

April 2012

Fulking Village Action Plan

Fulking is a beautiful rural village and parish, nestling at the foot of the South Downs in full view of Devil's Dyke, one of the South Downs' most famous natural features. It is located in the South Downs National Park and is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A significant part of the village is a designated Conservation Area. The parish of Fulking has around 120 dwellings, including houses, flats and a pub, as well as farms and houses outside the village. It is served by St Andrew's Church in the neighbouring village of Edburton. Fulking is home to people of all ages, including approximately 215 adults and 60 children under 15 years of age.

Vision for Fulking

Our vision for Fulking is to preserve the essential rural character of the village whilst making sure that we have an inclusive community and up-to-date facilities and communications for residents. This means balancing our wish to conserve and preserve the environment with embracing progress and strengthening community involvement.

The Action Plan

Our Action Plan has been developed to help us achieve the vision. It is led by community members, working closely with the support and involvement of the Parish Council (PC) and other key partners.

The Plan

The process began in 2009 with a consultation on what villagers felt were the important issues. This was followed by more detailed consultation on 11 ideas which led to the establishment of the Fulking Village Action Plan Group.

The Plan presented on the following pages is divided into three themes:

- ★ Environment
- ★ Transport and Housing
- ★ Community and Leisure

For each theme we have identified the key issues and main objectives that we want to achieve. These are followed by the actions that we have agreed, the lead for each one and any finance/funding implications or sources. We have set timescales of short term (up to six months), medium term (six months – five years) and long term (five years plus) for each action.

Of course, issues and actions will often have an impact on more than one theme. The residents leading on each theme have made sure that they work closely together so that the planned actions link across themes where appropriate.

The Action Plan is a living document and the Action Plan Group aims to meet twice a year to review progress and agree new actions. If you would like to join the Group or have any comments on the Plan, please contact either Bob Rowland on 01273 857 271 or bob.pamrowland@btinternet.com, or Kate Watson at kate.watson4@btinternet.com. Updates will be published at www.fulkingvillage.co.uk.

Environment

Key issues

Preserving Fulking's character as a tranquil and historic village set in unspoiled countryside is of paramount importance to residents. This involves a range of issues, from supporting the ban on private motor vehicles and motorised hang gliders on the Downs and within the South Downs National Park to the maintenance of footpaths and bridleways. We welcome and support the creation of the South Downs National Park as a body dedicated to the protection of the countryside and its historic villages.

Farming is an essential element of the parish and it is important to ensure that residents, farmers and visitors understand one another's needs and work together to maintain and develop the natural environment.

With the demise of the village shop some years ago, Fulking has few public or communal spaces. It is thus important to preserve those communal spaces that do exist, such as the North Town Field, the village hall and the pub, which are a focus for the community. Actions under 'Community and Leisure' identify how we want to do this.

Currently, there is little in the way of sustainable energy production or other 'green' activity in the village.

Key objectives:

- ★ Work together to ensure that the natural environment serves the needs of residents, farmers and visitors whilst safeguarding the essential tranquil character of Fulking.
- ★ Promote the use of sustainable energy and other green activities such as allotments, in the development of the village.

Actions	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
1. Produce an information sheet about farming (cattle, sheep, crops etc.) and Countryside Code for residents and visitors to help raise awareness of the environment and increase understanding about the use of footpaths/bridleways/set aside etc. Arrange meeting with local farmers and National Trust to receive input and collate information. Discuss and agree how this information is best published/ broadcast.	Ongoing	Kate Watson / Jen Green / Lydia Bush	Farmers/ National Trust	Finance for printing of information sheet
2. Assess the condition of footpaths, bridleways and other routes. Raise awareness of this amongst local walkers, horse riders and dog owners and set up method of reporting back on any action needed. Liaise with the appropriate authorities to repair paths degraded by cattle, maintain the paths at the correct width and keep the adjacent hedgerows under control.	Ongoing	Jen Green / Chris Gildersleeve /	Farmers/ National Trust/ Residents	
3. Investigate how private motor vehicles and motorised hang gliders can be prevented from operating within the South Downs National Park area	Ongoing	TBA	South Downs National Park/Farmers/PC/	

Actions	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
			Villagers	
4. Support applications/developments for solar, wind and other sustainable energy, but with due consideration for the setting and the preservation of the unspoilt beauty of Fulking	Ongoing	Bob Rowland	Parish Council	
5. Advertise regular clean up of The Street and surrounding lanes by villagers, encourage reporting of fly tipping, encourage dog owners to clear up dog mess etc	Achieved/On-going	Social Committee	Parish Council / North Town Field Trustees	
6. Protect village assets, for example telephone box, Ruskin fountain, Ram House, village archives, letter box, two village hand pumps etc	Achieved/On-going	Terry and Linda Harris	Parish Council	
7. Encourage villagers to use environmentally friendly lighting with requested 'lights out' time	Achieved/On-going	Pam Rowland	Residents	

Transport & housing

Key issues

The roads servicing the village are prone to problems including potholes and obstruction with ice, snow and flood. Parking is extremely limited. There is congestion from pub traffic at the west end of the village and on The Street, and increased traffic and parking issues arising from the expansion of the Preston Nomads cricket ground in Clappers Lane. As Fulking is now in the South Downs National Park, it could attract more visitors and as a result car parking may need to be re-assessed. Public/community transport is very limited, but it is not clear whether there is likely to be sufficient demand to justify lobbying for an increase.

There has been significant extension and enlargement of properties, which has increased the price of housing and the population, and has reduced the number of less expensive houses for sale.

One of the National Park's policies is for no new building, and this will help retain Fulking's natural character and size. Fulking has little infrastructure for affordable housing development and there is already some social housing in Clappers Lane. Many larger neighbouring villages have new housing developments which include social housing, and it is therefore not clear if there is a need or demand for more of this type of development in Fulking.

Key objectives

- ★ Ensure that roads are in good order and that ice, snow and flood water problems are dealt with quickly.
- ★ Encourage ways of reducing car use by residents and visitors.
- ★ Ensure full involvement and consultation in considering planning applications which include the extension of properties and permitted development.
- ★ Encourage slower traffic speeds and quieter surroundings in The Street and Clappers Lane

Actions	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
1. Publicise in advance any planning meetings using the Village website, Pigeon Post when practical, the Village notice board and any other methods of communication. Ensure that no unauthorised development takes place and that planning rules are strictly adhered to.	Achieved/On-going	Clive Goodridge Linda Dyos	Parish Council Mid Sussex District Council	
2. Re-instate the arrangement whereby local farmers are paid to snow plough roads. Ensure sufficient well-stocked grit bins are placed throughout the village.	AchievedOn-going	Tony Brooks Parish Council	Farmers Parish Council	From West Sussex County Council

Actions	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
3. Consult residents on a variety of options including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → car sharing/'streetcar' type car hire scheme/public transport, for example Devil's Dyke bus service extension to Fulking in summer. → Street lighting - further consultation is required 	Ongoing	TBA	Residents Parish Council	
4. Identify key actions for speed and weight restrictions, and/or a /7.5 tonne weight limit for all access roads and quiet lane status for Clappers Lane	Short	Neil Cooper	Parish Council	

Community & leisure

Key issues

The village has few facilities, services and activities and some of these are outdated and in need of development so that they serve residents and visitors more effectively. The **existing village hall provides a place for some village activities** but it is poorly equipped and in need of major refurbishment **if possible**. The village Social Committee organises a range of events for villagers. It needs ongoing support and involvement from residents to keep the vibrancy of village life and encourage 'good neighbourliness'. There are **some** activities specifically for young people. The village has poor broadband and mobile phone service which is an issue for businesses and residents alike.

Key objectives:

- ★ Improve and maintain physical facilities, including **the** village hall, improved broadband and mobile phone signal, well maintained footpaths/bridleways etc.
- ★ Develop activities and services for the significant number of young people that the village will have over the coming years. We understand that there are approximately 60 children currently under 15.
- ★ Promote good neighbourliness and community engagement in all village plan developments and actions
- ★ Encourage local businesses to support the village and local business and enterprise development.

Actions	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
1. Ensure that the amenity of the village hall is retained. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Consult and explore issues regarding location, car parking → St Andrew's Parochial Church Council (PCC) to investigate and pursue options for the current village hall site. → Approach Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Planning Department regarding preferred option 	Ongoing	St Andrew's PCC, Village Hall Action Group	Village Plan Action Group Parish Council Residents	
2. Consult with all age groups to develop activities for them	Ongoing	Village Hall Action Group	Residents	
3. Investigate and plan how to improve village broadband speed and mobile signal, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identifying local resident willing to spearhead liaison with BT. 	Ongoing	Tony Brooks / Andrew Iversen	Utilities	

Actions	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
→ Encouraging neighbouring parishes to register interest in/engage with BT Infinity				
4. Liaise closely with Preston Nomads to ensure effective communication and collaboration, maintaining the peace and tranquillity of the village, especially areas close to the Club	Achieved/On-going	Bob Rowland/Tony Brooks	Preston Nomads	
5. Compile directory of recommended local businesses and skills and publish on village web site	Achieved/On-going	Bob Rowland	Residents/James Lightfoot	
6. Ensure that the Fulking Village website and Pigeon Post (PP) are supported as key communication tools, including: → Directing readers of Pigeon Post to village website and vice versa on a regular basis and encouraging contributions to Pigeon Post.	Achieved/On-going	Chris Gildersleeve (PP) / Kate Watson (website)	Aidan Walker, Pigeon Post editor James Lightfoot, Website editor	

Other suggestions are presented below. It has been agreed that these will be considered as and when actions in the main body of the plan are implemented and achieved.

Environment

- Investigate the possibility of creating a sustainable source of timber for logs by coppiced trees to reduce the use of unsustainable fuel sources
- Investigate the possibility of reinstating the water system to pumps and drinking fountain

Transport and Housing

- Review car parking facilities for residents (taking into account the new spaces to be provided by Preston Nomads) including investigating the possibility of removing bank in Clappers Lane to provide extra spaces