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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Hail Weston Community Plan (CP) was borne out of a rural white paper "Our Countryside - The Future" published in 2000. Parish Plans are aimed at strengthening rural communities by aiding residents to shape their future, a process further reinforced by the Localism Act of 2011.

Two years of commitment by Hail Weston parish residents have resulted in the publication of this document. The plan is a culmination of considerable community effort which reflects the aspirations of all age groups in our small, vibrant parish. This process commenced in January 2014 with a series of workshops. These were followed throughout the year with topic teams developing the areas of interest which formed the basis of the questionnaire presented to all households in the spring of 2015.

A safe, supportive community was a constant theme of the feedback generated by the various workshops, the teams and the questionnaire; the latter being the central focusing force of the Community Plan development.

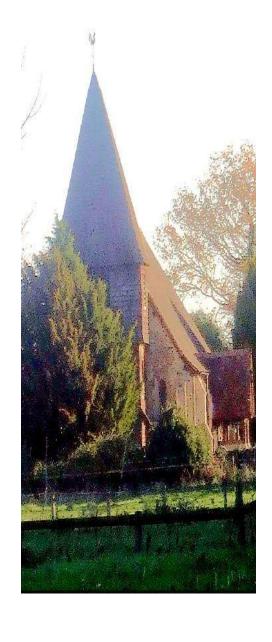
In the months following the questionnaire, various initiatives have been driven forward.

Several community groups are being formed and the Parish Council is acting to reduce concerns over road safety and to improve communication. Many more actions are being actively pursued.

I hope readers, now and in the future, will find the Hail Weston Community Plan to be a statement of intent for a strong, forward-thinking community.

My thanks to the Action Group and their many team members without whom publication of this document would not have been achieved.

Barry Easom, Chairman
Hail Weston Community Plan Action Group

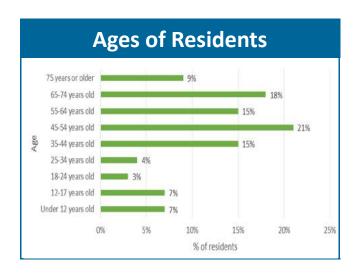


DEMOGRAPHICS

HAIL WESTON CP FINDINGS

Of the 237 potential households who received the questionnaire, responses were received from 169 households resulting in a 71.3% response rate.

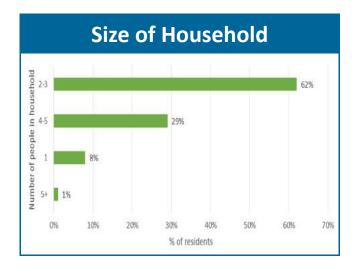
A total of 363 residents in all age groups participated in the research to inform the community plan. The majority of responders (21%) were in the 45 to 54 years age group.



"This has been my home for 77 years"

Residents aged 12 years and younger and 75+ highlighted living close to family and friends as being most important. Whilst the older generations 65+ also added the importance to them of the rural setting.

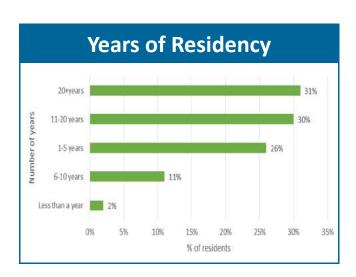
"It's a quiet, friendly, supportive community"



"good quality of life"

Other aspects appreciated can be summed up as good community spirit as well as the benefits of being located close to a busy market town with good schools whilst maintaining the peace and quiet of rural living. Few residents would choose to move away from the parish.

"Safe, pleasant environment for children"



HISTORY

THE PARISH OF HAIL WESTON

The parish of Hail Weston, which covers an area of 1,583 acres, is steeped in history. The land surrounding the village is still used mainly for farming, as it has been over the centuries. Evidence of Bronze and Iron Age occupation has been found in the outlying fields around the village, as well as a significant amount of Roman artefacts, including pottery, coins, a quernstone, a bronze figure of Mercury (found in 1820), and a Roman skeleton (unearthed in 1953), which indicate that the Romans were well established in this area at one time. Today the parish is part of the District of Huntingdonshire and its administrative centre is based in Huntingdon. The village of Hail Weston, which is situated approximately 3 miles north-west

of St Neots in the extreme west of Cambridgeshire, was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and was known at that time as Westune/Westone. It took its full name of Hail Weston from the River Hail or Hayle (now known as the River Kym) that flows through the parish. In 1086, the village consisted of four villagers plus a local Lord although exactly who had claim to the title appears to have been in hot dispute at the time!



HAIL WESTON IN THE 1800s

Over the centuries, the population of Hail Weston has waxed and waned. In 1801 there were 258 people living in the village, and by the time of the 1831 census, this had risen to 346. However, by 1901, the number had dropped back again to 251, rising again in 1961 to 315 and, in the last census of 2011 to 610. The 1881 census showed that Hail Weston was a small but bustling community with six farmers, 68 agricultural labourers, a shepherd, a stock-keeper, four horse-keepers, a bailiff, a gamekeeper, a cook, ten servants and four gardeners in residence. In addition, the village was home to five sawyers, four brickmakers, a builder, six carpenters, a butcher and his assistant, a baker, a milkman, four shopkeepers,

a milliner, three dressmakers, a tailoress, a charwoman and a shoemaker. Ten women were recorded as being lace makers in the village, whilst another eleven worked as paper makers, probably at St Neots Paper Mill which was founded 1799. There were also two clerks, a postmistress, two carriers and a letter carrier, as well as a Baptist Minister to serve the chapel in the High Street.



HISTORY

THE CHURCH & VILLAGE SPRINGS

By the early 13th century, the Church of St Nicolas had been built in the centre of the village, and there are records showing that services were taking place there as early as 1209. The unusual timber tower is a later addition to the mediaeval building (possibly 15th century or even earlier), and is unique in Cambridgeshire. The Baptist chapel, which was built in 1757 and reputed to be the oldest in Huntingdonshire, was pulled down in the 1970s, although the graveyard remains to this day. The village achieved fame as it had two springs which were renowned for their medicinal qualities and were supposed to restore people to health. These were immortalised by Michael Drayton (1563-1631) in his poem called

'Holy Wells of Hail Weston'. The wells remained popular until the 19th century, when interest in them began to wane. In 1844, they were eventually sold to the Hail Weston Springs Company who aerated, bottled and sold the water. Their bottling plant was situated at Hail Bridge, by the A1, and remained in operation until 1954.



THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

There were 109 children living in the village in 1881, and this meant that the village school needed two school mistresses and a pupil teacher to meet their needs. With such a large and hard-working population, the village was well able to support its three public houses — two of which (The Royal Oak and The Crown) were still in use until relatively recently. In the 1960s, the village was still served by two village shops (one included the local bakery), two pubs, a post office and a village school, St Nicolas' Church, the local Baptist church and Cobbolds, the village undertakers. Today, although there has been an increase in the number of residents, all the village services, apart from the Church of St Nicolas, are no longer here. With the

exception of Cobbolds, which is now based in St Neots, everything else is extinct. The village has changed from being a predominately rurally based population to one that is more 'commuter based'. The increase in the number of privately owned cars means that residents can travel to obtain the services they require.



GROUPS

GROUPS

The questionnaire has highlighted that there are low levels of awareness of the many local special interest groups (Christian fellowship, oil buying group, fitness classes, Mondays Singing group, book club, etc).

For new special interest groups to be formed and for the less well known to strengthen their membership, it would be beneficial to provide contact details via the various communication platforms.

In all cases it has to be realised that whilst there is interest in provision of new group activities success will only be realised if residents are prepared to step forward and provide leadership.

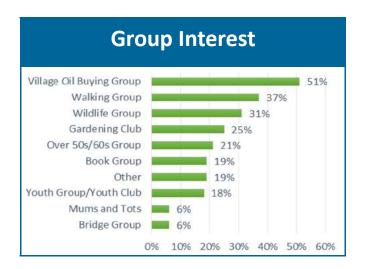
With 18% of respondents identifying a desire for a youth group this represents 65 potential members and helpers which is a significant number of residents. Setting up a youth group has many challenges but if successful it could be a great asset for the community.

Hail Weston Kart Race



POINTS OF INTEREST

- Special Interest Groups
- Potential for Leadership
- Raising Awareness



Action

Special Interest Groups	Collate a list of active groups with contact details together with any meeting times and locations.
Potential Groups	Review questionnaire data and facilitate the setting up of new

facilitate the setting up of new interest groups e.g. walking, 50/60s club, etc.

Youth Group Parish Council/ Community Plan team to set up a working party to explore feasibility.

Raise Ensure details of groups are
Awareness well advertised on the various,
existing and proposed parish
communication platforms.

COMMUNICATIONS

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Improving Communications
- Current Communication
- New Communication Tools

Action

News Service An on-line Hail Weston e-news service has been developed. Mail Chimp is used to send communications on community issues and events to individual email users. The following link allows you to sign up to this e-newsletter.

http://eepurl.com/Ox58T

Residents can use the following link to view the

Hunts Post online.

http://www.huntspost24.co.uk/home/e-edition

Parish Council Newsletter The Parish Council will continue to publish a newsletter for distribution two or three times

a year.

Parish Council Website Parish Council is developing a community web site. This new version will be available early 2016 and will include specific sections for the various groups and events within Hail Weston.

COMMUNICATIONS

There are a number of formats for communication available throughout the parish including a monthly church newsletter and notice board. However 21% of respondents do not believe that they get enough information about community issues and events. Some 79% would support proposals to have a collection point for the local Hunts Post newspaper, however publishers are not able to comply with this request in the foreseeable future. As information is recognised to be an essential function of community involvement various initiatives are being explored including the introduction of a community web site.

"Village information could be improved, with better use made of the website, email and newsletters"

Parish Council Notice Board HAIL WESTON PARISH COUNCIL OR OTHER PARIS

FACILITIES

FACILITIES

The playing fields are a hugely important asset to Hail Weston and the wider community. 90% of residents stated it was important to them that there are playing fields in Hail Weston and they use them for many different occasions and reasons.

The questionnaire gathered valuable and detailed information about additional facilities that could be provided and the demand for them. These additional facilities range from major elements such as changing and toilet facilities through to BBQ facilities.

There is a wealth of data to review from the questionnaire and many improvements and additions that could be made. This needs to be well-managed in order to deliver sustainable and relevant improvements.

Action

Playing Set up a Playing Fields Committee
Fields to oversee the maintenance and
improvement plans for this vital
resource.

Telephone Box PC to consult with interested parties to provide a shortlist of options, the options will be costed and funding sources identified in order to deliver the best and most realistic use for the phone box.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Development of Recreational Facilities
- Telephone Box Village Asset



PHONE BOX

British Telecom have decommissioned the phone box and it has been purchased by the Parish Council as a community asset.



FACILITIES

FACILITIES

25% of residents would be likely or very likely to use an indoor, daytime venue, with many suggestions made for its possible use.

Given the demands upon the space in the village hall during the day and the loss of the Royal Oak as a community space, providing an alternative indoor venue available during the day represents a very real challenge.



An overwhelming majority of respondents (76%) feel it is important to have a Pub in Hail Weston and would use it for a wide range of activities including having a drink; dining; as a community shop; as an internet shopping collection point; for meetings and coffee mornings.

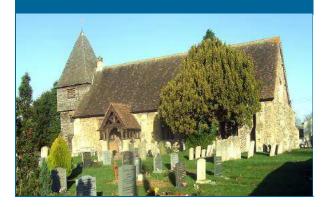


POINTS OF INTEREST

- Development of Existing Facilities
- Saving Parish Heritage
- Meeting Venues

The 800-year-old Church of St Nicolas is seen as an important part of the parish heritage. 33% of respondents indicated that if modifications were made to allow the church to be used as an additional venue for the parish, they would be likely or very likely to use this space and many suggestions were made for its possible use.

St Nicolas Church



The ancient bell tower of St Nicolas is in need of repair and 89% of respondents indicated potential support for fundraising efforts.

Action

Pub Society to actively pursue opportunities to re-establish the Royal Oak.

Parochial Church Council to set up committee to aid improvements to structure and facilities of St Nicolas' Church.

TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

TRANSPORT & THE COMMUNITY

Feedback from the questionnaire highlighted the fact that the village setting is one of the most valued factors of living in the parish of Hail Weston.

The questionnaire reflects the fact that Hail Weston has the advantage of both good transport links to and from the A1 and the nearby town of St Neots. Hail Weston also benefits from good access to both schools and general facilities.

"I am able to drive at the moment but may need to use services in the future"

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Transport-Led Services
- Vehicle Speed
- Footpaths and Roads
- Visibility and Access

'Hail Weston
has a great
location with the
advantage of a
rural village feel "

TRANSPORT SERVICES

When considering satisfaction with transport services the greatest concerns were expressed by the 64-75-year-old respondents with 23% stating that the current facilities do not meet their needs and a further 26% requiring further information on the various services already available to the parish.

Demographics point to an aging population in the parish and the CP team investigated services currently available to the community. These include the HACT pick up and drop off service, prescription collection, hospital cars, a limited bus service to and from St Neots and finally the logistics of a Help A Neighbour register designed for willing members of the community to support one another within the parish.



HACT & Details of these services to be Prescription included on the new Service community web site and Parish Council notice board. See Help A Neighbour Scheme in the Crime and Safety section.

TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

FOOTPATHS & ROADS

Footpaths and roads are the responsibility of the Highways Department for upkeep and general maintenance. The questionnaire reflects the fact that only 42% of respondents felt that the roads were well maintained. There are however particular post code locations that consider roads needed immediate attention, in particular the Orchard Close development.

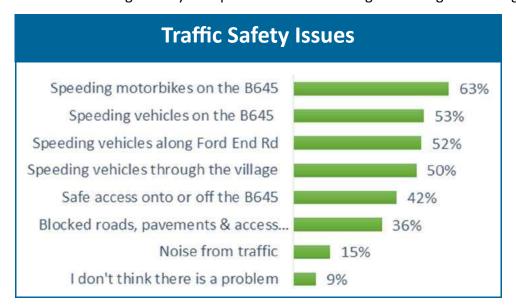
The Parish Council, over the past 10 years, have pressed for improvements specifically on road surfacing in and around Hail Weston. The CP Team and Parish Council have met with Highways to share the recent and ongoing concerns raised by respondents in the questionnaire.

Footpaths were generally reported as "fit for purpose", whilst there were specific comments concerning the overgrown nature of certain pathways which have been raised with the Parish Council.

Initial repairs made to road
surface (work in progress).
Ongoing communication with Highways and HWPC on road improvements and timing.
Create Pathway Watch and plan spring clean of key footpaths.
Any unfit or dangerous pathways to be reported to County Highways Department.
Parish Council continue to manage verge growth on entrances to village during summer months. Request made to Parish Council to review exit from Green Lane on to B645.

SPEEDING

Enforcement of speed restriction remains the responsibility of local police. From the questionnaire it is clear that many of the respondents have concerns over speeding cars and motorcycles on the B645 and more generally the speed of vehicles through the village and along Ford End Road.



Action B645 Speed measurement results shared with County Highways. Parish Council reviewing speed issues through Hail Weston and Ford End.

TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

Action

The Parish Council and the CP Team have brought highway safety issues to the attention of the County Highways Department.

The Highways Department emphasise that residents are responsible for the removal of vegetation that obstructs roadways and public footpaths.

VISIBILITY & ACCESS

Hail Weston has five different access and exit points, four of which lead on to the B645 and a further exit at Ford End Road heading towards Little Paxton and the A1.

45% of respondents felt that vegetation around exits was found to be obstructive and there were a number of statements with a common theme regarding vegetation obstructing roads and footpaths in various parts of the village.

"The pavement is frequently unpassable due to shrubs between main road and village"

AI(M) EXPANSION

In the 1990s residents of Hail Weston fought against plans that would have seen the A1(M) cross the west side of Hail Weston cutting through farm land and close to residential property. The plan to extend the road was finally shelved, however, in 2014 the Government announced a plan to update parts of the A1(M) in the Eastern Counties. The CP process gave a timely opportunity for residents to make their views clear on any new proposals for the road in this area (36% of respondents felt that the road should not be altered and 39% felt it should follow its current route if upgraded).



VECHICLE NOISE & FORD END

Respondents continue to have concerns during the summer months of the dangers created to road users by vehicles' excessive speed and also the noise of motorcycles.

Due to the frequent use by pedestrians and cyclists, 52% of respondents voiced concern regarding speed of vehicles on Ford End Road and HGV usage of the route.

Action

Maintain police awareness of speed issues in the parish.

Discourage use of Ford End Road by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

Request Parish Council evaluate the feasibility of reducing speed on Ford End Road on safety grounds.

HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Growth of Parish
- Facilities & Development
- Development Priorities
- Areas of Development

HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT

When considering potential development,75% were opposed to any development between the village and the A1 in order to ensure that Hail Weston village maintains a separate Identity from St Neots.

Strongest support was for in-fill development and around existing farm buildings in the wider parish. Of particular concern was that any new development should:

- A) Have adequate off-street parking (75% support)
- B) Ensure existing open views, towards and from the 800 year old Church of St Nicolas be protected (74% support).
- Enable the parish to benefit from contributions to facilities in the event of development (88% support).
- D) Avoid the development of new business units (72% opposed).

HOUSING SPECIFICS

There are currently some 237 properties in the parish. The last large-scale housing development took place in the 1970's, centred in Orchard Close. Since then development has primarily been single properties or small scale, the largest being 11 properties off Bird Lane. The majority of houses built in this period have been 3 bedroom-plus properties. 68% of residents are opposed to any major growth in the parish with 38% not supporting any growth and 31% are content with development being restricted to ten properties. When considering the type of development, the size of the property was not of particular concern. However, there was support for more housing for the elderly (38%) whilst 29% considered there is a need for more affordable housing.

Hail Weston (Aerial Image)



Action

The data derived from the CP questionnaire is intended to inform the Parish Council when responding to future Town & Country Planning and Development Control issues affecting the parish. Degree of development, placement of development, constraints and opportunities should align with the residents' hopes and aspirations.

WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Footpaths & Cycleways
- Litter
- Improving our Environment
- Wildlife

LITTER

Dropped litter on paths and roadways was highlighted by respondents. There is a parish volunteer annual litter pick, however there are areas of specific concern focus around:

- -Dog fouling
- -Fly-tipping
- -Litter bins

A number of residents indicated in the questionnaire that they would be willing to help, or would consider helping to improve or maintain communal areas within the parish.

FOOTPATHS & CYCLEWAYS

Walking and cycling is popular with 26% of residents using local public rights of way daily, 30% weekly and 82% using them during the year.

We are fortunate to have a number of footpath, cycle and bridleway routes near to, or leading from, the village including Sustran Cycle Route 12 - part of a 121 - mile national route, which provides safe access to St Neots to the east and Grafham Water to the north.

The public footpaths and cycleways provide good circular routes to the north and east however access to the footpath system to the south and west is poor due to the need to negotiate the B645 which is not cycle-or pedestrian-friendly.

Action Dog Fouling Repeat offenders to be reported to HDC. **Cycle Routes** New mapping to appear on & Footpaths community web site. Litter Bins CP Team working with PC to acquire further litter bins. Fly Tipping **Encourage reports on HDC** website: https://applications.huntingdonshire. gov.uk/forms/Operations/ New_Street_Cleaning_1.html Community Appeal for volunteers for litter picks and communal projects. input Sign up to the e-Newsletter for updates at: http://eepurl.com/Ox58T

Right of Way-Footpath

IMPROVING THE PARISH

The questionnaire sought to identify potential environment improvement projects which would receive local support.

66% of respondents are either willing, or interested in supporting improvement and maintenance projects within the parish.

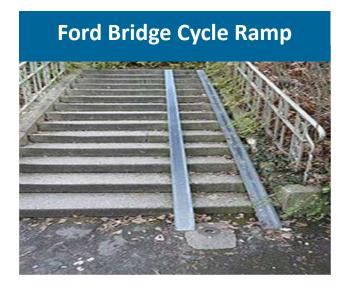
WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT

WINTER GRITTING

56% of all respondents pointed to a lack of gritting and snow clearance in the winter months. The parish roads in the village are classed by Highways as Code Green, meaning roads are only gritted when the temperatures are below freezing for at least 5 consecutive days. Given County Council budget restrictions the CP Team have been informed that our level of service is unlikely to improve. We do however, have two well-stocked grit boxes, one outside the village hall and the other on the High Street at the corner of Orchard Close. Residents are encouraged to use the material provided by the Highways Department throughout the village on a self-help basis.

Action	
All	Gritting concerns raised with County Highways who are responsible for services. Monitor and report issues.
All	Residents free to utilise grit boxes. CP Team to work with Parish Council on monitoring grit levels.
All	Work with the Parish Council to manage gritting procedures with Cambridgeshire County Council.

IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT



Cycle Ramp Ramps costed and project Over Ford under consideration by Parish Council. Grass Cutting Current mowing regimes raised with Parish Council. Wildflower Sowing area in Playing Field Meadow identified for spring 2016.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Development of this type remains a divisive issue amongst residents with 55% of respondents unwilling to support development of wind farm projects in the parish. 52% of respondents are against visible wind farms, even if built outside parish boundaries. Solar farms receive a similar response with 52% of respondents not wanting their introduction. A further 51% of respondents are against solar farms being visible even if built outside the parish boundary.



LOCAL ECONOMY

PARISH BUSINESSES

There are only a small number of businesses active in the parish. The majority of these employ just one person.

Most businesses in the parish would like to be included in a directory.

Poor broadband speed and limited business units were the principle factors that hindered business development.



Action Broadband A small number of businesses are affected by poor broadband service. Initiatives to improve and extend the service to all areas of the parish should be pursued when opportunities arise. Business Directory A number of respondents indicated an interest in being included in a parish business directory. Contact details of those interested have been made available with a view to creating the directory and making it available on the various communication platforms including the Hail Weston newsletter and the community web site which is currently under development by the Parish Council.



CRIME AND SAFETY

SAFETY

Hail Weston is generally considered to be a safe place to live with the majority of issues affecting residents more aligned to thoughtless behaviour, such as dog-fouling, littering, inconsiderate parking, fire smoke and barking dogs.

Over a third of residents are members of Neighbourhood Watch and more would be interested in joining.

Most respondents would like to see a Help A Neighbour scheme introduced to the village, with nearly half willing to provide support to others. More information about the scheme and what it entails would be welcome for those unsure about getting involved.

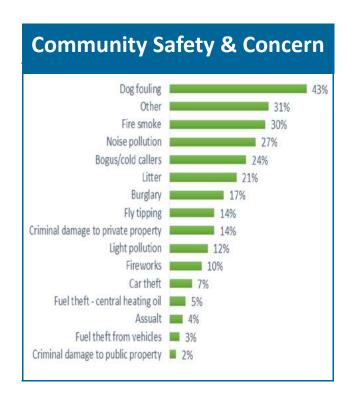
Respondents are generally satisfied with the level of street lighting near their homes, though there are areas of concern, which have been identified by postcode, for further action by the authorities concerned.

Action

Action	
Help a Neighbour	Forum to be set up alongside Neighbourhood Watch.
Pavements and lighting	Both issues have been raised with the Parish Council. An existing repair programme is currently in place.
Defibrillator	The CP Team is exploring potential locations, funding, usage and governance.

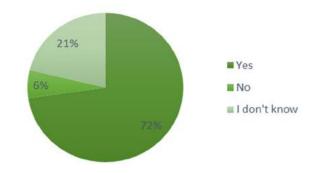
POINTS OF INTEREST

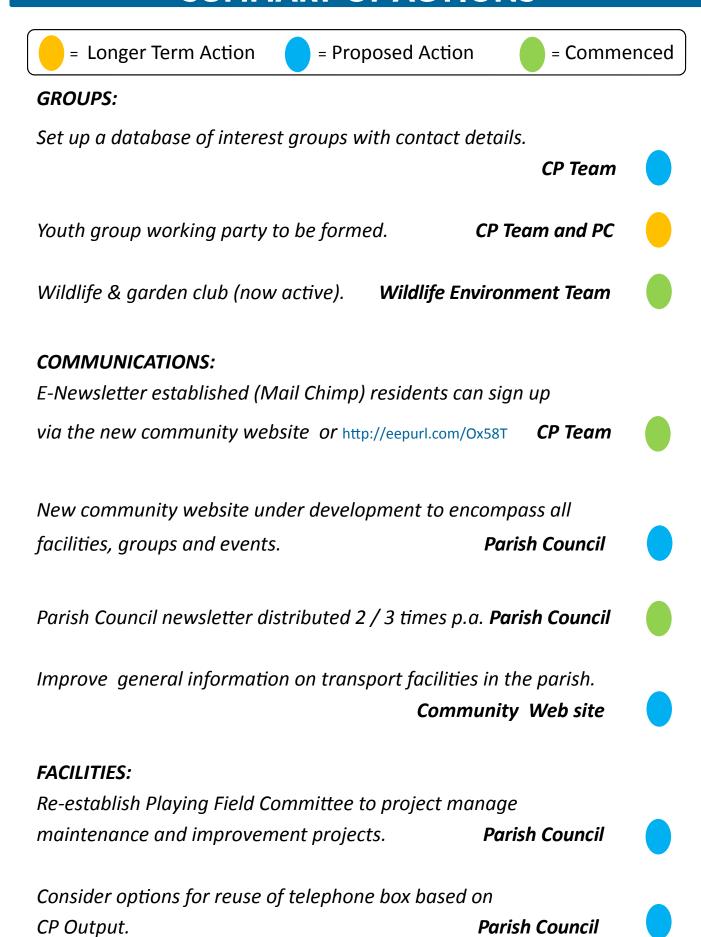
- Crime & Community Safety
- Street lighting
- Help A Neighbour
- Defibrillator

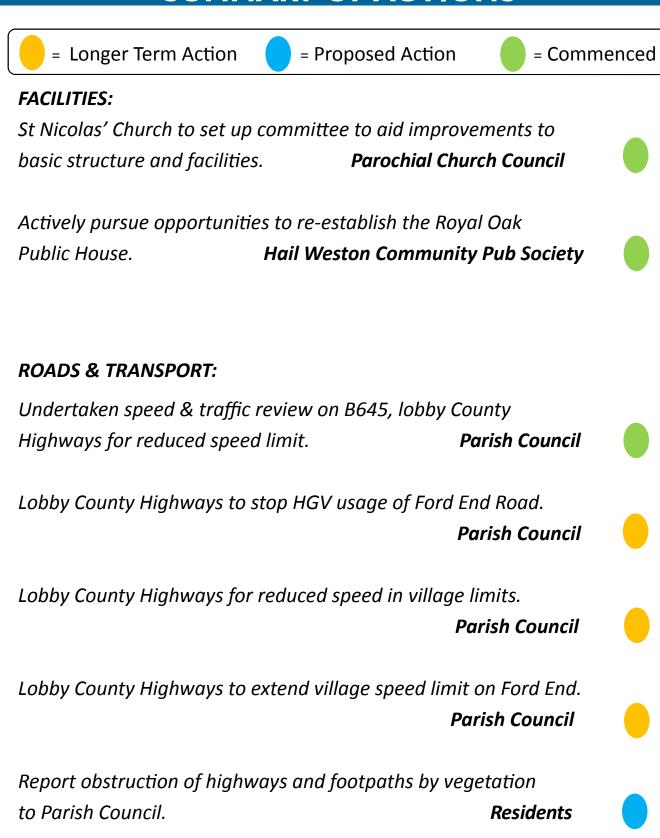


DEFRIBRILLATOR

The idea of installing a defibrillator in the parish was welcomed by most respondents though more information on the purpose, safety and maintenance is required.



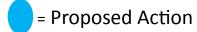




Parish Council

Create "Pathway Watch" and plan spring clean of footpaths.







HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT:

Residents' views in response to the CP questionnaire to guide local authorities when considering development control issues in and around the parish.

Parish Council



LOCAL ECONOMY:

Set up a directory of businesses and services available locally and add them to community web site. **CP Team**



Lobby for improved broadband speed throughout the parish.





CRIME AND SAFETY:

Create a Help A Neighbour scheme. CP / Crime & Safety



Report issues concerning roadway and footpath maintenance to Parish Council for action by Highways Department. **Residents**



Explore possibilities for the siting, usage and regulation of a defibrillator in the parish.

Crime & Safety Team in Conjunction with Parish Council



WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT:

Explore opportunities to site more litter bins in the village on commonly-used routes.

Wildlife Environment Team in partnership with Parish Council







= Proposed Action



= Commenced

WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT:

Create a skills and interests list of residents who have indicated willingness to improve and maintain parish facilities.

Wildlife Environment Team



Winter road and footpath safety issues to be minimised by encouraging community self-help with gritting.

Residents supported by Parish Council



Wildflower meadow creation at playing field.

Wildlife Environment Team in partnership with Parish Council



Explore opportunities to install cycle ramp at ford bridge.

Wildlife Environment Team in partnership with Parish Council



Improve mowing regimes within the parish.

CP in consultation with Parish Council



Research local rights of way and prepare information leaflet for community Web site.

Wildlife Environment Team



Report frequent dog fouling incidents and offenders to

Huntingdon District Council dog warden team. Contact details

to be published on Community web site.

Parish Council



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A considerable number of people have generously given their time to create Hail Weston's Community Plan. We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of the Action Group, Topic Team Leaders, the Questionnaire Champions, who distributed and collected the questionnaire and the many residents who attended meetings and workshops to debate and review our community objectives. A mention must also be given to those households who engaged with the process by completing the questionnaire ensuring that the report represents a true and accurate consensus of local opinion.

Thanks also go to Hail Weston Parish Council for their support and generous donation of £250 towards the cost of the project.

Particular thanks goes to the Big Lottery Awards for All team for their substantial funding support which made the undertaking of this community project a reality.

ACTION GROUP		
Barry Easom	Andy James	Nick Abell
CHAIRMAN	SECRETARY	TREASURER
Veronica Bolton	Karl Frestle	Guy Warner
Tony Baker	Dawn Isaac	Tony Huckle
Maurice Lee	Peter Mailer	Kate Cranwell
Judith Clements		

HISTORY	WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT	LOCAL ECONOMY	PUBLICATION AND DESIGN
Anne-Marie Hamilto	n Dawn Isaac	Kate Cranwell	Chris Couzens
Elaine McCarthy	Peter Mailer	Nick Abell	Barry Easom
May Parker	Anne-Marie Hamilton		

QUESTIONNAIRE	HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT	CRIME AND SAFETY	GROUPS FACILITIES AND COMMUNICATIONS	HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT
Gisele Bigot	Chris Couzens	Maurice Lee	Guy Warner	Barry Easom
Jane Sugars	Terry Walford	Gisele Bigot	Judith Clements	Karl Frestle
Karl Frestle	Lorraine Burdett	Sue Lee	Elaine McCarthy	Ian Wilkie
		Liz Owen	Pamela Wilkie	Tony Huckle
		Jane Sugars	Bridget Bickley	Paul Scullion
		Wendy Baker		

It is important to note that all of the principal active organisations in the community had representation on the Action Group and topic teams: Parish Council, Parochial Church Council, Village Hall Committee and Hail Weston Community Pub Society.

POSTSCRIPT

This document represents a small proportion of the information gathered by the questionnaire. All of the intricate analysis which supports this plan will be available online when the new Hail Weston Community web site goes live in 2016.

This plan is intended to be a living document subject to a process of review every five years. So, in 2021 it will be necessary to publish a new document which evaluates progress achieved and sets new proposals for the future.

The Localism Act of 2011 was intended to give a voice to communities so that they could guide their own future and lay seeds for future generations. It is important that our elected representatives and their officers, when making decisions which affect this community, fully appreciate and take into account, the time, effort, enthusiasm and care that Hail Weston residents have taken to produce this plan.

NOTES

VIEWS OF HAIL WESTON









VIEWS OF HAIL WESTON









