

**Long Sutton  
Parish Plan  
2008**

## Introduction

In the Summer of 2006, following a Parish Meeting, the Parish Council (PC) decided to start the preparation of a Parish Plan (PP). The aim of the Plan would be:

**To enable the people of Long Sutton to improve the quality of their environment and increase their satisfaction with life in the Parish.**

At the Meeting, attended by 115 residents, about 150 suggestions were put forward. Later a Parish Plan Team (PPT) of volunteers was formed and divided into smaller groups whose task, drawing from the residents' suggestions, was first to define the sections into which the PP should be divided and, secondly, to produce a survey in the form of a questionnaire which would include all areas of vital concern to the Parish.

More than 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the residents completed all, or parts of, the 18 page survey and on this basis the PC concluded that it had a democratic mandate on which to base the PP. The PPT, with additional volunteers, then reviewed the findings of the survey, identified the main issues and prepared action plans where required.

Learning from what it perceives as inadequacies in recently published PPs, the PPT has avoided listing commendable but unachievable aspirations. Its guiding principles have been: clear allocation of responsibility for completion of every action to individuals and groups; ensuring practical timescales for completion of actions; ensuring that there is a transparent progress monitoring system; maintaining a well defined relationship between the PC and the PPT.

The PPT acts as an agent for the PC. It is a body of volunteers with no legal status and only a limited lifespan, therefore, many of the actions in the PP necessarily fall to the PC. However, it will be essential that the PPT, and the residents generally, give their full support to the PC or many of the actions will not be completed.

There have been too many people involved in the production of this Plan for us to thank them all individually, however, we would like to thank SSDC and our County and District Councillors for their enthusiastic moral and financial support.

We offer this Plan to the people of Long Sutton Parish and encourage them to make it happen.

Steve Sensier  
Project Leader

Judy Turner  
Madam Chair  
Parish Council



Long Sutton viewed from Rodmoor

## Some key features from the survey

The survey showed that most people felt quite safe in the village and that very few people had experienced vandalism and anti-social activities. However, vandalism and anti-social activities do occur – mainly around the village hall and recreation facilities.

There were clear indications that the sense of community within the village is strong. Most people like going to village events – particularly family events such as the Fete, Flower show and Panto. Those who did not go gave as their main reason, predictably, lack of time.

The age and household profile of the village is quite revealing. Almost one in five houses is occupied by just one person, most of them being over 60 years old. Equally significant is that a minority (23%) of villagers is under 40 years of age. This indicates a continuing shift in the social structure of the community.

The Plan contains the following main topics:

· Community	page 4
· Community Safety	page 5
· Local Environment	page 6
· Local Economy	page 7
· Development control & Housing	page 8
· Public Transport	page 9
· Highway	page 10
· Footpaths	page 11
· Communications	page 12
· Some statistics on the population	page 13
· Maps of conservation and development areas	pages 14 & 15
· Actions progress charts	pages 17 to 24

The first 8 sections begin with respondents' reviews as expressed in the survey and end with actions to be carried out.

The final section of the Plan gives a consolidated list of actions with timescales and responsibilities, so that residents who so wish can follow the progress of actions. The actions list will be published on the website and updated regularly.



## Community

The survey showed that the Post Office, Village Shop, Village Hall, Parish Church and School are considered to be at the heart of the community. Over 50% of respondents said that religion was either important or very important to them. Of these 12% attended Church of England services regularly, 6% Roman Catholic and 3% Quaker.

If community means "people having different life styles and personal beliefs living in harmony" then the response to the survey indicates that Long Sutton goes a long way to meet this ideal in its facilities and its wide range of clubs and organisations. There are, as in any community, different needs for different groups. For example, the young, the family, older people and those who live on their own.

Long Sutton has developed and maintained a large number of clubs, societies and activities matching the interests of villagers. It is not the intention of this plan to detract from these activities. However, the change in the social profile (see introduction) of the village is likely to lead to changes in the needs and interests of villagers. The village will need to seek ways to enhance and extend current facilities and activities for parishioners to meet in partnership and fellowship. The actions set out below will offer ways to communicate, review and introduce new approaches where fitting.



The Village Shop

### Key issues for our community as reflected in the survey are seen as:

- Supporting the Village shop and Post Office
- Involving the younger generation in village matters and catering for their interests
- Promoting inclusive community activities involving all sections of the community including the elderly, infirm and all the organisations in the parish embracing the School and the Churches
- Continuing to support the village hall in its strategy to host a wide range of entertainment, general interest events and education
- Acknowledging that residents of Knole, Bineham, Upton and Long Sutton are all part of the same Community
- Supporting the Parish Church and the Quakers

### Actions

#### The Parish Council:

- Will ensure that its policies and actions support the continued provision of the shop and post office as a vital community facility
- Will attempt to find a young person's representative to represent the interests of the younger members of the community and investigate current facilities and potential activities e.g. Mobile clubs, Rural Youth Projects, SSDC Youth Facilities
- Will research ideas to extend the annual church and school fete into the Saturday evening and/or Sunday in the village hall to encourage wider community involvement from 2009



Children's Play Area

#### The Village Hall Committee:

- Will continue to broaden the scope of its activities by encouraging local people to put on short courses or presentations on diverse subjects
- Will use the communication mediums of the Newsletter and Website to advertise activities and encourage new uses for the hall and grounds
- Will organise an event to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of the village hall in 2009

## Community Safety

Virtually all respondents consider that there are no areas in the Parish where they feel unsafe, and the majority have not been subjected to vandalism or anti-social behaviour. However, there are regular incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism at the Village Hall, School and Recreation Ground including: cars and motorbikes being driven dangerously and raced around the car park and recreation area, damage to the Village Hall disabled access ramp and the new notice board, the Pavilion, waste paper bins, tennis courts fencing and nets.

In general, a majority of the parishioners who said they had reported anti-social incidents or vandalism were content with the response by the police. However, 58% of all respondents were not satisfied with the level of general policing in the parish.

The team strongly recommend that residents should report all incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism so that the police can understand more accurately their frequency. This will support efforts by the Parish Council to increase the police presence in the village.

The majority of respondents were aware of the neighbourhood watch scheme, but it is not currently fully operational and it will require regular reinforcement to maintain its usefulness.



PCSO Craig Treasure

### Actions

#### The Parish Council will:

- Encourage residents to report all anti-social incidents and vandalism directly to the police as soon as they become aware of them
- Ask the Avon & Somerset Police to provide a stronger police presence in the Parish
- Will try to revive the Neighbourhood Watch scheme by seeking volunteer co-ordinators
- Continue at PC meetings to liaise with our Community Beat Officer and PCSO; and will in the Newsletter:
  - List current police/emergency contact phone numbers
  - Publicise links to the LS Website where more information will be available
- Highlight through the Chair's Annual Report to the Annual Parish Meeting, the incidence of crime, including vandalism and anti-social behaviour

## Long Sutton Environment



Flooding on Wet Moor, from the church tower, 24/01/2008

An overwhelming majority (98%) felt the Parish is generally well cared for. However, there were some aspects reported as needing attention. The most frequently mentioned were: hedges and verges encroaching on pavements and reducing the space for pedestrians; dog mess on pavements and grass areas such as the Green; "untidy" roadsides on the approaches to Long Sutton village.

Respondents who answered the part of the survey on the more general aspects of the environment were positive about the use of energy saving devices with solar panels and wind turbines being the preferred methods. (The Team noted that the provision of such equipment was beyond the remit of the Parish Council.) Many respondents felt that more recycling facilities should be provided within the Parish with plastic and cardboard recycling being the most serious deficiency. However, most respondents felt that there were sufficient public waste bins available.

When asked to suggest how to improve the situation regarding overgrown hedges and general tidiness, many respondents suggested the use of volunteer labour but only 15 respondents actually volunteered themselves. The Team, while appreciating the offer of help, considered that this would not provide a permanent solution. When asked if the Parish Council should employ a "lengthsman" (the term generally used for someone who keeps a parish tidy) 55% of those who responded were positive. Most of these respondents said they were prepared to accept an increase in the Parish Precept to pay for the service. However it should be pointed out that only 29% of respondents were in favour of this approach.

### Actions

#### The Parish Council will:

- **Consider hiring a "lengthsman" to maintain verges etc, in partnership with SSDC and Somerset County Council as the highways authority**
- **Encourage residents to maintain their own boundary foliage to avoid encroachment onto footpaths and highways**
- **Ensure that village signs and approaches to the village are well maintained in order to give a positive impression of the village**
- **Impress upon dog owners the requirement to manage their dogs' mess using the facilities provided.**
- **Review, with dog owners, the location of dog mess bins, including new bins and invite suggestions on how to prevent the problem**
- **Point out to the SCC/SSDC that the nearest recycling facility for plastics and cardboard is about 3 miles away and request recycling facilities nearer the Village.**

## The Local Economy

The survey showed that 13% of respondents are involved with businesses in the parish, including service-based, retail, leisure, transport, manufacturing and arts/crafts enterprises as well as the traditional business of farming

The barriers to starting or developing business were highlighted as the lack of public transport and suitable premises, especially low priced workshops which were identified as crucial.

The team felt, when practical and environmentally friendly, working from home has many advantages to the community; it encourages economic diversity, develops local skills and helps the environment by reducing car usage.

Some respondents mentioned a variety of skills and services they were able to offer locally. A local services directory would encourage residents to support local businesses.

### Actions

- **The Communications Team will, via the Newsletter, ask people running local businesses or providing services to provide details. A decision will then be made by the Parish Council whether there was sufficient interest to produce a local services directory.**
- **The Parish Council will look sympathetically at planning applications for small businesses, including agricultural diversification schemes, when such developments do not adversely affect the environment or conflict with SDC and national policies**



Village Green

## Development Control and Housing

This section had an excellent response rate of over 70% showing how important the issues of development control and housing are to the community.

A clear majority (79% of those answering the question) thought that new houses and extensions are generally well designed. Respondents favoured developments which follow the traditional building styles of the parish. This shows that the Design Statement published in 2000 serves a useful purpose; and clearly most of those who have read it consider it is helpful to builders and home owners in designing new houses and extensions that reflect local character.

The majority of the respondents in this section of the survey felt that the two current conservation areas (Knole and Long Sutton) should be retained as they stand.

A majority thought that we could accommodate Starter and Small Family homes without losing the character of the parish. However, support for building homes for single people, large families or executive homes was low.

A development of affordable housing is being proposed and the outcome of the associated enquiry will be displayed to the public when completed.

New build housing should take into consideration local needs. The location and size of such developments should recognize the likelihood of flooding, and other environmental issues.

The views expressed in the survey will sustain the Parish Council in maintaining its established position on new developments.

See maps on pages 15 & 16 for details of both conservation areas and building development areas.

### Actions

#### The Parish Council will:

- **Continue to use the 2000 Design Statement as a guide in its decision-making on planning applications**
- **Support developments that reflect local needs.**
- **Uphold the existing conservation zones of Knole and Long Sutton and the permitted development areas throughout the parish**
- **Continue to protect the distinctive characters of Long Sutton and the hamlets of Knole and Upton**



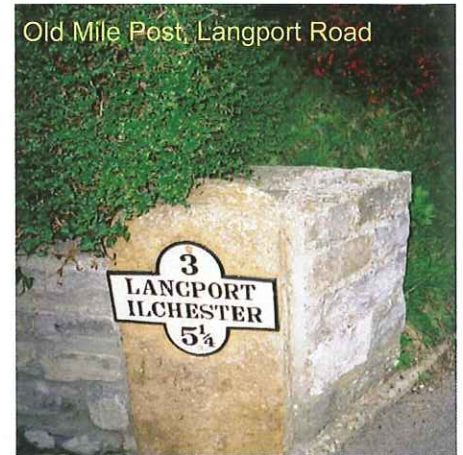


## Public Transport

The residents generally showed a deep concern for people with no personal transport even though the great majority are not in this position. Several offered to drive people without cars but insurance and other administrative problems make this a difficult service to organise within a small community.

Although only a small number of residents use the Langport Area Development Trust sponsored weekly community bus service to Langport it is obviously of great importance to them. 1 in 10 of the respondents said that they would use the service regularly if it ran 3 or 4 times a week to different destinations. It could be assumed that at least the same proportion would use other bus services such as the Nippy Bus if they were available and convenient.

34% of respondents considered that lack of public transport was the greatest barrier to Long Sutton being a good place to work.



View from Upton Bridge



## Actions

- The Parish Council will liaise with the District Councillor for his support in developing and maintaining community transport including the community bus
- The Team will inform Somerset CC of the results of the Questionnaire, in particular the importance of public bus services to the most vulnerable of residents



Community Bus

## Highways Improvement, Maintenance and Safety

There was a good return (74%) for this section. The Team noted that 43% of these respondents did not think that “there are traffic problems in the Parish” apart from undoubted concern over the Shute Lane and Martock Road crossing which most considered the most dangerous in the Parish. 35% of respondents felt that increased police speed checks are the most effective cure to speeding while 23% favoured a Community Speed Watch Scheme. Speed indicator devices were also considered very desirable.

The Team considers that:

The PC needs a clear set of priorities for improving the Parish highways before embarking on particular improvements or traffic calming – curing a problem in one area can sometimes merely move it to another.

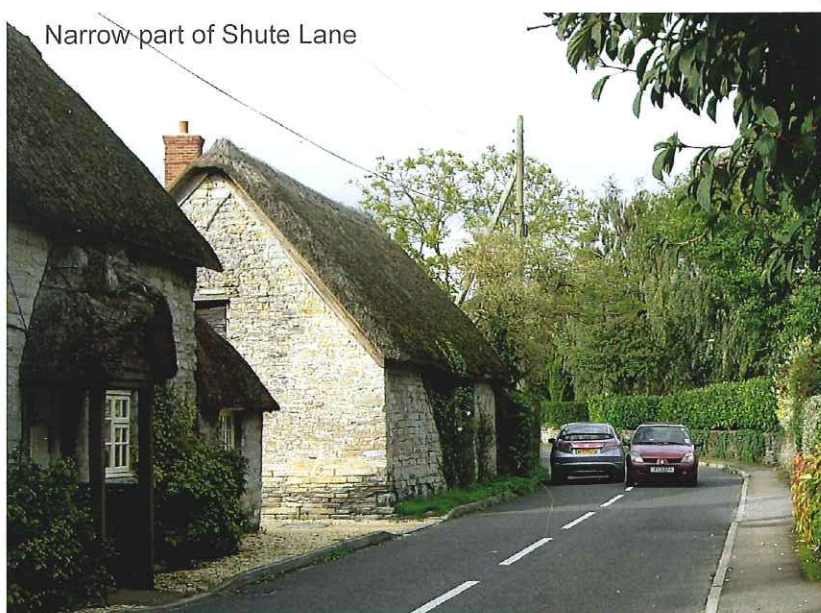
Community Speed Watch proved very divisive when raised in the past at PC meetings and at a public meeting. It was eventually discarded because there were insufficient volunteers; that remains true today judging from responses to the Questionnaire. However, the Team noted that Community Speed Watch is becoming more widespread in the County and has strong Police support.



### Actions

#### The Team will:

- **Work with the PC to produce clear priorities for road improvements and traffic management to be presented at the 2009 Annual Parish Meeting**
- **Inform the Chief Constable of the parts of the Parish Plan which affect the Police, stressing among other points the importance of police speed checks**
- **Recommend that the PC should reconsider from time to time the practicability of setting up a Long Sutton Community Speed Watch taking into account any shifts in public opinion**



## Footpaths



Footpath to Knole Hill

There was a very high response rate to this section. 44 respondents said that they would join a parish walking group and 22 volunteered to assist in footpath maintenance. This demonstrated clearly that footpaths in the Parish are highly valued.

Most respondents considered paths to the east of Long Sutton village to be in the worst condition, particularly those between Knole and Bineham. They are the subject of an amendment order and the necessary work on the stiles signage is progressing which has been agreed by all the parties involved. Before the publication of the amendment there will be a need for new stiles and signage.

Most respondents felt that information on the footpath network should be made more readily available. The WI have produced an excellent pamphlet, which is available in the Stores, detailing five parish walks. However, it is clear that a map of the network, based on the Ordnance Survey Explorer series, would be welcomed.

The Team noted that there are two paths in the Knole area which are blocked and/or unsigned. The problem is known to SSDC.

## Actions

### The Team will:

- **Implement the decision made at a meeting held in April concerning the formation of a walking group**
- **Make the rights of Way Department of SSDC aware of the findings of this Survey and will request that the necessary work is carried out to the amended footpaths, with the aid of volunteers from the Parish, by the end of May**
- **Produce an up to date walking map of the Parish by December 2008**
- **With the Parish Paths Liaison Officer, press SSDC to clear and sign the two blocked paths in/near Knole. It would be unrealistic to set a time limit on this action**

## Communications

The Newsletter, village shop and parish notice boards are the most important media of communications for more than 75% of respondents.

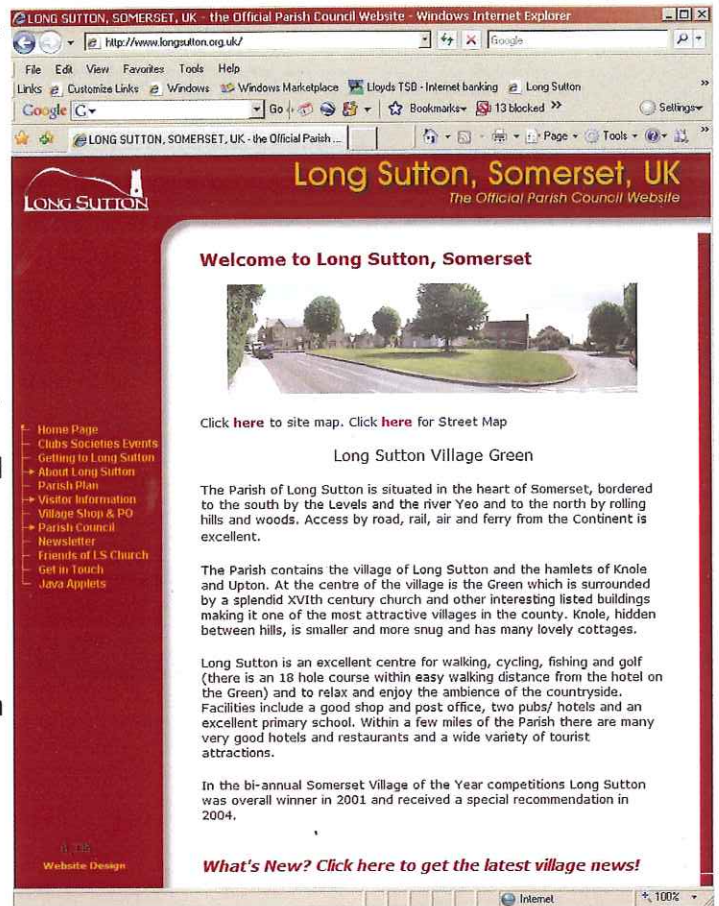
The majority of the village do not see the village website as a communication vehicle, although 75% said they had access to the internet, most using it daily.

The website has had over 8500 hits since 2004.

In the survey respondents proposed ways to enhance the Newsletter and making the parish website more useful to the community. To accommodate the added communication needs placed upon the Newsletter it may have to concentrate on Long Sutton issues alone.

Communications within our community are vital in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for parishioners. News of the many activities in the parish will be more effectively shared by using all the communication options available. The various means of communication available should be kept under review.

The Newsletter and Website should be made complementary by cross-referencing announcements in both.



## Actions

### Newsletter

The Parish Council will work with the Parochial Church Council to enhance the usefulness of the Newsletter within the Parish, using these headings:

- Parish Council notices and feedback
- Village clubs and society information on events
- Community Safety notices
- Church and School notices
- Future community events
- Links to dedicated pages on the website for all the above

### Website

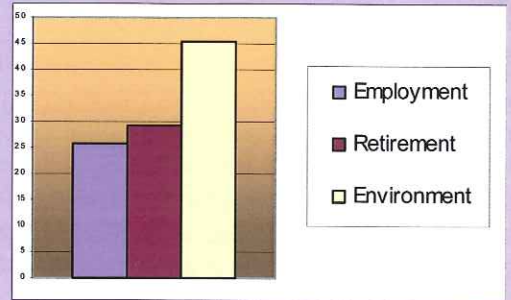
- A new website will be designed by the team to enhance communications and supplement the Newsletter, Notice Boards and the Parish Diary
- The team will arrange with village clubs etc. to obtain regular updates to be included in dedicated web pages

### Central Village Display

- The team will seek funding through the Parish Council for a permanent village display on the Green to highlight the features of the parish and to provide information for visitors to the village

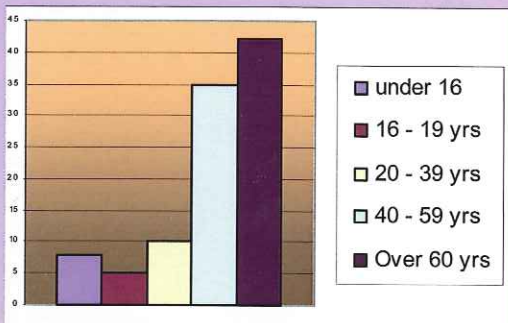
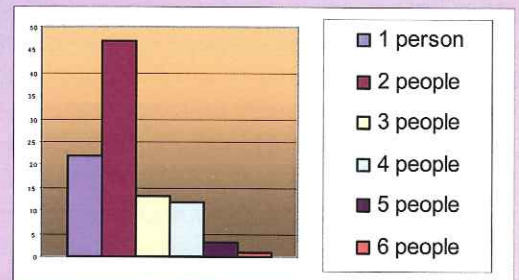
## Some interesting statistics from the survey

This graph shows the primary reasons for coming to Long Sutton. Our environment is the major feature in attracting people here.



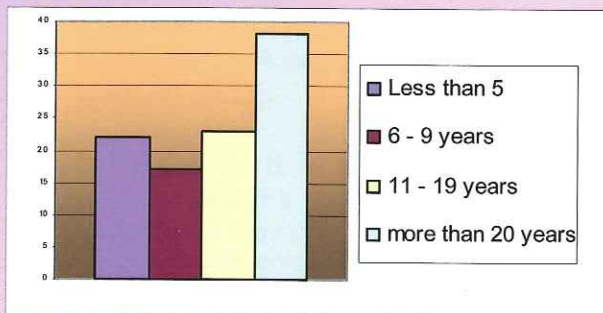
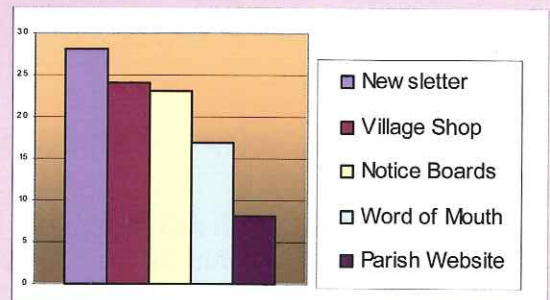
This shows the pattern of work destinations showing that a significant minority work from home. However, it also indicates that only a minority work in local towns.

This graph shows the levels of occupancy for houses in the village. 22% of properties have only one occupant.



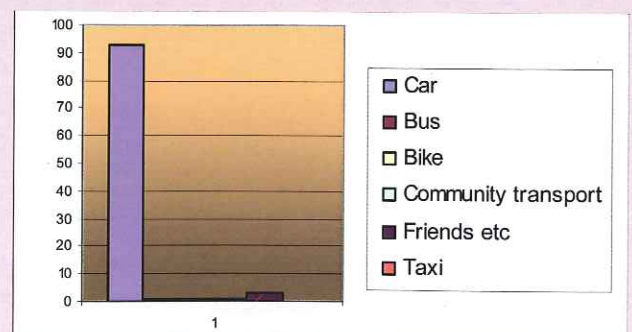
The age profile of the village is weighted towards the older generations. This tendency is likely to increase and put pressures upon local services.

Here the relative usefulness of the various media is shown. The Newsletter is the most popular and the Parish website the least.

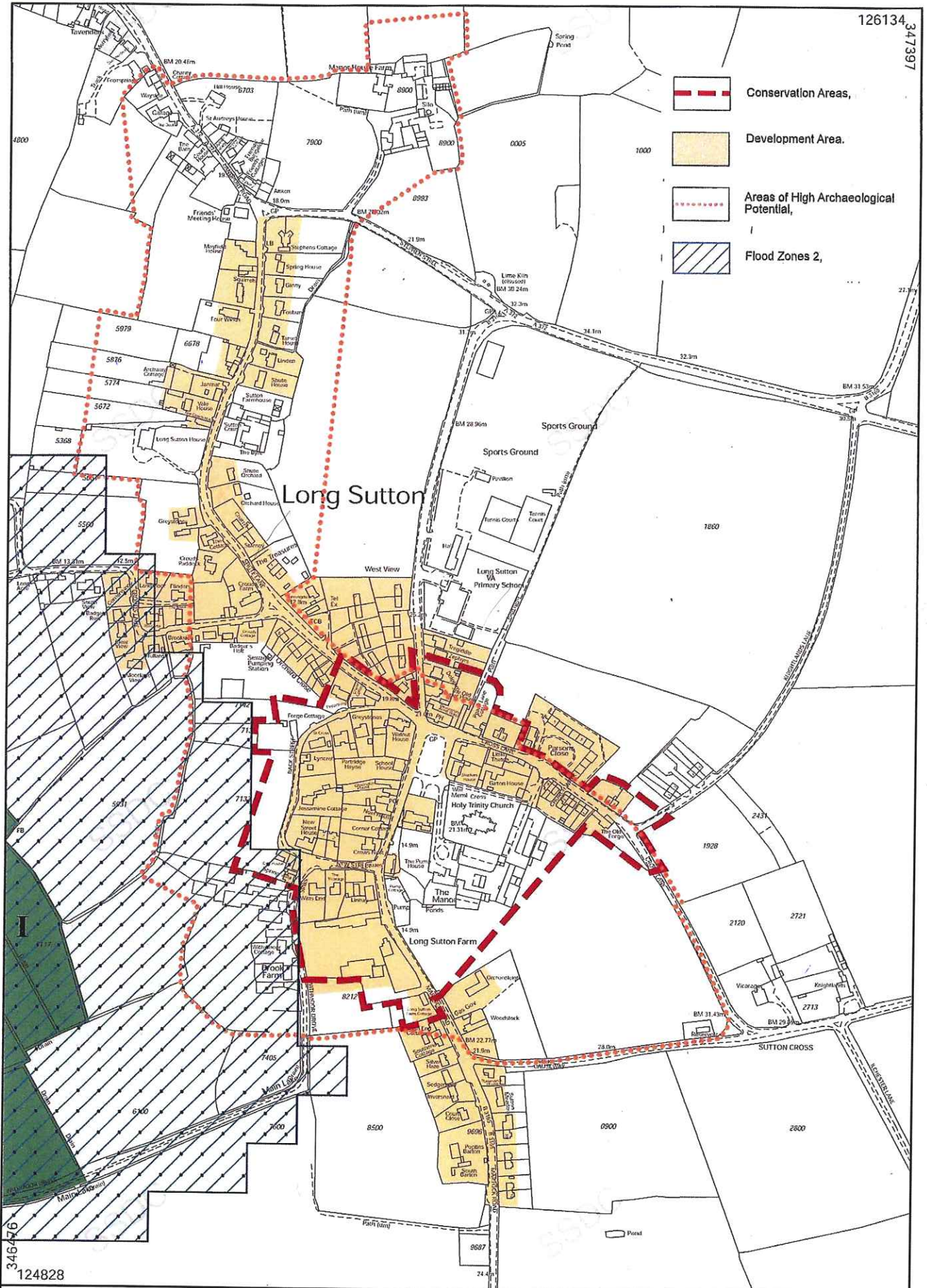


This graph shows that 45% of residents have lived here for over 20years. However, 21% have lived here for less than 5.

Modes of transport used by villagers. Friends, family etc provide for only 5% of travel needs. Most people use their own cars.



# Long Sutton Conservation Area and Development Area



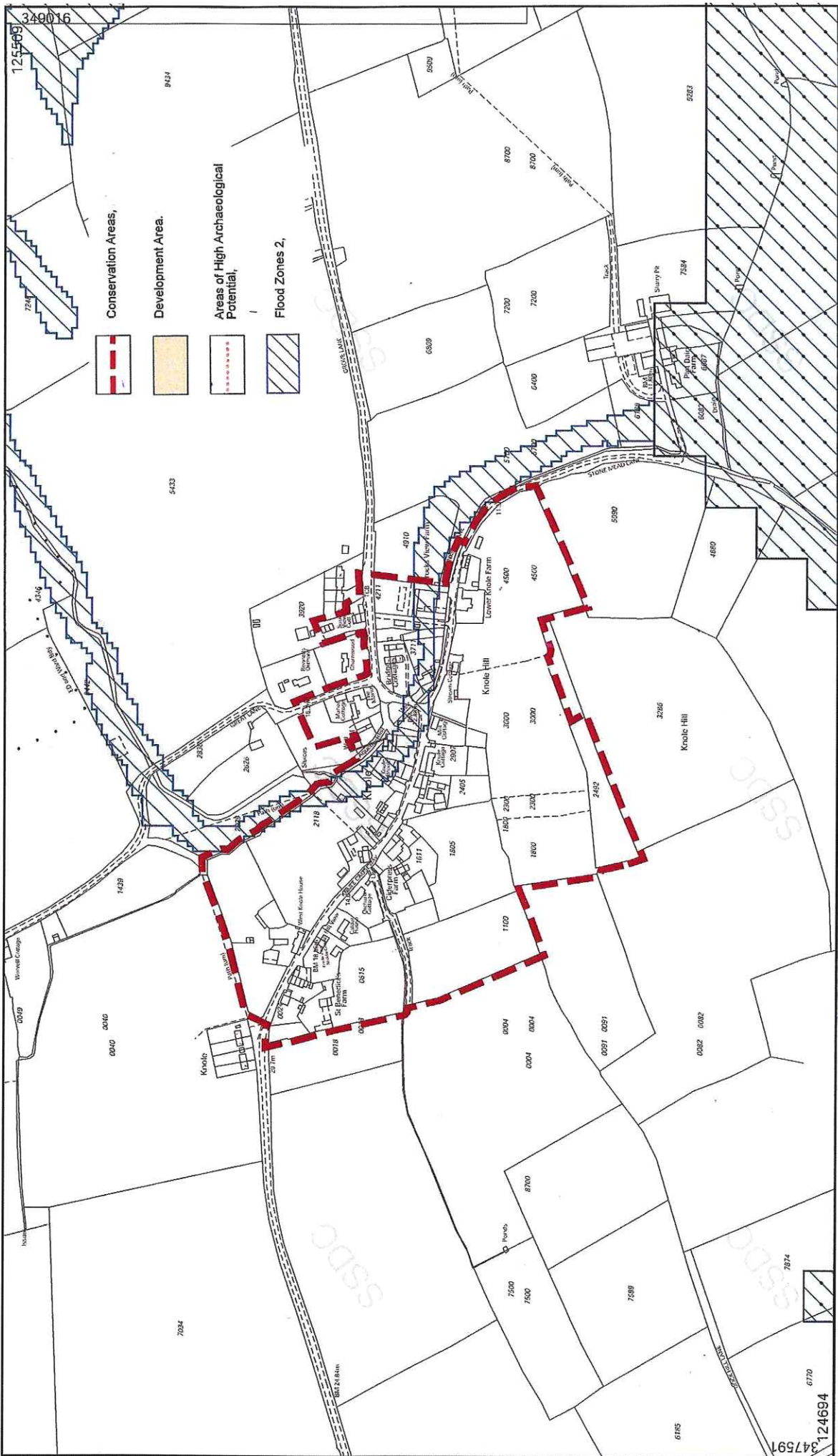
126134  
347397

346476  
124828

## South Somerset Local Plan - Adopted 2006 Long Sutton - Inset N20 Area North



Knole Conservation Area



South Somerset Local Plan - Adopted 2006  
 Knole - Inset N16

Scale 1:5,000

N16

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Sunrise over Stephens Hill, 6.34 10/10/2007

### **In conclusion ...**

Long Sutton Parish Plan can only deliver its potential if everyone in the community is committed to its success. This means there is not 'someone else' to get things done—it must be all of us working towards the objective of an even better village community. The Parish Council will lead the efforts to meet these aims and will seek help from groups and individuals within the community to realise the Plan's aspirations.



**Acknowledgements:**

Essential Funding for the production of the Plan was provided by DEFRA, the Community Council for Somerset, Somerset Parish Plan Partnership and South Somerset Area Working Party.

Katy Calvert from the Community Council for Somerset and Les Collett from the SSDC also provided valuable encouragement and advice.

The members of the Parish Plan Team, all volunteers of course, who designed the questionnaire, analysed the results and developed the Plan at many meetings over many months were:

David Aitken	Yvonne Aitken	Greg Board	Tina Board	Rupert Cox	Ian Eastment
Pauline Eastment	Keith Harding	Brenda Meaden	Malcolm Meaden	Heather Pomeroy,	Nick Pomeroy
Steve Sensier,	Judy Turner,	Mike Willoughby	Amanda Vaux,	Richard Vaux.	

The following who were not members of the team, when called upon, willingly gave their time and expertise to the project:

Christopher Dams	Chris Greenfield	Pam Jukes	Ann Kent	Robin Davies
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Village Green from the Church tower, 21/06/2006



## Actions

1. Community
2. Community Safety
3. Local Environment
4. Local Economy
5. Development control & Housing
6. Public Transport & Highways
7. Footpaths
8. Communications

Community	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
<p>The Parish Council Will ensure that its policies and actions support the continued provision of the shop and post office as a vital community facility</p>			
<p>The Parish Council Will attempt to find a young person's representative to represent the interests of the younger members of the community and investigate current facilities and potential activities e.g. Mobile clubs, Rural Youth Projects, SSDC Youth Facilities</p>			
<p>The Parish Council Will research ideas to extend the annual church and school fete into the Saturday evening and/or Sunday in the village hall to encourage wider community involvement from 2009</p>			
<p>The Village Hall Committee Will continue to broaden the scope of its activities by encouraging local people to put on short courses or presentations on diverse subjects</p>			
<p>The Village Hall Committee Will use the communication mediums of the Newsletter and Website to advertise activities and encourage new uses for the hall and grounds</p>			
<p>The Village Hall Committee Will organise an event to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of the village hall In 2009</p>			

<b>Community Safety</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
<p>The Parish Council will: Encourage residents to report all anti-social incidents and vandalism directly to the police as soon as they become aware of them</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Ask the Avon &amp; Somerset Police to provide a stronger police presence in the Parish</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Try to revive the Neighbourhood Watch scheme by seeking volunteer co-ordinators</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Continue at PC meetings to liaise with our Community Beat Officer and PCSO; and will in the Newsletter: List current police / emergency contact phone numbers.  Publicise links to the LS web site where more information will be available</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Highlight through the Chair's Annual Report to the Annual Parish Meeting, the incidence of crime, including vandalism and anti-social behaviour</p>			

<b>Environment</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
The Parish Council will: Consider hiring a "lengthsmen" to maintain verges etc, in partnership with SSDC and Somerset County Council as the highways authority			
The Parish Council will: Encourage residents to maintain their own boundary foliage to avoid encroachment onto footpaths and highways			
The Parish Council will: Ensure that village signs and approaches to the village are well maintained in order to give a positive impression of the village			
The Parish Council will: Impress upon dog owners the requirement to manage their dogs' mess using the facilities provided.			
The Parish Council will: Review, with dog owners, the location of dog mess bins, including new bins and invite suggestions on how to prevent the problem			
The Parish Council will: Point out to the SCC/SSDC that the nearest recycling facility for plastics and cardboard is about 3 miles away and request recycling facilities nearer the Village.			

<b>Economy</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
<p>The Communications Team will, via the Newsletter, ask people running local businesses or providing services to provide details. A decision will then be made by the Parish Council whether there was sufficient interest to produce a local services directory.</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will look sympathetically at planning applications for small businesses, including agricultural diversification schemes, when such developments do not adversely affect the environment or conflict with SSDC and national policies</p>			

<b>Development Control &amp; Housing</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
<p>The Parish Council will: Continue to use the 2000 Design Statement as a guide in its decision-making on planning applications</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Support developments that reflect local needs.</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Uphold the existing conservation zones of Knole and Long Sutton and the permitted development areas throughout the parish.</p>			
<p>The Parish Council will: Continue to protect the distinctive characters of Long Sutton and the hamlets of Knole and Upton</p>			

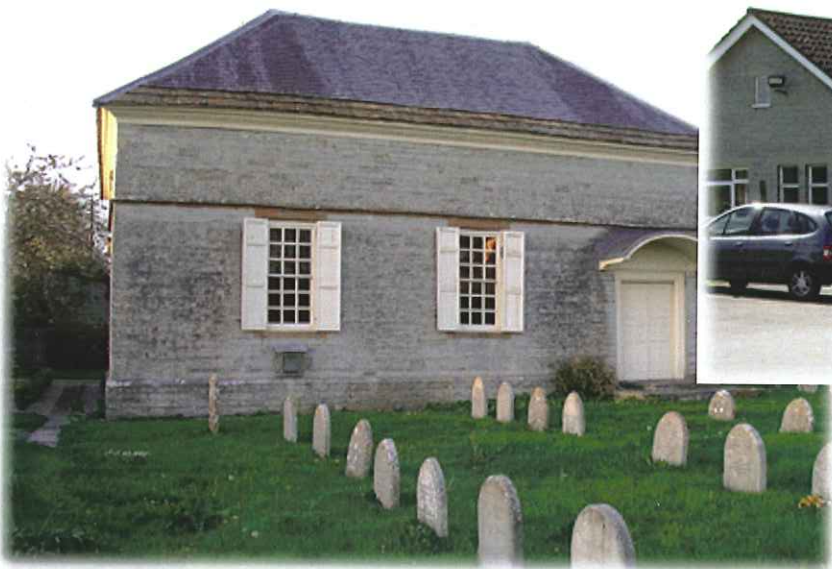
<b>Transport</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
The Team has asked the District Councillor for his support in maintaining, and if possible enhancing, the service provided by the community bus			
The Team will inform Somerset CC of the results of the Questionnaire, in particular the importance of public bus services to the most vulnerable of residents			

<b>Highways Improvement, Maintenance and Safety</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
The Team will: Work with the PC to produce clear priorities for road improvements and traffic management to be presented at the 2009 Annual Parish Meeting			
The Team will: Inform the Chief Constable of the parts of the Parish Plan which affect the Police, stressing among other points the importance of police speed checks			
The Team will: Recommend that the PC should reconsider from time to time the practicability of setting up a Long Sutton Community Speed Watch taking into account any shifts in public opinion			

<b>Footpaths</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
<p>The Team will: Implement the decision made at a meeting held in April concerning the formation of a walking group</p>			
<p>The Team will: Make the rights of Way Department of SSDC aware of the findings of this Survey and will request that the necessary work is carried out to the amended footpaths, with the aid of volunteers from the Parish, by the end of May</p>			
<p>The Team will: Produce an up to date walking map of the Parish by December 2008</p>			
<p>The Team will: With the Parish Paths Liaison Officer, press SSDC to clear and sign the two blocked paths in/near Knole. It would be unrealistic to set a time limit on this action</p>			

<b>Communications</b>	Target date for completion	Progress	Date completed
<p><b>Newsletter</b>            The Parish Council will work with the Parochial Church Council to enhance the usefulness of the Newsletter within the Parish, using these headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parish Council notices and feedback</li> <li>Village clubs and society information on events</li> <li>Community Safety notices</li> <li>Church and School notices</li> <li>Future community events</li> <li>Links to dedicated pages on the website for all the above</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Website</b>            A new website will be designed by the team to enhance communications and supplement the Newsletter, Notice Boards and the Parish Diary</p> <p>The team will arrange with village clubs etc. to obtain regular updates to be included in dedicated web pages</p>			
<p><b>Central Village Display</b>            The team will seek funding through the Parish Council for a permanent village display on the Green to highlight the features of the parish and to provide information for visitors to the village</p>			





Long Sutton—from the Southeast, Spring 2008

