



Haughton Parish Plan

March 2009



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Introduction

1.1 Background, Purpose and Methodology

A Parish Plan is a document which assesses the local community's main aspirations and sets out proposals to achieve, or at least pursue, those aspirations. It is based on the views of the local community expressed through community participation, surveys and research. It should set out realistic and achievable goals to meet the wishes of the local community as far as is practically possible, working within, but also attempting to influence, the guiding framework of local authority policies. It can also provide evidential support for obtaining funding for initiatives proposed within the Plan itself.

Haughton Parish Council commissioned this Plan to cover the coming 5- 10 year period (with funding from DEFRA) in early 2008 by requesting the voluntary services of a group of local residents to work independently on the project. The group drew the main concerns of the local community from the Parish Appraisal which had been completed in 2006. Further face-to-face interviews were carried out by members of the group across a wide age range of local residents. From this research and interpretation, ideas and proposals began to emerge. With further help and input from The Community Council of Staffordshire and stakeholders such as the local school, Church, voluntary organisations and businesses, these were refined and presented to the community in an exhibition held over two days in November 2008. This was exceptionally well attended and measurable feedback was obtained for the policies and statements expressed therein.

This Plan contains full copies of the displays shown at the exhibition together with the feedback data. These detailed documents are preceded by a Summary of the Key Issues.

1.2 Summary of Key Issues

The over-riding concern expressed during the process was the future of new housing in the village. The Plan accepts the need to provide further housing and promotes its provision as an opportunity to develop other aspects of the community and environment in a co-ordinated manner. Particular support was given to the principles of a good mix of house types and any reciprocal funding returning back to the village to develop the school and other community facilities. In addition, the concept of a parkland-based development creating a landmark feature was given a very positive response.

Development of the excellent local school (especially with increased housing) and improved facilities for youngsters was strongly supported with updating of the existing play facilities receiving amongst the highest levels of positive feedback.

Another key direction of the proposals is the improvement and development of the network of the footpaths and other routes around the parish linking with existing and proposed open spaces and leisure resources such as the Greenway.

Ways to enhance the sense of identity and community were strongly supported with ideas such as the proposal for a village website, a new village centrepiece and events supporting the renowned Christmas lights displays.

Unsurprisingly for a village divided by a busy road, concerns were expressed about traffic and road safety particularly the prospect of increasing HGV usage.

Full details of the presented issues, policies, ideas and community responses are set out in the following sections and we believe that these give clear and positive direction and guidance for the future development and improvement of our community.

Since the exhibition, the Stafford Borough Council have published for consultation the draft Local Development Framework (the new Development Plan for the area covering the period to 2020). It is reassuring to note that most of the ideas and initiatives contained within this Parish Plan accord with the policies and strategies contained in the draft Framework.

On a final note, with only 7% of respondents stating that there is an anti-social behaviour problem in Haughton and 78% agreeing that it is tidy and well maintained, the overall impression is clearly that the residents feel it is a great place to live. This Parish Plan aims to make it even better.

1.3 Acknowledgements

The Parish Plan Steering Group members included the following willing and enthusiastic souls: Gill Anslow, Carole Mathews, Jon Smith, Geoff Ward and Alan Appleby with others joining and leaving as their time and energy levels permitted including Rev. Peter Ashby, Ben Palmer, Peter Kowalewski, Sue Edwards, Judith Pearson, Reg Mathews, Patsy Warbrick, Ian Lamb & Ann Rendall and noting the considerable efforts of Jan & Les Hender.

Thanks are also due to Mike Allen, Chairman and Julie Hill, Secretary of Haughton Parish Council who helped get the process off the ground and kept it legal; and to DEFRA for the funding which was spent most frugally.

The Community Council of Staffordshire were indispensable in the process, particularly Charlotte Green who enthusiastically attended our meetings and the exhibition days and contributed a great deal of useful best practice guidance as well as arranging formal training for the Steering Group members.

Credit must also go to Jackie Skelson and members of St Giles' Church and Haughton WI who added extra local interest to the exhibition days with historic photographs and artefacts (and some welcome refreshments).

Tracey Cook, the Head Teacher and the Governors of Haughton St Giles School added essential direction and information to the process.

Finally, the most important input of all came from the members of the community, notably of all ages, who responded at the various stages of the consultation process, particularly the exhibition days and made sure that their views formed part of Haughton Parish Plan.

THANK YOU EVERYONE.

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