

Pidley-cum-Fenton Community Plan

The plan's aim is to make the village a safer and more pleasant place for us to live and work and to strengthen the sense of community by making it more caring, communicative, supportive and welcoming to all.

This can be achieved by ensuring that the parishioners are represented in the preparation of the plan and agree the plan before it is given to the Parish Council.

INTRODUCTION.

Following the Village Questionnaire Meeting of 14th October 2015, the Parish Council at its meeting on 11 November 2015 delegated the task of creating the village plan to a Working Group of volunteers from different parts of Pidley and Fenton.

This group was to be independent of the Parish Council and was to use the replies to the questionnaire as the source of the requirements of the parishioners. These requirements would be analysed, prioritised and a draft plan formulated bearing in mind the finances and resources available.

Short, medium and long term goals could equate to requirements being achieved within one year, three years or five years. For each goal the plan will identify if the Parishioners, Parish Council, District Council or County Council need to be consulted before it could be actioned.

The draft plan would then be presented to the parishioners for approval or amendment at an open meeting on the 27th April 2016 before the plan would be given to the Parish Council.

With the joint boundary of the two settlements of Pidley and Fenton being one Parish with areas outside of the actual settlements, it was felt that a “Community Plan” would be a more appropriate title than 'Village Plan'.

The membership of the Working Group has varied during the production of the plan but the principle of having members representing roads/streets in Pidley and a representative from Fenton was followed where-ever possible.

The number of questionnaires returned before the Village Questionnaire Meeting of 14th October 2015 was 26. Some parishioners said they had not received the questionnaire or it had been delivered late. The Working Group felt this was an insufficient response from the community of around 160 dwellings. Questionnaires were delivered by members of the Working Group to those properties that had not replied and this resulted in a further 34 replies giving a total of 60 responses. An analysis of the questionnaire returns can be found in Appendix 1.

From a review of other village plans and analysis of the replies to the questionnaire, the following headings for the plan were agreed and wishes from the residents of the community have been allocated to one of these headings:

- Safety and Security
- Infrastructure and Development
- Information and Communication
- Facilities, Groups and Communities
- 5 Year Plan

For this community plan to be effective, it needs to be adopted and progressed by the Parish Council, be a permanent agenda item at Parish Council meetings, with progress reported to residents via the village newsletter and website. The Working Group should periodically consult the parishioners to obtain their current requirements to update the plan.

FACTS AND FIGURES

It would be ideal if the Parish had the finances and authority to implement all the requirements identified from the analysis of the questionnaire returns. This section outlines the financial constraints and the regulatory bodies involved in the implementation of the plan.

PARISH ACCOUNTS

The Parish Council has to fund projects and purchases from an annual budget based on a parish precept agreed by Huntingdon District Council, grants from charities or government, and loans from Cambridgeshire County Council.

Analysis of the income and expenditure for the period April 2013 to April 2016 can be summarised as follows:

Financial Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	*2016/17
Balance Previous Year	11660.73	4367.57	5579.25	10999.17
Parish Precept	5000.00	6000.00	7500.00	10000.00
Other Income	448.95	16052.00	2546.64	112.98
Expenditure	12742.11	20840.32	* 4626.72	
Balance at Year End	4367.57	5579.25	10999.17	21112.15

*Calculated from the figures for expenditure in minutes of Parish Council Meetings 2015/16

The 2016/2017 cost of the increase in council tax for the precept increasing from £7500 to £10000 for a house with a Band D rating is £13.35 (£63.69-£50.34). Of approximately 160 properties in Pidley-cum-Fenton, 104 have a Band rating of D or less.

There was an annual cost of the Parish Clerk, Insurances, Subscriptions, Auditors and Village Hall was £4008 for 2015/2016. These costs are likely to raise to £4400 in 2016/17.

Appendix 2 contains the detailed financial and statistical information which has been summarised in this section.

REGULATORY CONSTRAINTS

The regulatory bodies which are involved in implementing the plan are:

Cambridge County Council – Road Maintenance and Improvement

Road Drainage

Road Safety

Street Lighting

School Transport

Huntingdon District Council- Refuse Collection

Planning and Development

Anglian Water- Foul water sewers

Surface water sewers

EON- Electricity Supply

British Telecommunications - Superfast Broadband

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Road Safety

In identifying a plan for improving road safety it is important to balance: the needs of the community; with the most effective traffic calming measures; against a realistic budget.

A recent village questionnaire identified several concerns about the speed of traffic through the community as well as the type of vehicles, namely heavy goods vehicles, using the narrow (B) and unclassified roads. Most residents supported traffic calming measures to help improve road safety and provided a list of suggestions for improving road safety.

Both Pidley and Fenton already have some traffic calming measures:

- the ‘build outs’ and associated signage installed at the three entrances to Pidley in March 2012 at a cost of £13,200;
- the ‘dragon’s teeth’ road markings and associated signage in Fenton; and
- interactive warning speed signs.

Speed monitoring data has been used to identify the ‘worst’ roads in the village. This data indicates that the majority (75%) of vehicles travelling through the village are doing so below or at the speed limit or within recognized guidelines. Of those vehicles travelling above these guidelines, 20% are travelling between 36-40mph, while a small percentage (5%) are travelling above 41mph.

Cambridgeshire County Council highways department provided professional advice and also conducted a site visit to assess different traffic calming ideas. In addition, the community planning team have used considerable academic studies to assess the effectiveness of different types of traffic calming measures. Over fifteen different traffic calming options are explained in Appendix 3 with their possible advantages and disadvantages, indicative costs and a rating as to their effectiveness over the short, medium and long term. It is proposed that any traffic calming measure should aim to target and reduce these 20% of vehicles with the expectation that those 5% of vehicles travelling over 41mph would also have their speeds reduced to a safer level.

To be as effective as possible it is suggested that the Parish Council, within its community action plan, has a phased approach, over a number of years, to improve road safety. This would help ensure that up to data research and techniques are applied and appropriate cost analysis takes place. These ensure that Pidley cum Fenton remain attractive to tourism and support a sustainable rural economy.

Cambridgeshire County Council highways department have been asked to suggest how speeding could be reduced in Fenton. There is no speeding and traffic volume information for Fenton yet available as this requires surface mounted cables to be used and there is no appropriate site for a pole mounted traffic monitoring device.

Summary of traffic calming measures for consideration:

Short term 1-2 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revisit width restrictions at entrances to Pidley and make some enhancements, for example, adding prominent ‘gateways;’ • purchase mobile interactive speed warning device (which could be hired out to other villages to help cover costs); • introduce natural traffic calming measures; and • launch community speedwatch scheme 	Cost 5,000 3,000 500 0
Medium-term 3-5 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • install pedestrian refuge near bus stops in High Street and narrow road 	15,000
Long –term 5 years +: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • install chicane and sheltered parking or speed bumps in Warboys Road 	7,000

Security

The community of Pidley and Fenton is a safe place to live and work. There are also a number of opportunities to get involved in community based ‘watch’ schemes and there are several different ones available to join, for example, neighbourhood watch, dog watch (Paws on Patrol), horse watch and farm watch. These are supported by the police and are run with the help of volunteers. If community members wish to get involved then a presentation can be provided for those interested.

Secondly, community members can sign up to Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s neighbourhood alert system called e-cops. It provides regular email alerts on local crime and anti-social behaviour incidents and how the crime was committed so that residents can put in place their own crime prevention actions. Sometimes there are also descriptions of suspects and vehicles that still need to be traced. In addition, there is information on where and when residents can meet local officers and staff.

<https://www.cambs.police.uk/ecops>

DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Development

The Huntingdon Local Plan to 2036 does not specifically mention Pidley-cum-Fenton but does include the following section which covers our parish:

Homes in the Countryside

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to new homes in the countryside and the extension, alteration or replacement of existing homes in the countryside. A proposal that includes the creation of a new home in the countryside will only be supported where

- a. there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work; or*
- b. it helps meet an established need for affordable housing; or*
- c. the proposal would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of a heritage asset; or the proposal would re-use an existing building; or*
- d. the design of the home is of exceptional quality or is truly innovative in nature*

The Cambridge ACRE Housing Need Survey Results Report of 2012 found only a very limited need for affordable housing in the parish, and that the parish did not have the basic range of services required to support affordable housing development.

There were 37 replies to the questionnaire on the topic of housing development in the parish. Over half of the replies wanted no further housing development due to the lack of infrastructure or that the village was already the right size. New housing on 'brown field' or in-fill sites was favoured by 8 replies whilst 5 were in favour of 'low cost' starter homes and 5 were against 'affordable housing'. Suitable housing for the elderly received 5 replies.

The National Census had approximated the number of households in Pidley-cum-Fenton at 138 in 2001 and this had risen to 161 in the 2011.

An analysis of the Huntingdon District Council Planning database since 2011 has yielded the following:

2 Completed houses and 1 completed "unused farm buildings" conversion

17 "Unused farm buildings" have planning permission and are being converted to residential

7 Industrial buildings have planning permission to be converted to residential

2 Portable Shepherds Huts have planning permission.

This would give a further 27 households if all the plans approved are completed.

These figures indicate since the census in 2011 the number of new houses planned or built will be more than in the previous 10 years. This is mainly due to the Government decision to allow unused farm buildings to be converted to residential properties.

The analysis of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) showed that 75% of the replies wanted no further development or any future building on in-fill or brown field sites.

The plan for further housing in Pidley-cum-Fenton would be in line with the Huntingdon Local Plan and be on an in-fill or brown field basis only.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Sewers

There have been a number of occasions in the past few years when the foul water sewers in Oldhurst Road, High Street and parts of Warboys Road have been blocked or overloaded and the water levels in toilet bowls have risen and sometimes overflowed. When notified Anglian Water (AW) has normally sent a tanker out to clear the problem. This problem seems to occur more regularly when there is heavy rainfall.

AW has been contacted by the Community Planning Team and a Customer Liaison Manager has confirmed that there have been problems with the foul sewers and with vacuum pumps. AW have agreed to investigate, using CCTV, the status of the foul sewer pipes and check to see that no surface water is infiltrating this system and to monitor the performance of the vacuum pumps. AW have promised to report back before the end of May 2016.

Telecommunications

The Parish is not fully covered by superfast broadband.

The High Street, Oldhurst Road and parts of Warboys Road are covered but the Church end of Warboys Road, Pond Close and Fen Road are too far away from the fibre optic superfast cabinet on Somersham Road to benefit. Fenton has superfast broadband supplied via the Warboys cabinet.

The Government has the target of 95% of UK premises having Superfast Broadband by the end of 2017. Connecting Cambridge, the organisation co-ordinating the superfast broadband provision in Cambridge, has been contacted but cannot give a date or the method by which the rest of Pidley will be covered. It is unlikely to be by fibre optic cable.

There are alternative methods of obtaining fast broadband. Some parts of Cambridgeshire are covered by local wireless broadband providers. Redraw is such a provider which already covers Pidley and can supply a 12Mbps broadband connection for an installation fee of £300 and a monthly fee of £30.

The Government subsidises the provision of a wireless broadband by reducing the total cost of the installation, commissioning plus 12 monthly subscriptions by around £350. More information on the scheme can be found at:

<http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/basic-broadband/>

Street Lighting

Street lighting needs to be improved in Fen Road and Warboys Road. It has been noted that when the street lighting was changed in 2015, the High Street and Oldhurst Road were classed as traffic routes and other roads were classed as residential in spite of Warboys Road receiving most of the traffic from the High Street. This resulted in different spacing of lamp-posts.

Pavements and Footpaths

There were 33 replies regarding pavements and footpaths.

Pavements needed at top end of Fen Road and in Fenton.

Widening pavement to allow use by mobility scooter along Warboys Road.

Remove roadside grass verges from pavements which will not only make the pavement wider but also stop the drains being blocked when grass is cut.

Need for Volunteers to maintain Public Footpaths by cutting grass, trees and hedges.

Need for Volunteers to regularly cut grass verge between Pidley and Somersham to provide a makeshift footpath.

Information and Communication

Currently information is communicated to residents by a monthly newsletter and a parish website. The website is dated and needs to be modernised.

As part of the community plan, a new central website is proposed for the village to provide up to date community information.

The community planning team have identified that the new website have the following minimum list of requirements:

- An easy to find website that appears high on Google listings
 - Cross references to other sites
- An accessible site which is easy to navigate with information easy to find and read
- An up to date design suited to being viewed on a number of browsers (IE, Firefox,..) and devices; iPhone, iPad, Android etc. with interaction through established social media platforms
- Information specific to the village to include:
 - Downloadable documents such as Parish council meeting agendas and minutes
 - Copies of the village newsletters
 - Events & activities in the village; charity events, church services, parish council meetings, voluntary village tidy ups, Timebank
 - Status update on local issues; community plan, traffic calming,
 - History of the village
 - Map of the village with local business locations
 - Pictures of places & events
 - Details of businesses
 - Bus timetables
 - Links to other village references
- A website that can be updated regularly by various groups with suitable security

Having considered a number of ways of achieving this it is proposed that a new, simple, domain name (eg. www.pidleycumfenton.com) is registered to the Parish Council (ideally .com and .co.uk variants of the same name) that will provide immediate results for those searching for village details on Google.

At the same time, a new WordPress or similar platform site be designed with a layout and template that provides for all requirements and functionality as listed above..

Costs for the domain name registration and website hosting are not anticipated to be any more than £100 per annum.

To avoid duplication of messages and efforts, where possible, existing domains (ideally Parish Council and ACRE) should be redirected to the new site (or as a minimum include links to it.) In addition we should invite other websites related to Pidley (TimeBank, local businesses, Somersham church parishes etc) to link to the new site (this should further help to boost Google rankings).

Once the functionality of the new site is in place (assumed to be set up within a couple of months on a voluntary basis) a number of contributors will be required to provide content for the new site but also maintain this and keep it up to date once it is up and running. This could be achieved via a team of contributors responsible for various sections.

Facilities, Groups and Communities

This section summarises the Wish List and Village Plan sections of the Questionnaire not already covered in other sections of the Community Plan:

Cycleway to Somersham

Around a third of the replies wanted a cycleway to Somersham but when this was costed by the Working Party set up by the Parish Council it was in excess of £160,000 to be acceptable to Council Standards. It is proposed that volunteers will be encouraged to cut a path in the grass verge to make a footpath so that it is safe to walk to Somersham until funds are obtained for a cycleway or approval can be obtained to source an achievable cost of a cycle track.

Village Shop

45% of the replies to the questionnaire wanted a village shop or community shop but many thought this would not be commercially viable unless it was shared with an existing business. The two sources thought to be likely to be interested in integrating a village shop when contacted by the Community Planning Team were not interested.

Churches

The two churches, All Saints and the Baptist Church, have regular services. The Baptist Church having regular coffee mornings open to all. Get involved with flower arranging at the Annual All Saints Flower Festival - contact Christine Paynter c.paynter@btconnect.com.

Burial Plots

There is space for 20 more burial plots in the Churchyard and it has been estimated that this is sufficient for another 8 years.

Village Hall

The Village Hall is run by a dedicated team of parishioners. The facilities are excellent and available to hire for functions; meetings, quizzes etc.

Village Social Club

The Village Social Club uses the Village Hall for many activities from Pool to Knit and Natter. The joining fee is £3 and is free to women over 60 and men over 65.

Newsletter

This is written and printed and delivered by volunteers each month - anyone can add to it, by emailing 'sandrajohnson436@btinternet.com'. News; event dates; items of interest always welcome.

Pidley Mountain Rescue

The Pidley Mountain Rescue team have been going for a considerable amount of years and during this time have done an admirable job in helping disabled people with practical aids. They are currently seeking new members in order that the charity fund raising can continue.

Support for those in Need

Currently there is support for parishioners who need assistance with travel for medical reasons, shopping, gardening etc. from family and friends. There is a need for a system for those parishioners who do not have this support to seek assistance and have a means of reimbursing the helper in some way. Timebank (see below) is a means of satisfying these requirements.

Timebank

The Parish Council have signed up to the Timebank scheme at a cost of £327 per annum. The uptake of the system in the parish has been slow. A meeting with Co-ordinator Lucy Bird has been arranged to discuss how to promote Timebank in Pidley-cum-Fenton so that parishioners can benefit from this service. Contact: lucy.bird@somersham-pc.gov.uk

Transport

Need to make parishioners aware of what transport is available in the parish e.g. scheduled buses: Dial a Ride, Timebank etc.

Large scale Bus Timetables to be positioned at bus stops and at the Village Hall.

Map encapsulated to be positioned outside Village Hall showing house names/numbers and where located.

Dog Poo Bins

Two new general purpose litter bins sited by footpath entrance by Old School House and footpath entrance in Fen Road.

Three Dog Waste have been ordered to be sited on dog walking routes.

Aesthetic Changes to the Village

It is proposed that the following tasks can be performed by volunteers:

General tidy-up of entrances to Village

Flower Boxes to be erected in the Village

Painting of public areas e.g. Bus Shelters

New fencing around the Pond at junction of Warboys Road and Fen Road

Change of use of Telephone Box

Encourage parishioners (where applicable) to keep: gardens; fields; buildings in good order to give a good impression when passing traffic

Litter Picking

Following the successful 'litter pick' organised for the Queens' 90th birthday, the Community Plan proposes organising litter picks on a regular basis.

Posters

A Street Plan showing the Houses and businesses in Pidley and Large Scale Bus Timetables will be mounted in the two bus stops and outside the Village Hall.

Signage

Funds needed to provide 'FENTON' signs to be mounted on directional route signage already at bottom of Sheep Lane; (Mad Cat end) Warboys Road; Roundabout on the 141 at Warboys.

Volunteers to clean all road signs, including footpath signs, to be repainted where necessary

PLAN FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

Some of the tasks below can be delegated to village volunteers to ensure there are sufficient resources to achieve the plan.

YEAR 1

Road Safety

1. The top 4 most effective measures include 'width restrictions'. The Parish Council may wish to revisit the width restrictions which are already in place and make local engineering improvements to ensure the gap is no more than 3.1m wide (potential cost £5000). At the same time the restrictions could have more prominent 'gateways' put in place to enhance the demarcation into a village (£1000 each gateway or cheaper if sourced locally).
2. Also included in the top 4 most effective measures are interactive signs. There are four already and it may be possible to switch them around periodically so they face the opposite direction. However, this may require re-calibration and re-wiring which might be too costly. An alternative is to purchase a mobile interactive speed warning sign which can be moved around different locations and mounted on lamp posts. It also records speed data, which would be useful to see if speeds are reduced. It could also be hired out to other parish councils to help cover costs (£3000).
3. The Parish Council may wish to consider natural traffic calming measures used successfully in other rural villages. There are already village signs mentioning Pidley Mountain Rescue Team, however, one or two natural calming methods could also be used as it is more likely that if your neighbourhood looks cared for and feels looked after then visitors are far more likely to respect this and act accordingly. For example, for very little cost the following could be achieved:
 - entrances to the village (Fenton and Pidley) have plant tubs and bulbs / plants placed there;
 - where feasible, the approach verges to the village entrances planted with bulbs and cut in the summer more regularly;
 - existing signs, marker posts, bus shelters cleaned and painted, fences mended / painted and stray litter collected.
 - Consider 'village spruce up' days (potential cost £500)

This would need to be an 'all village' response but could be organized for two or three days throughout the year.

4. Community speedwatch is a community based scheme designed to harness public support of neighbourhood policing by volunteers monitoring speeds of vehicles in areas of concern to the public. It is not enforcement but instead it is aimed at improving driver behaviour. Anyone over 17 years old may volunteer and a group of 4 people makes a suitable team. It has been shown that community speedwatch does help to lower speeds during and after deployment and Parish Council support to launch the scheme may encourage participation
5. Arrange traffic survey in Fenton by Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Department.
6. Arrange and fund for 'FENTON' signs to be mounted on directional route signage already at bottom of Sheep Lane; Warboys Road (Mad Cat end); Roundabout on the A141 at Warboys.

Infrastructure

7. Monitor progress of provision of Superfast Broadband in Pidley with Connect Cambridge and see if a “package deal” could be arranged with a local wireless broadband provider for residents who are not yet connected,
8. Keep a record of all sewer problems to gather evidence, for an improve sewerage system for Pidley-cum-Fenton by Anglian Water,
9. Liaise with Cambridgeshire County Council on the on the reclassification of Warboys Road as a traffic route (to improve street lighting and to enable more traffic calming options)
10. Cost the provision of a pavement on the village end of Fen Road with suitable street lighting
11. Cost the widening of the footpath on Warboys Road

Information and Communications

12. Commission new Parish Website with the features in Information and Communications section for annual cost of around £100 per annum.

Facilities. Groups and Communities.

13. Provide the volunteer group with equipment to maintain the footpaths including the 'make-shift' footpath on the grass verge to Somersham.
14. Provide funds for display cases required to hold the bus timetables and the Village Street Plan.
15. Provide the volunteer groups with funding for equipment and goods needed to improve the look of the village e.g. paint for bus shelters; flowers/shrubs etc

Year 2 and 3

Road Safety

The current speed analysis indicates that the ‘worst’ road in Pidley is where vehicles pass through the village to and from Somersham and Oldhurst (B1089) where they are not hindered by turning traffic to and from Warboys Road (B1040). Anecdotal evidence also

suggests that this is where there is more pedestrian traffic, including where children cross to catch the school bus.

Should an updated speed analysis in 2017/18 identify this is still a problem then a combination of natural traffic calming with engineered changes to the road could be considered. Firstly, remove the central white line and build a pedestrian refuge at the point where the bus shelters are located. This will narrow the road, provide a safer crossing point and slow through traffic (potential cost £15,000)

Infrastructure

Dependent on funding provide on pavement on the village end of Fen Road with suitable street lighting

Dependent on funding provide traffic calming to Fenton

Year 4 and 5

Road Safety

According to current data the second 'worst' road is the Warboys Road. The more obvious and cheaper option may be to place speed bumps in the carriageway but this is an emotive traffic calming measure and there are some negative consequences including the potential for increased noise and revving engines for nearby residents. An alternative would be to put in place a road restriction or chicane which would naturally slow vehicles down as well as provide sheltered parking. (potential cost £7000).

Infrastructure

Dependent on funding provide improvement to pavement on Warboys Road with suitable street lighting