**DORNEY PARISH**

**PLAN**



**Feb 2005**

**DORNEY PARISH PLAN**

**"OUR PLACE IN THE COUNTRY"**

**Dorney Parish is a small rural community at the southern tip of Buckinghamshire. The river Thames defines the southern border and the M4 motorway runs across the north of the Parish. Despite its close proximity to neighbouring urban areas the Parish retains numerous attractive features. Two Conservation areas have been designated. three properties are afforded Grade I listing and forty-two are Grade II listed.**

**However, the Parish is within the dynamic and economically affluent Southeast. As a consequence, it is subject to many developmental pressures and has to accommodate significant changes. The recent creation of Dorney Rowing Lake and the Jubilee River are examples. There are also the inevitable problems of the twenty-first century such as increasing pressure from through traffic on the roads. The Parish is inadequately served by public transport and has no shops. Agricultural land use practices are evolving as a consequence of economic and market pressures. Leisure activities for in-comers are being encouraged. Demand for further development may be only a question of time.**

**Background**

**It was therefore prudent for the Parish Council to solicit the views of Parishioners for their opinions on local issues. This was done in the year 2000 through a Parish Appraisal Questionnaire delivered to each of the approximately three hundred households in the Parish. The subjects and issues were addressed in the Questionnaire through nearly a hundred questions and the responses received have been analysed and edited to form the basis of the Parish Plan. The Plan also draws on a paper submitted to the Parish Council that was prepared by a group of local residents and which, in particular, highlighted envi­ronmental issues. The Buckinghamshire Rural Strategy paper was used as the structural model for the Plan.**

**Aim of the Parish Plan**

**The aim is to provide guidelines for the Parish Council that reflect a consensus of the concerns, priorities and expectations of Parishioners. Thus the Plan covers a wide range of issues, some clearly focusing on the community and quality of life. Others relate to security, transport and environmental matters.**

**Through publication of the Parish Plan. both parishioners and the Parish Council are making a commitment to a positive approach, towards sustaining and strengthening community and environment. It follows therefore that the Plan will provide a mandate for the Parish Council since, it can justly claim, the Plan reflects local views and priorities. Thus it will serve to reinforce decision making on, for example planning issues, and in discussions with local government departments.**

**It is also relevant to all who live in the Parish, as the Plan sets guidelines for standards that are valued by today's Parishioners and, in the longer term, will contribute to protection of these standards for the benefit of future generations. Hopefully the Plan makes common sense and is both practical and worthwhile.**

**Structure of the Plan**

**The various issues selected for inclusion in the overall Plan have been grouped under ten headings. Within each heading there are three component sections:**

* **identifying and briefly explaining the issues**
* **deciding upon and trying to enable appropriate actions**
* **setting targets for monitoring achievement**

**Quotes from a summary of the results of the Parish Appraisal Questionnaire are given in** *italics.*

**The Plan reflects issues and concerns at the start of year 2005. it is recognised that the plan should be dynamic and be subject to modification in the light of future developments and priorities.**

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**ROAD USE AND TRANSPORT**

**ISSUES**

Increasing intrusion of through traffic in the Parish

*Speeding traffic is perceived as being a problem through Dorney*

*72% of respondents pointed to major danger-spots on Dorney roads, especially Marsh Lane and Village Road*

Risks to pedestrians and cyclists (Marsh Lane in particular) *There should be more cycle and footpaths*

Non-car owners are poorly served by public transport

*Improvement in routes, timetable and reliability of the service is needed*

Street lighting needs improvement *More and environmentally friendly lighting is needed; 30% thought it poor; 10% thought it good*

Damage to grass verges by parked vehicles

**ACTIONS**

**To** *liaise* with BCC to implement and seek enforcement of measures to restrict traffic volume, speed and inconsiderate parking (speed restrictions, traffic calming, warning signs, footpaths)

To secure improved street lighting

To liaise with BCC to seek improvement to the bus service or taxi alternative

**TARGETS**

Traffic speeds are reduced

Pedestrian and cyclist safety is improved

Street lighting is improved (all existing lights will be replaced early in 2005) Better access to public transport is provided

Damage to grass verges is prevented

**DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUES**

The future of heritage sites within the Parish should be safeguarded. (e.g., the **upkeep** of St James Church and the Churchyard is an example where maintenance is a significant commitment accepted and provided by the few).

Need to maintain the rural character of the Parish

*There is very strong resistance to any sort of development in the Parish, including housing, tourist, business or industrial development; the majority want the character of Dorney to stay as it is*

*The consensus is that more publicity needs to be given to planning applications that affect Dorney*

Risk of excessive development around the Rowing Lake

Concern over the influx of too many visitors to the Parish

**ACTIONS**

Encourage interest, pride and respect for Conservation areas

The Green Belt designation of the area is to be protected

There is a need to encourage appropriate income-generating business within the Parish (e.g., using converted redundant farm buildings)

Parish Council to resist developments that are considered inappropriate

Parish Council to ensure appropriate publicity is given to planning applications Introduce proper traffic and parking arrangements for visitors to the Parish

**TARGETS**

Ensure the future for the conservation and heritage sites

Prevent future development that will erode the character of the Parish

and safeguard the existing properties and the environment Facilitate the establishment of appropriate businesses Ensure that the Parish is not overburdened by visitors

**ENVIRONMENT - COUNTRYSIDE**

**ISSUES**

*90% of respondents consider the quality of the Dorney countryside to be important to them; a majority felt that the environment had changed for the better in recent years; most valued are the meadows, green fields, hedges and small woods, along with the rivers and streams*

*Both Dorney Lake and the Jubilee River are regarded favourably now that they are established*

*Interest in the environment was expressed through willingness to help with conservation and preservation of wildlife*

*Special features of Dorney should be recorded*

*Fences, hedges and footpaths are valued*

*Concern over litter and overgrown paths*

Loss of biodiversity (degradation of hedges, trees dying, wet areas drying out) Excessive grass cutting

**ACTIONS**

Recognise the strength of Parishioners' concern for environmental issues

Ensure that land-owning and land use interests are aware of the Council's stance on the environmental matters and the importance of safeguarding the countryside Continue to work with Donley Lake and the Environment Agency to harmonise initiatives for the management and improvement of the environment.

Work with SBDC and BCC to achieve tidier roads and paths

Rationalise grass cutting regimes and timetables

**TARGETS**

At minimum, sustain or at best increase, biodiversity by nurturing the environment

Ensure that felled, old trees are replaced

Cleaner, tidier roads and foot paths

The Natural History of the Parish has been recorded

**ENVIRONMENT -WATER AND RIVER MANAGEMENT**

**ISSUES**

Uncertainty over water table levels as a consequence of new developments Decline of streams and wet areas leading to loss of biodiversity

Risk of over-promotion of Thames Path and Jubilee River leading to degradation of the pathway and possible inconvenience to local residents

Possible long-term consequences of river management and climate change might lead to flooding

**ACTIONS**

Maintain the Flood Warning System

Liaise with the Environmental Agency to obtain information on flood management, maintenance of water **courses and** water tables

Ensure appropriate arrangements for visitors to the Parish (on foot, by car and cycle)

**TARGETS**

**Risk** of flooding is minimised

Water courses and riverside amenities are well maintained

**ENVIRONMENT - POLLUTION**

**ISSUES**

*Traffic noise* iS *considered a major disturbance in Donley*

A major cause of noise is the surface material used on the M4 motorway *The level of aircraft noise is also of concern*

Air pollution levels occasionally significant close to the motorway

**ACTIONS**

Obtain and monitor published data on noise and air pollution

*Investigate incidents where noise levels arising from the 11/14, aircraft and specific local sources (e.g. Dorney Lake) exceed statutory levels*

*To support BCC policy of reducing night flights*

Continue to press for the replacement of high noise asphalt with sound reducing material when the M4 is next resurfaced

**TARGETS**

To reduce noise and pollution levels

**SECURITY**

**ISSUES**

Concern over vandalism

*Although the majority of respondents said they felt safe in Dorney, 26% said that there were areas where they felt unsafe*

*Demand for greater police presence in the Parish*

*Police score poorly compared with ambulance and fire services*

ACTIONS

Liaise with Thames Valley Police, obtain better community policing Liaise with Community Safety Officers at SBDC

Support and promote the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Consider introduction of CCTV in key areas

TARGETS

Ensure continuation of Neighbourhood Watch Fear of crime is reduced

RECREATION AND EDUCATION

**ISSUES**

*There is high demand for a children's playground in the Parish*

*Local leisure facilities within the Parish are deemed poor, for all age groups but especially for children and the 17-25 age group*

Utilisation of the Village Hall and the tennis court is very low

*About 80% of residents use the facilities either never or less than once a month The Horticultural Society is the most popular choice of residents*

*The Parish Magazine was received by 90% of respondents who value it as an important source of information and 60% wish it to be delivered to every home in the Parish*

*Only 11% of respondents thought that Council decisions and activities were well reported*

*Demand for publication of maps of local footpaths and leaflets of walks*

ACTIONS

The Parish Council has investigated the possibilities of a children’s playground and of a grant. Safety, insurance and maintenance regulations have so far made this unviable. Parish Council will continue to liaise with District Council to resolve issues.

Stimulate awareness of leisure opportunities in the Parish

Investigate obtaining concessions for nearby leisure centre facilities

Support independent production of the Parish Magazine and continue to report Parish Council matters

Parish Council to develop its Website

A footpath map linking the new opportunities provided by the Jubilee River and Rowing Lake is being published in Spring 2005

**TARGETS**

**Ensure that appropriate leisure facilities are available and publicised** Ensurethe continuity of publication of the Parish Magazine and that Parish Council matters are reported

Distribute the local footpath map

SERVICES

ISSUES

*Problems were reported with the provision of public utility services in the Parish (unreliability of telephone, radio, TV water and post)*

*There is high demand .for recycling facilities in the Parish*

ACTIONS

Parish Council to monitor complaints from Parishioners and take up significant problems with therespective utility providers

Work with South Bucks District Council to facilitate more arrangements for recycling in the Parish

TARGETS

The level of complaints is reduced Recycling of refuse is maximised

FINANCE

ISSUES

*Investments for the benefit of the Parish should be either funded by moderate tax rises or fund raising and sponsorship*

ACTIONS

Investigate availability of grants and opportunities for sponsorship for improvements

TARGETS

Ensure optimal use of available funds

References

Buckinghamshire Rural Strategy, July 1997

The Natural History of Dorney Parish, March 2000