than half a mile from the built-up zone. This information compares favourably with an *Insight* survey carried out in 2005 by Telford & Wrekin in which the Parish Councils and the population of the Borough were asked to take part.

When asked what improvements would help them to make use of the footpaths and bridleways, most people indicated they would make greater use of the network if a local parish rights of way map was published, if bad or missing signposts were replaced, if surfaces were better maintained, if there was better control of vegetation and if gates and stiles were suitable for the less able.

Many were concerned at the amount of dog fouling. The dissatisfaction with signposting was reinforced by the replies of those who suggested that there should be a footpath connecting Edgmond to Newport when one already exists.



The restoration of the canal and towpath and the connecting of several footpaths were popular requests. An audit of the local rights of way network was also requested.

Vision and aim

- ❖ To provide opportunities for recreation, healthy exercise and enjoyment of the countryside through well maintained and signed rights of way, and information about them for the community.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 23)

6.8 Roads, pavements and traffic

What have we got?

The B5062 passes north of the village and bisects the Parish; all other roads in the Parish are minor ones. Some of these roads have pavements on both sides, some on one side only and some on neither. The location of pavements is not closely related to safety and owes more to history than need. An advisory cycle route runs from the bottom of Cheney Hill along Newport Road, Robin Lane, the High Street, down School and Flatt Roads to Harper Adams. However, apart from the stretch on Cheney Hill, there is no protection from other traffic.

The speed limit on all roads is 60mph except for the built-up areas where it is 30mph, and on the stretch of the B5062 between the Chetwynd Road junction and Harper Adams where it is 40mph. Borough Council policy would prevent an extension of this limit to the top of Cheney Hill as drivers must be able to overtake at some point. Similarly, the built-up area of the village does not satisfy the current criteria for a 20mph limit.

Much traffic, including some heavy vehicles, uses the village as a short cut, especially between the A41 at Chetwynd Church and the Red House at Lilleshall. There are serious blind spots at some junctions.

Potholes on many roads are repaired frequently but, because this often takes place in the wet, and because the standard of repair is not good, the damage soon reappears.

'Village Views'

Roads, traffic and pavements were of concern to many people with small majorities requesting more speed limits (56%), flashing speed signs (67%) and vehicle weight limits (52%).

Most of those who replied were against speed bumps and build-outs (65%) and one-way roads (78%). Although a small majority (54%) were against more cycle lanes this may be because few adults use cycles. Of the young people who said how they get to Newport if they cannot get a lift, nearly half said they used a bicycle and several asked for better or safer cycle routes.

Individual comments about roads and pavements included many concerned with their state of repair:

"...all repairs are repairs of existing repairs - a waste of our money and of T&W resources".

Others were concerned with the need to control speeding, to encourage walkers and cyclists, and to stop heavy vehicles cutting through the Village. Comments about traffic applied particularly to the High Street, Flatt Road, Chetwynd Road and Marsh Road.

More than 40 people said they did not want to see more pavements but over 200 did. The most frequently mentioned locations were along Newport and Shrewsbury Roads, on the B5062 (especially from Chetwynd Road to the Lamb), and down School Road/Hillside/Flatt Road.

After the *'Parish Plan Review'* one respondent suggested that the playing field car park opposite the Village Hall be illuminated because kerbs and walls cannot be seen at night and because lone women may feel vulnerable.

Another comment from the *'Parish Plan Review'* event suggested that a parking area could be provided outside the shop by making a loop into the field opposite. The area around the loop could then be created into a 'village green' and accessed by a pedestrian crossing with a footpath to the playing fields. Members of the Steering Group felt that this could be considered further, but that such a major change would require a new survey of opinion which should be carried out after publication of the Plan.



Vision and aim

- ❖ To provide motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and especially young people with a safe and well maintained network of roads, cycleways and pavements whilst minimising suburbanisation.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 23-24)

6.9 Travel and transport

What have we got?

The 519 bus service from Newport to Shrewsbury passes through Edgmond six times a day starting at 7.34 am and finishing at 6.10 pm. From Shrewsbury the service arrives seven times per day starting at 7.45 am and finishing at 5.55 pm. From Newport there are frequent buses to Stafford and Telford. Each day between Monday and Friday a 'Wrekin Connect' bus also travels *direct* to Edgmond from Newport at 11.12 am and *via* Chetwynd, Sambrook, Howle and Tibberton at 8.58 am and 1.12 pm. The possibility of sharing a minibus service with Church Aston and Tibberton is being investigated.

Many pupils at St Peters Primary School live outside the Village. Parents therefore transport children to and from school by car which generates serious parking problems and congestion in Stackyard Lane and in the High Street. To counter this problem the School has developed a 'Walking Bus' system from the playing fields car park but only a small proportion of children join it.



Harper Adams generates much traffic. Bus times from Newport no longer coincide with the start of the working day and over 80% of staff and 60% of students travel to work by car, either as single drivers or as passengers.

In 2008 the College initiated a travel plan in consultation with Telford and Wrekin Council which includes:

- ❖ bicycle-purchase schemes;
- ❖ car-sharing schemes;
- ❖ proposals to encourage walking and cycling;
- ❖ proposals to improve the 519 bus service.

'Village Views'

When asked '*How could travelling around the village be improved for you?*' the large majority of respondents mentioned the problem of school parking and the state of repair of roads and pavements; some mentioned the cutting back of hedges.

In addressing the same question in relation to travel to Newport and beyond, an even larger majority, including many young people, asked for more regular buses as well as the provision of safe cycleways and footpaths to the town.

Vision and aim

- ❖ To encourage the provision of alternative, safe and convenient means of travel so as to minimise the use of cars in the Parish and the associated problems of noise, pollution and parking.

Actions proposed to realise this vision are set out in the Action Plan (p 24)

7. Action plan and next steps

7.1 The action plan

The section that follows lists those actions that the Parish Council proposes to take in order to realise the vision and aims listed in section 6 above. In each case the responsibility, partners and suggested timescale for **initiating** the actions are listed, together with possible funding sources where known. Whilst the Parish Plan is concerned with developments over the next 5 - 10 years, the timescale for **initiation** of the actions proposed is shorter. It is based on the initial adoption of the Plan by the Parish Council with short, medium and long term representing up to 12, up to 36 and over 36 months.

7.2 Next steps

The publication of the Parish Plan is clearly only the first stage in the implementation of its proposals. Firstly, the Parish Council will need to review and modify the plan according to changing circumstances over the next few years. The Borough Council too should examine the plan and take note of the expressions of voter opinion within it when developing its own plans.

Secondly, the implementation of the Plan must be monitored on a regular basis. This monitoring should be an annual process and should involve not only the Parish Council but also other members of the community including, ideally, members of the Steering Group who have developed it.

Finally, it is **vital** that more members of the community become involved in the implementation of the Parish Plan if the aims are to be achieved. The questionnaires and consultation events revealed a desire for a stronger community. This requires not only attendance at local events but also participation in the activities proposed to improve our community - environmental action, footpath monitoring, the Walking Bus and so on.

A number of working groups will be established to carry forward the actions proposed to achieve the aims set out in this Plan.

Volunteers will be needed for these groups.

Members of the Steering Group and of the Parish Council

look forward to **your** involvement.

1. Communication and the Parish Council

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Set up a website on the model of a 'blog' and use local expertise and enthusiasm to create an editor group.	Parish Council Editor group	Parish organisations	In progress
Appoint a publicity and promotions officer for the Parish Council to publicise the website and facilitate its use, and to prepare a brief descriptive summary of meetings for the notice board, the Parish Magazine and Newport Advertiser.	Parish Council	Parish organisations	Short
Provide a new community notice board which can be used by members of the community as well as the Parish Council. Consult with the owners of the shop & T&W Council on the feasibility of locating it outside the shop.	Parish Council	Shop owners T&W Council	Short
Strengthen contacts between the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council and investigate ways of widening the appeal of the Parish Magazine.	Parish Council	Parochial Church Council	Short/medium
Allocate an area of the Parish to each councillor so that the Council can be alerted to the arrival of new residents. Prepare an information/welcome pack for residents (to include the Parish Plan) to be made available via the shop and website.	Parish Council	Village Organisations	Short/medium

2. Social, cultural, sporting and educational activities

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Work with Harper Adams contacts to clarify and publicise facilities available to the community and develop and maintain beneficial links with the College.	Parish Council	Harper Adams	Medium
Investigate the availability of tennis courts to the public at Harper Adams and the possibility of a joint community and College club and, if oversubscribed, pursue funding for additional courts.	Parish Council	Harper Adams	Medium
Publish a list of current clubs and activities in the welcome pack on the website and notice boards; publicise and foster the establishment of new groups.	Parish Council	Village Hall Committee	Medium
Liaise with interested parties to investigate and support the provision of allotments for the community.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Medium
Encourage local pubs to provide drop-in facilities for young people.	Parish Council	Landlords	Medium
Encourage the provision of more community social events.	Parish Council	Village Hall Committee	Medium

3. Community buildings

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Establish a Village Hall Steering Committee with the partners listed to plan the development of a new Village Hall which will provide for the needs of the whole community.	Parish Council	Village and Methodist Hall Committees Parish & T&W Council	Medium
Commission chartered surveyor students to develop designs in consultation with the Steering Committee.	Village Hall Steering Committee	Harper Adams	Medium

4. Housing

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Undertake a detailed survey to identify the level of need for affordable housing within the Parish.	Parish Council	Housing Associations T&W Council Wrekin Housing Trust	Medium
Prepare a Village/Parish building design statement in consultation with members of the community.	Parish Council	T&W Council Bromford Corinthia Housing Association	Medium
Protect from development those areas that contribute to the character of the village and especially the field opposite the shop, the playing field and the Church Field.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Continuing
Publish a scale plan showing Edgmond's Conservation Area and make it available locally for public viewing.	Parish Council		Short

5. Employment

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Support the establishment of a small business hub and park accessible to local businesses and located at an appropriate site.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Long
Investigate ways to encourage and support home working.	Parish Council	T&W Council Fay Easton Enterprise HQ	Medium
Prepare a register of local practical and professional skills.	Parish Council	Awards for All	Medium

6. The natural environment, energy conservation & pollution

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Encourage the formation of an environmental action group to carry out a range of activities such as those suggested below.	Parish Council	T&W Council Shrops CC Countryside Service Natural England	Short
Increase community awareness of Parish environment and wildlife through web-site sourced observation and information sheets and environmental events, such as a family garden-bird survey.	Environment Group	Shrops Wildlife Trust NE Field Studies Council National Lottery Harper Adams	Short/medium
Initiate surveys of Parish wildlife. Develop a policy to maintain and increase biodiversity. Link these activities with Shropshire CC / T&W Council Bio diversity Action plans.	Environment Group	As above	Short/medium Medium/long

Develop joint activities with local education centres teachers and students, such as a landscape survey based on the CPRE process, a wildlife project at Edgmond Hall	Environment Group	Edgmond Hall; Harper Adams CPRE; St Peters School	Medium
Form working parties to carry out, for example, tree planting and landscape improvements within the village.	Environment Group	Shrops CC Countryside Service Woodland Trust Countryside Commission	Short/medium
Seek formal recognition of the Rock Hole as a T&W and County Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS). Form a sub-group to work on national project of Building Stone Records and relationships to local geology.	Environment Group	T&W Council Shrops CC Shrops Geological Society EU?	Medium
Engage with activities involved in the extension of the Newport canal and ensure due consideration of associated natural green highway linking Aqualate National Nature Reserve to the Weald Moors.	Environment Group	Shrewsbury and Newport Canal Trust; T&W Council EU?	Long
Provide support for those seeking to reduce the cost of home energy and the production of carbon dioxide.	Parish Council through Environment Group	Environmental Action Group Shropshire; Hereford & Stoke Energy Advice Centre	Medium/long
Provide local facilities for the disposal of plastics and further dog waste bins.	Parish Council	T&W Council	In progress

7. Rural footpaths and rights of way

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Ensure that a physical audit of the rights of way network is carried out by Telford and Wrekin Council.	Parish Council	T&W Council Ramblers Association	Short
Carry out any repair work and improvements identified in the audit, and ensure that rights of way are signed and usable by the public.	Borough Council	Rights of Way Officer	Medium
Nominate a Councillor or other interested person to monitor the rights of way within Edgmond Parish and encourage the formation of a local access group.	Parish Council	Environmental Action Group	Short
Prepare an up-to-date map of the Parish rights of way and publish in downloadable form on the Parish and T&W Council website and display on Parish notice board.	Parish Council	Rights of Way Officer	Short

8. Roads, pavements and traffic

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Seek a 40 mph speed limit from Newport over the top of Cheney Hill.	Parish Council	Chetwynd Parish Council T&W Council	Short
Seek to establish 30 mph speed limits on access roads to Edgmond Village.	Parish Council	T&W Council	In progress
Install flashing speed signs in an appropriate rotation at the various access roads and the top of Cheney Hill	Parish Council	T&W Council Local Police	In progress
Request the installation of vehicle weight limit signs on Chetwynd Road, Longwithy Road, and School/Flatt Road.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Short

Urge T&W to ensure that pothole repair is carried out to a higher standard.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Short
Seek extension of pavements along Newport Rd, from The Lamb to Mentone Crescent and down School and Flatt Rd.	Parish Council	Harper Adams T&W Council	Medium
Encourage members of the community to report violations of vehicle weight limits and potholes to the Parish Clerk.	Parish Council	Edgmond community	In progress
Review the proposal to create a road loop and leisure area in the field opposite the shop and, if considered practical, survey community opinion.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Medium
Consider the installation of lighting on the playing field car park.	Parish Council	T&W Council	Short

9. Travel and transport

Action	Responsibility	Partners & Funding	Timescale
Seek a review and extension of the walking bus scheme including the recruitment of residents to assist, the establishment of additional routes and the award of points to children who walk but do not use it.	Parish Council	St.Peter's School	Medium
Support Telford and Wrekin Rural Forum and Harper Adams University College in their reviews of rural bus timetables and routes.	Parish Council Forum Representative	Rural Parish Councils in Telford and Wrekin	Medium
Plan the development of continuous safe cycleways between Edgmond centre and both Newport (possibly by the upgrading of the canal footpath) and Newtown and seek support and funding for their establishment.	Parish Council	Harper Adams Telford Cycle Forum T&W Council	Medium

Appendix I: Members of steering and planning groups

The following members of the community helped in various ways and at different times - as members of the Steering or Planning groups or in supporting the work of these groups - in the development of the Parish Plan.

Sheila Atkinson
Alice Arbuthnot
John Bentley
Janis Blinkhorne
Margaret Bradley
Paddy Browne
Richard Bruce
Veronica Caperon
David Chadwick
Jill Chaney
Keith Chaney

Alan Costley
Joan Costley
Elizabeth Dodd
Paula Doherty
Catherine Edwards
Emily Hancox
Robert Hudson
Penny Hughes
Peter Knight
Ray Marriott
Martin Reid

David Ryan
Jim Shaw
Mark Shaw
Judd Spears
Anne Sumner
David Tapley
Helen Turner
Andrew Temperton
Wendy Thompson
Geoffrey Wakeham
Mike Whiting

Appendix II: Parish organisations that took part in the 'Village Voice' event

The following organisations had displays or posters at the event.

Friends of St Peter's Primary School
Mothers' Union
Edgmond Hall Outdoor Education Centre
Police and Community Together (PACT)
The Brownies
The Scouts (who also provided a barbecue)
Edgmond Seniors Club
EDGEAhead
Edgmond Women's Institute
St Peter's Church
The Foresters
Edgmond Rural Community Initiative
The Snooker Club
Village Hall Committee
Christian Aid
Harper Adams University College
Weather-watch Group

Appendix III: Organisations and individuals consulted during the planning process

Local Development Framework

Mathew Wedderburn, Development Plans Team leader, T&W Council
John Bentley, Planning Officer, Shropshire CC

Communication and the Parish Council

Sara Taylor, Editor of the Parish Magazine
Paul Canning, Chairman of the Parish Council

Social, cultural and sporting activities

Clive Knight, Telford & Wrekin Sports Development Officer & ex LTA Officer
Ian Sankey, Telford & Wrekin Community Sports Development Officer
Keith Carder, Shropshire Lawn Tennis Association

Community buildings

Paula Doherty, Secretary of the Village Hall Committee
Diana Wright, Secretary to the Methodist Church Hall
Chris Taylor, Church Warden, St Peter's Church

Housing

The Wrekin Housing Trust
Bromford Corinthia Housing Association

Employment

Rural Knowledge Exchange, Harper Adams
Izzy Warren-Smith, Women in Rural Enterprise, Harper Adams
Councillor Eric Carter, T&W Council
Fay Easton, Shropshire Enterprise Partnership Ltd

The natural environment

Sean Burkey, Shropshire Countryside Commission
Tim Coleshaw, Natural England
Jan McElvy, Shropshire Wildlife Trust
Robin Mager, T&W Council Wildlife Officer
Hillary Betts, Shropshire, Hereford and Stoke Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
Richard Oakes, Edgmond Hall Outdoor Education Centre
Graham French, Shropshire CC Environmental Officer
Michael Rosenbaum, Shropshire Geological Society
Alan Dawes, Shropshire Ornithological Society
Chris Driver, Cheshire Wildlife Trust
David Challinor, CPRE
Kate Lowe, Cheshire Landscape Trust

Footpaths and rights of way

T&W Council
Natural England
Department of Health
North Shropshire District Council
Shropshire County Council
Shropshire County NHS Primary Care Trust
The Ramblers Association
Tony Osborne, former Parish Councillor with special interest in footpaths

Roads, pavements and traffic / Transport and travel

Members of PACT (Police and Community Together)
Katrina Baker, Clerk to the Parish Council
Members of Edgmond Parish Council

Appendix IV: List of current educational, social sporting and cultural activities in Edgmond

Art Class	Guides	St Peters Youth Group
Bell Ringers	Karate Club	Senior Citizens Club
Bowling Club	Line Dancing Class	Snooker Club
Brownies	Lion Football Team	Toddlers Group
Cubs, Beavers, Scouts, Explorers	Mobile library	Upholstery Class
EDGEAhead	Mothers' Union	Weather Watch Group
Emmaus group	Open Mic at the Lion	Women's Institute
Dominoes Club	Pilates Class	Youth Bus

Appendix V: Sources of information on biodiversity and geology within the Parish

Shropshire Wildlife Trust County biodiversity records

These reveal a very limited number of sightings of animals subject to the County Biodiversity Action plans including:

3 locations for pipistrelle bats	3 locations for freshwater crayfish
3 locations for otter sightings	1 record for water vole

British Trust for Ornithology and Shropshire Ornithological Society Atlas of Breeding Birds

The second year of a 5 year survey is underway. This aims to record the birds in every tetrad (2km square of the country) both during the winter and the spring/summer breeding season.

Records completed in year 1 (ie 2007-2008) of the survey for Edgmond Parish indicate that a total of 75 species can be seen within the Parish. These include redwing, fieldfare brambling snipe and woodcock, red legged partridges, tawny and barn owls.

Birds of Harper Adams University College Farm Survey 2004/2005

A site survey and evaluation of breeding and wintering birds with habitat recommendations. This survey recorded 58 species of breeding bird during spring and summer, 5 non breeding species and 5 additional overwintering species.

RSPB Garden Bird Surveys

A combined set of results of those residents who contributed to the survey would be of interest.

Moth records from the National Garden Moth Recording Scheme

The NGMRS involves 200 people who survey using a light box and record the moths found in their gardens for one night a week over a 36 week period each year. Records from one garden in Edgmond have added the following information to the national data bank.

Year	Total moths surveyed	Number of Species
2007	1446	176
2008	1766	171 (58 new to 2007)
Overall total	3212	234

Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS)

Correspondence with the Shropshire Geological Society (<http://www.shropshiregeology.org.uk/>) indicates that there are 5 quarries and 4 sand and gravel sites within the Parish. One of these, the Rock Hole, is recommended for registration as a RIGS. It is described as "a first rate site which has many interesting features" and is recommended for registration "because it is an impressive site in the Chester Pebble Beds....and demonstrates a variety of sedimentary structures".

Notes

Notes



Planning our future



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