

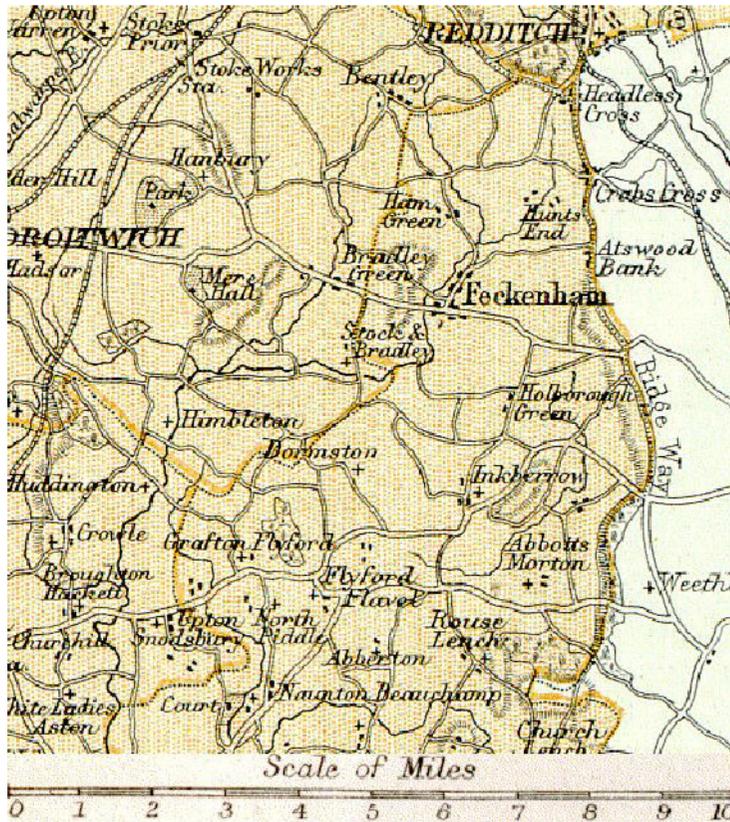
An aerial photograph of a rural landscape, likely in the UK, showing a patchwork of green and yellow fields separated by stone walls and hedges. A small village with several buildings and a church is visible in the lower center. The text 'Stock & Bradley Parish Plan' is overlaid in large white letters with a black outline, and '2006' is written below it in a smaller white font.

Stock & Bradley Parish Plan

2006

Stock and Bradley Parish Plan
Prepared by the steering group
M Ayliffe J Cresswell
G McCluskey J McCluskey
K Nash R Purbrick
W Ralphs L Smith
F Walker D Waring
Grants and guidance from
Countryside Commission
Stock and Bradley Parish Council
Wychavon District Council
Special thanks to
K Burbeck A Fuller
A Lipscomb J Mayes
L Mayes A Smith

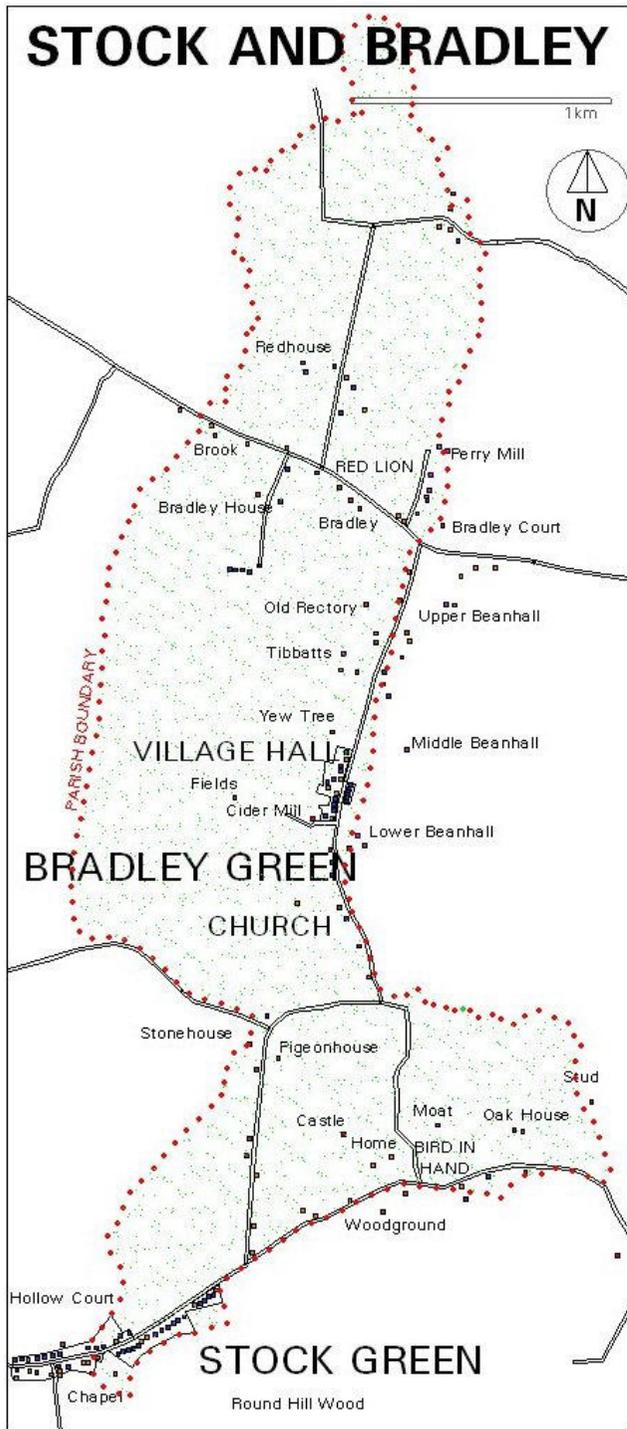
CONTENTS



Extract from 1888 map

• Introduction	5
• Transport and Road Safety	6
• The Environment	8
• Church and Chapel	9
• Housing	11
• Employment	12
• Education	13
• Leisure and Amenities	14
• Communications	16
• Policing	16
• Utilities	17
• Village Envelope	18
• Action Plan	19





INTRODUCTION.

The Parish of Stock and Bradley is comprised of the majority of the properties in the villages of Stock Green and Bradley Green. It is a small rural settlement spreading out along the roads serving the two villages, covering an area of approximately 1140 acres as shown in Fig. 1.

In the 1861 census the population numbered 310 and were largely employed in agriculture and glove making. By the 1950's the population had declined to 200 but has been rising slowly to today's figure of approximately 300

The Parish Plan initiative has been developed through the support and sponsorship of the Countryside Agency with further assistance from the Parish Council, Wychavon District Council and Community First. The purpose of the Parish Plan is to set out a vision for the future development of our community and how that will be achieved. It will:

- reflect the views of all sections of the community
- identify features and local characteristics that people value
- identify local needs and opportunities
- set out a vision of how people want this community to develop in the future
- include an Action Plan to achieve this vision.

Parish Plans can influence a wide range of organisations and processes, which affect the lives of the residents of our Parish. The basis of the Plan results from a detailed questionnaire which was distributed to every property in the two villages in 2005 including those properties in adjoining parishes that are within the rural settlements of Stock Green and Bradley Green.

In the Plan, we have set out to consider local problems and opportunities, which were highlighted in the questionnaire.

The key issues raised are reviewed in the Plan under the following headings:

- Transport and Road Safety
- The Environment
- Church and Chapel
- Housing
- Employment
- Education
- Leisure and Amenities
- Communications
- Policing
- Utilities
- Village Envelope

The Plan sets out a broad vision of the future and its place in the Wychavon District Council's Local Plan; its success is dependent upon the commitment of all parties and will require further support and commitment from Parishioners to become a reality.

The Steering Group would like to thank everyone who contributed to the production of this document and for their willingness in completing the questionnaire, without which the Plan could not have been produced.



TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT

The road network serving Stock and Bradley comprises the busy B4090, or Saltway Roman Road, between Droitwich and Alcester and the lesser classified rural roads of Flying Horse Lane, Church Road, Middle Road, Dark Lane and Earls Common Road. The layout of these roads has remained unchanged for centuries and has dictated the linear development within the Parish. Historical features can still be seen, such as the Worcester Cross Milestone and Priest Bridge, but are in danger of being damaged beyond repair due to erosion and the increasing weight and speed of traffic using the rural roads network.

The survey covered several areas concerned with Transport matters which can be summarised as follows:

- 1 Road Safety
- 2 Accessibility



Road Safety

The negative effects of traffic in rural areas in terms of speed, noise and vibration, severance, environmental impact and concerns for the safety of pedestrians and other road users are a recognised problem and a major concern to many. The majority of respondents consider all 'Highways' i.e. roads, pavements, drainage and verges, unsafe and inadequate for the levels, type and speed of traffic now using them with the pavements particularly difficult to use for those with disabilities or using wheelchairs/pushchairs. In addition, the majority of comments added to the questionnaire were concerned with speeding traffic and the potential danger to pedestrians, cyclists, riders and animals particularly along Church Road. There is considerable concern that it is no longer safe for parishioners, especially the elderly, infirm and those walking with dogs or children, to walk along the road. Increased use by traffic, including heavy lorries and large farm vehicles, has eroded the grass verges with subsequent resurfacing effectively widening the road by stealth to the advantage of traffic but detriment of parishioners.

A majority of 77% of survey respondents felt that speeding traffic was a problem with a significant percentage supporting action to improve Road Safety, notably on the B4090 and Church Road, but the same concerns apply throughout the Parish. Just over 50% supported an adjustment to the Speed Limit, with less support for Traffic Calming (42%) and other measures.

A change to the Speed Limit was instigated in Church Road during November 2005; the effectiveness of this will be measured by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) via a monitoring survey in due course. However, WCC will not implement Traffic Calming measures without their standard Street Lighting; the future provision of even environmentally sensitive Street Lighting was overwhelmingly rejected by 90% of the survey respondents. Similarly, whilst 34% supported the provision of more pavements, 56% wanted no change.

Clearly the issue of Road Safety is an emotive one but also a priority for the majority of respondents. With rural traffic levels predicted by the Countryside Agency to rise between 33-50% in the next 25 years, the existing clearly inadequate situation must be challenged and future needs considered. The key question to address is what can be done, sensitively, to meet the needs of all road users without compromising or changing the existing environment so valued by many?



Accessibility

Social exclusion due to lack of accessibility to facilities and services is a recognised problem in rural areas affecting a wide range of people including those on low incomes, the young, elderly, disabled, and people with either a temporary or permanent medical condition that prevents them driving. Car reliance is inevitably higher than in urban areas with National Statistics quoting residents travelling some 40% further than those in urban areas just to access services and facilities.

An overwhelming majority of respondents to the survey are not currently reliant on a local bus or taxi service, but a small minority is. Whilst the majority of residents never experience transport difficulties getting in or out of the Parish, 26% occasionally or often do. Since the survey was completed, the current poor support for a bus service has resulted in the withdrawal of the Flexilink service effective from the end of January 2006 which will inevitably add to the problems experienced by a small minority. However, the twice weekly bus service to Worcester and the weekly service to Redditch still remain.

When questioned about a Voluntary Transport Scheme, 20% of survey respondents indicated they would be prepared to offer their services. In lieu of any formal initiatives or alternative to the Flexilink scheme from local service providers, this may be a matter for further consideration.

In line with current UK trends, Stock and Bradley has an ageing population with 62% of the survey respondents aged over 45. So the needs of the Parish will change and therefore social exclusion due to lack of accessibility should be addressed. The Countryside Agency currently supports Rural Transport initiatives and offers funding through their Rural Transport Partnership and Parish Transport Grant Schemes; their application to the existing situation, and for future provision, in Stock and Bradley needs further investigation.



ENVIRONMENT

THE ENVIRONMENT



Stock and Bradley Parish extends to approximately 1140 acres. The landscape which determines the character of the British Countryside and the responsibility for its wellbeing, belongs to every one of us. The area suffered greatly when the Dutch Elm Disease destroyed all the elm trees, particularly the ones that represented the boundary between Stock and Bradley and Feckenham. In celebration of the new millennium, young oaks were planted to replace this boundary and there is an on-going requirement for their maintenance.

There are a number of ridge and furrow fields remaining in the Parish, which could be of national importance when compared with the designation given to Rookery Garden Meadows just outside the Parish at Feckenham. This site is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because the existing meadows overlie a medieval ridge and furrow and have been maintained by traditional hay cutting followed by grazing with cattle. The special interest at this site lies with the diversity of the semi-natural grassland sward with its rich assemblage of herbs and grasses; the same may well apply to the ridge and furrow fields within our Parish.

Whilst there are no designated forests within the Parish, we are fortunate to have two lovely areas right on our doorstep. The first is at Roundhill Woods, Stock Green, which are designated as Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland as the land has had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600AD, retaining native trees and shrubs which are allowed to regenerate naturally. The second is at Berrow Hill, Feckenham, which is included on the National Inventory of Woodland Trees and owned by the Forestry Commission.



Our questionnaire recorded that 84% felt all the trees needed to be protected with 86% wanting protection for hedges and streams. Prairie farming, introduced into farms bordering Stock Green some years ago, destroyed many hedgerows, which are now lost forever. Under recent legislation all hedges are now protected and, in addition, all watercourses fall under the remit of the Environment Agency in conjunction with Riparian owners and ditches under the responsibility of the District Council. 75% wanted the ponds to be protected and 78% were concerned that the ditches should be kept in good order. The Lengthsman, newly employed by the Parish Council, has been allotted the task of keeping the ditches and highways clear of rubbish in order that the surface water can run free.

Farming has declined over recent years and only a small number remain as working farms, mainly cattle and sheep, with one dairy herd. Cereals such as maize, beans and wheat are generally grown.

85.2% felt the quality of the countryside in our Parish was very important. This view is reflected by many of the local landowners who have adopted National initiatives to safeguard the environment. Information available through the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website (www.magic.gov.uk) shows that land at Upper Hollowfields Farm, Perry Mill Farm and Upper Beanhall Farm is included under Countryside Stewardship Agreements. These are grant schemes which aim to make conservation part of farming and land management practice and offer payment for changes in land management which improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside. Land at Perry Mill Meadows, Rectory Meadow, Upper Beanhall Farm Meadows and Woodground Meadow are listed under the Grassland Inventory. This aims to make lowland grassland data available for conservation management schemes in the wider community.

CHURCH AND CHAPEL

As part of the National Recycling Initiative Wychavon DC now supplies different coloured plastic bags for tins, paper and general refuse. Bradley Green has bins for glass collection but not Stock Green as the scheme is currently at the experimental stage. The provision of a skip for garden waste would also be appreciated by some residents without the facility for composting. 54% appreciated the annual spring clean of our verges, organised by the Parish Council and sponsored by Wychavon DC. Additional comments appended to the questionnaire also asked for frontages to be maintained to a standard in sympathy, and in keeping, with the rural character of the Parish.



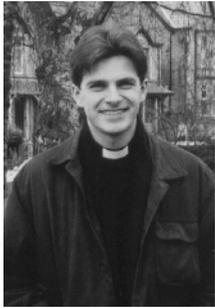
BAPTIST CHAPEL, STOCK GREEN

Stock Green Baptist Chapel was founded in 1846. It is located in the village of Stock Green, just outside the Parish boundary. As a building the chapel is not much bigger than a farm kitchen and is believed to be the smallest chapel in Worcestershire. It is tucked away round a corner at the junction of Cockshot Lane. Inside and out the chapel is simple and unspoilt. In 1984 it closed down, but only for a few months. Following its re-opening the affairs of the chapel were managed by an ad hoc committee. Some repairs and improvements were carried out, including the tidying up of the graveyard and re-erection of fallen gravestones. By the end of 1987 the Worcestershire Baptist Association suggested the time was right for Stock Green to adopt a formal constitution and that the chapel be regularised as a church within the Baptist Union. New electrical wiring, a fresh porch and a replacement floor, together with re-decoration was carried out at a cost of £1660. Services are held twice monthly. The Anniversary Service and strawberry tea held each June commemorates the 1984 re-opening of the chapel. The harvest festival of fruit and vegetables is ever popular and is held in September with the produce being auctioned afterwards at the Harvest Supper, a light-hearted and boisterous village affair. The Christmas carol service is similarly well supported. Among all its other commitments, the little Chapel supports the work of Miss Jacqui Wells, a missionary in Thailand and other appeals, such as "Home Mission", "Tear Fund" and "Send a Cow".



CHURCH

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, BRADLEY GREEN



The spire of St. John the Baptist, the parish Church of Stock and Bradley, rises to a height of 90 feet. It is by far the highest building in the parish, but because it is some way from the road and the surrounding countryside is gentle and rolling, the church rides along with rather than dominates the parish. The church is visible for miles around. Access is gained from Church Road, Bradley Green, through Church Farm land along a farm lane.

The usual attendance for the twice monthly services is between 15 and 25. The church was designed to seat two hundred and is often filled to capacity for festivals, weddings and funerals. In 1999 the Archbishop of Canterbury, warned that too many churches are unwelcoming, cold, drab and dreary and greater resources should be put into attracting children and young people to its services. To this end 2005 was partly devoted to forming an After School Fun Club for primary school age children, under the auspices of the PCC and this is now up and running at the nearby Village Hall. Complete re-wiring was carried out in 2004, creating improved heating and lighting.

The old organ finally had to be removed in 2004 to give way to a fine electronic organ. The old organ lives on, in a number of houses in the area, having been made into garden ornaments and bird boxes and in a superb new lightweight lectern made by Mike Butcher. During the past few years gifts of a Paschal candlestick, new carpets, altar curtains and an altar frontal, have been donated by grateful parishioners. The photograph shows Rev. Alistair Fuller, who in 2001 was appointed Rector of Bowbrook North, which includes the parishes of Hanbury, Feckenham and Stock & Bradley.

The church supports St. Richard's Hospice and Farmers Overseas Advisory Group.

The Future

The need for a total re roofing is now becoming imminent, probably within the period of the next 5-years, at a current cost of £60,000 which together with other repairs and safety measures requires a total of £114,000. The questionnaire tells us that 40% of our population never attends Church, only 16% are regular worshippers and yet 34% say it is important for Sunday worship, 44% for baptisms, 70% for weddings and funerals, 66% as a focal point for the community and 64% as an historic building. This poses the question is there the dedication and energy within the Parish for Stock and Bradley's church to survive?

The questionnaire also tells us that the new sign directing the way to the Church is much appreciated, but the drive and car parking remain a problem, although much improved in 2005. The fact that the drive has to be shared with heavy farm vehicles means constant erosion of the surface.

One Respondent would be prepared to donate funds for the improvement of 'the field road'. The Steering Committee has concluded that research into costs and negotiation with the owner of the road might result in much needed improvement.



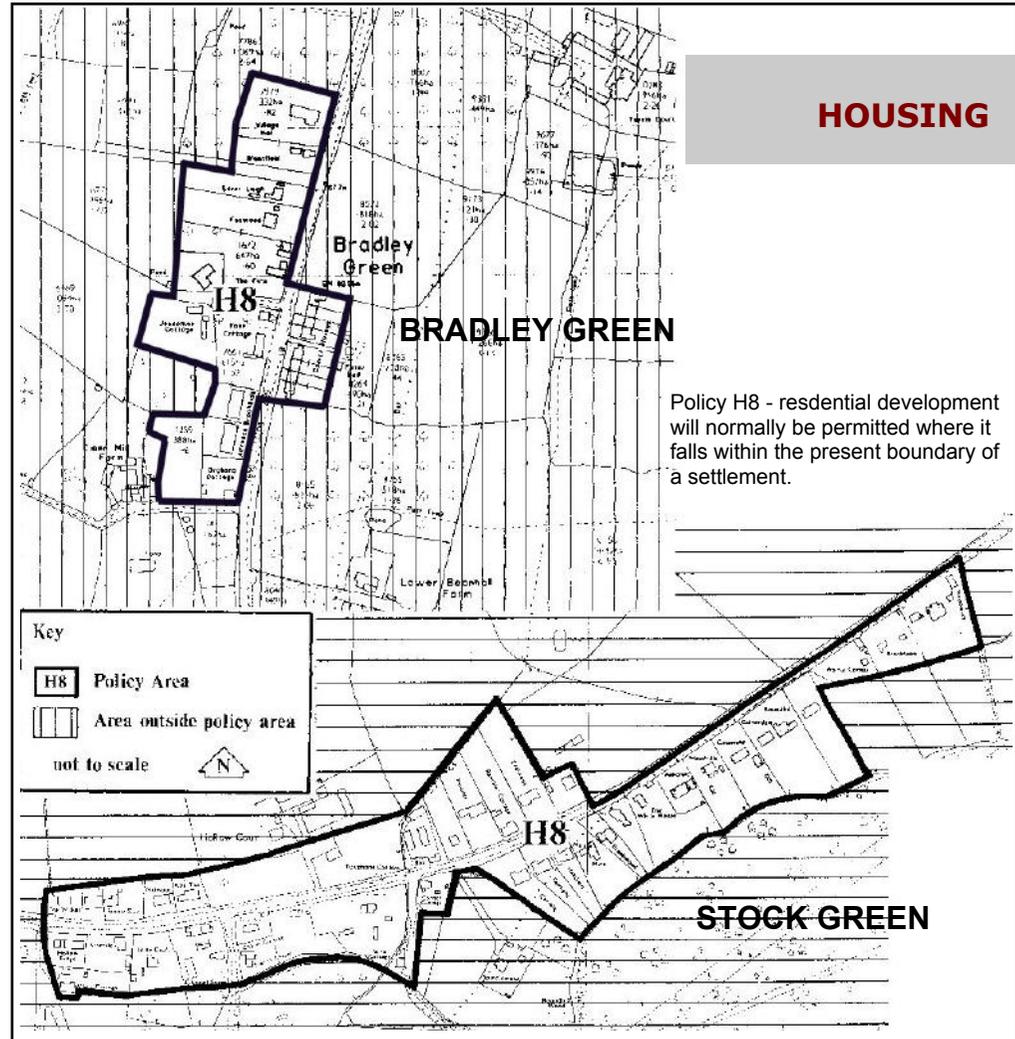
HOUSING

Stock and Bradley boasts a large range of house types, some dating back to the 17th century. The greatest majority are privately owned, with very few available for rent. In the early fifties eight Local Authority houses were built in Church Road and they were officially named by the Parish Council, as 1 - 8 Forest View. Only four of these remain for letting, and in recent years these have been taken over by a Housing Association. Stock and Bradley appear to be the only community for miles around without special need housing for the elderly. Every surrounding village has this facility, but a need did not show up in our questionnaire, confirming the findings of previous surveys.

In response to the questionnaire over a third of respondents rejected the idea of further housing development in the Parish. There was some support for the conversion of redundant buildings and for single dwellings in controlled locations but there was an overwhelming rejection of any proposals for larger groups of houses even if carefully designed. There was also some support for sensitive infill housing within the defined village envelope.

The area for residential development is currently defined by the structure plan prepared by Wychavon District Council.

The majority of respondents would not support any substantial change to the existing housing provision in keeping with the current designation in the Local Plan.



EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Local Economy

Since well before to the onset of the Industrial Revolution our Parish economy has been based on Farming in the clearings of the ancient Feckenham Forest. The pastures were well suited to rearing stock - cattle, sheep and horses, a condition that continues today. Cottage industries were developed in the 19th Century with, in particular, nail making and brick workings using the local Bradley Clay. These have long since gone out of existence. From the Second World War some medium scale horticulture developed but this too fell into decline and is now no longer to be found.

Some women were employed as outworkers for the glovemaking factories in Worcester. Today, the Parish is still predominantly an agricultural area, with the consequent reduction in the need for local workers due to modern farming methods.

Employment

Of the 213 respondents to our questionnaire who are over 18, only 106 (50%) are of normal working age. Many of these are housewives, so those in outside employment represent about 30% of the respondents. The remainder are over 65 and are either retired or are nearing retirement.

The majority of the working population goes outside of our area for employment, commuting to neighbouring conurbations including Redditch, Droitwich and Bromsgrove and as far afield as Warwick and Birmingham. This confirms the belief that people have moved into the area to enjoy the benefits of the countryside and are prepared to travel to work. Others are either self-employed working from home or operating small-scale operations or cottage industries within the Parish, with few opportunities to employ local people.

Businesses

There are a few small businesses and cottage industries in addition to farming that operate in the Parish. These include light engineering, horticultural nurseries, dog kennels, a cattery and livery stables; however, none of them employ many people. A small business park just outside the Parish does offer a few employment opportunities. There are two public houses, The Bird in Hand at Stock Green and The Red Lion, on the Droitwich Road, Bradley Green, which employ part time younger people. There are no shops.

The Future

There is clearly little or no opportunity for any change in the economic structure of the Parish. Indeed, the questionnaire showed there is a marked reluctance on the part of the inhabitants to make any changes to the present situation. The Parish has become predominantly a retirement and dormitory area serving the surrounding towns and the residents are intent on protecting that position.



EDUCATION**Previously**

The 1870 Education Act provided genuine mass education on a scale never seen before, every child under the age of 13 was to attend school. Therefore the land at the end of Church Road was purchased in 1875 and a school with an attached schoolhouse was built there to serve the education needs of this parish. The school housed one large schoolroom and had outdoor toilets for girls and boys situated at the rear. There was also a playground and at a later date extra land was purchased so that the children had a grassy area on which to play and learn. At the time of its construction the school curriculum was also extended to encounter grammar, geography, history, elementary mathematics and simple sciences. Priest Bridge County Primary school closed its doors in 1966 and was converted to a house and sold in 1970

Currently

The Parish of Stock and Bradley is currently served by a selection of First, Middle and High schools dependent upon postcode. The residents of Bradley send their children to either Hanbury or Feckenham First schools, from there the children usually attend the Ridgeway Middle school in Astwood Bank, then on to Kingsley College. The residents of Stock Green send their children to Hanbury, Flyford Flavell, Inkberrow or Himbleton First schools, from there the children will usually go onto Pinvin Middle school and then on to Pershore High school. As all of the schools are out of the Parish most of them are not within reasonable walking distance. The Authority does provide a free transport to school service for distances of over 2 miles for the under eights and distances of over 3 miles for those over eight years of age. However, most parents drive their children to the First Schools. In addition, some children are educated privately.

Future

The residents of Stock and Bradley are satisfied with the current educational arrangements for children. However they would like to see more opportunities within the parish or surrounding areas for adult education. From the questionnaire it was also found that there was a demand for an After School club for young children. This club has now been set up and is available once a week during term-time for children aged 4 to 9. The survey also demonstrated that there was some interest in a Play Group for younger children, a Holiday Play scheme, a Youth club and a children's playground in addition to a designated picnic area. 57% thought that the playground should be located near or adjacent to the Village Hall



LEISURE

LEISURE AND AMENITIES

The Village Hall



Stock and Bradley Village Hall is the centre for many of the leisure activities that run within the village. It was built in 1935 with funds raised by the voluntary contributions from the villagers. More recently the village hall has had some extensive refurbishments costing £80,000, including the remodelling of the kitchen and the building of a storeroom on the back. Organisations using the hall are asked to send one of their members to serve as a Trustee on the committee of approximately 8 members who manage the running of the village hall. They meet about 6 times a year and assist with organising fund raising events to ensure its upkeep. The Village Hall is recognised as a vital part of our community and as such is very dependent on the goodwill and support of all residents.

The following clubs and activities meet regularly at the village hall:

- Art Class
- Circuit training
- Dog training
- Breakaway
- Gardening club
- Cool kids club
- Scottish dancing
- Whist drive

Some of the groups only meet during the week-day and are therefore unsuitable for working people. Additional comments to the questionnaire asked whether event/group organisers could consider the possibility of amending hours to make them available to working people.



Other leisure activities

Due to Stock and Bradley's rural location there are many other leisure pursuits available and utilised by the parishioners.

The walking club meet once a month and enjoys the beautiful and diverse public footpaths situated both within and around the parish. The residents and the wider community also enjoy many of these paths throughout the rest of the year.

Stock and Bradley has 19 kilometres of footpaths and bridleways. Our questionnaire recorded that 75% knew where the paths were, 62% felt they were well sign posted and 56% felt able to use them without difficulty with a third of respondents agreeing that there should be more. The Parish Council, through the Footpaths Officer, is responsible for reporting the state of the paths to the County Council. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for their upkeep lies with the landowners the County Council, with health and safety as a priority, does contribute towards the necessary work to keep the paths and bridleways in good order (e.g. Repairing rotten bridges, removing barbed wire and other obstructions and replacing missing signposts). However, it is noted that some of them are not adequately maintained and require attention from their landowners. With 2 liverys situated in our community and many residents owning their own horse, the bridleways are in constant use and therefore need regular maintenance.

Despite the fact that Church Road forms part of the National Cycle Route, only 13% supported the need for more cycleways although cycling is considered a suitable activity in the community.

The roads of Stock and Bradley are often used by regional Cycling Clubs for training and club runs and races and for families looking for a safe and beautiful area in which to cycle.

AMENITIES

Once a month a mobile library comes to our parish and stops in both Stock Green and Bradley Green. A book club is also held monthly and is open to all. The times and locations of both these activities are regularly advertised in The Chronicle.

Notice Boards

There are 2 notice boards situated within the parish, displaying information about forthcoming events, matters of interest and concern, Parish Council Agendas and Minutes as well as a map of the area.

Public houses

Stock Green and Bradley Green each have their own public house, 'The Bird in the Hand' at Stock Green and 'The Red Lion' located in Bradley Green.

The Red Lion is owned by Punch Taverns and managed by the current licensee. The pub has a carvery which is served at both lunch and dinner times. The building was built around 1780 but it is unclear when it started trading as a pub, however records do show that in 1830 it was a public house and was called 'The Bell.'

The Bird in the Hand is a free house and the building began trading as a pub in 1916. The current licensee has been there for 13 years and the current owner has had the property for 25 years. The pub serves a variety of beers and ales. Both pubs have beer gardens and pool tables.



Shops

A number of houses with various conversions and extensions have served as public houses and shops. Old Crown Cottage, Stock Green was once a pub, hence its name. Walnut Cottage and Long Orchard of Stock Green and Bradley Green's Orchard Cottage, Rose Cottage and Lulworth Cottage have all been shops. On the retirement of Tom Bather as sub-postmaster at Lulworth Stores, Janet and Mick Cresswell opened The Honeypot Shop & Post Office in Bradley Green, in a purpose-built extension to The Firs in 1980. Janet retired in 1998 after 19 years as sub postmistress and handed over to her daughter Julie. Unfortunately it closed in 2003, and reverted to a private residence. Losing the only shop and post office was a severe blow, particularly to the elderly, causing everyone to have to travel to either a nearby town or to Inkberrow or Flyford Flavell for their shopping. This has removed the most important source of social interaction in the Parish.

The questionnaire results suggested that if a Village Shop was not a viable proposition then a drop-in centre, manned by volunteers, offering refreshments and selling basic provisions and stamps providing some assistance with the collection of prescriptions could be set up in the Village Hall.



COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS



Communications have been fundamentally changed by the recent provision of Broadband and therefore fast Internet connection for both Email and Web Browsing. Whilst still at a relatively slow speed of 512k, this is still a great leap forward from the old dial up connection or even typed documents.

With the widespread use of mobile 'phones, not surprisingly, Bradley Green no longer possesses a call box though one still exists, at least for the time being, in Stock Green. There are two post boxes in both Bradley Green and Stock Green with two collections per day.

In addition the Noticeboards in both Villages are well used and the monthly Village Magazine ('The Chronicle') is widely read.

In fact, survey respondents said their main source of information was 'The Chronicle' (89%) whilst 57% said word of mouth and 27% the Village Noticeboards.

Future Priorities

Key priorities are recommended as follows: -

- Maintain quality and interest in the Village Magazine.
- Increase presence in local media, especially Newspapers and Local Radio.
- Consider setting up of Village Website.
- Lobby BT for faster Broadband speeds.



POLICING

POLICING

Overall, respondents to the Parish Plan Survey considered current policing to be reasonable (60%). Undoubtedly any concerns over this are reduced by the "Neighbourhood Watch" schemes in Bradley Green and Stock Green where 90% of respondents wished it to be maintained.

Furthermore, additional schemes such as "Horse Watch" and "Water Watch" are under consideration by the West Mercia Neighbourhood Association, led by Adrian Symonds.

Concerns continue regarding the speed of vehicles through Bradley Green, though the recently amended speed limits may well reduce this.

The Rural Beat Manager regularly attends Parish Council meetings both to advise and to receive comment.

Finally, the availability of a Community Policeman to advise on security (on a pre-booked basis) should be noted.

Future Priorities

Key priorities are recommended as follows: -

- Increase membership of "Neighbourhood Watch".
- Renew relationship with the Community Police Representative and West Mercia Neighbourhood Watch Association.



UTILITIES

Stock and Bradley is currently served by mains water and electricity (mainly via overhead cables) but is deficient in a mains gas supply and both surface water and foul sewerage. The survey asked residents whether they would be interested in a mains gas connection but did not cover mains sewerage. It should be noted at this point that any improvement to the Utilities serving the area could make the Parish more attractive to outside developers which would be contrary to the wishes of the majority of people.

Electricity Supply

The electricity supply to some parts of the Parish is erratic at times with faults occurring often leading to disruption to the supply. This is typically for a short length of time but has also occurred over several days without the Electricity Provider taking any responsibility for the subsequent disruption. The survey indicated that pressure should be put on the Electricity Provider to ensure a more stable supply and thereby reduce these power cuts.

Gas Supply

In common with many rural areas there are no gas supplies to the Parish. 70% of the respondents to the survey indicated that they would be interested in a connection to a mains gas supply. National Grid Transco will provide a quotation for a supply to the Parish. This will require the names and addresses of all interested parties to be collected and submitted to them. They will then estimate the amount of work required to bring a new supply to the area and divide that cost between the residents for payment. If there is sufficient agreement to meet the cost and the scheme is successful, this cost will be applied to anyone wishing to make a connection for the subsequent 10 years.

Surface Water

Surface water drainage currently goes through a system of ditches into local watercourses and is therefore heavily reliant on maintenance of the ditches and capacity of the watercourses. The survey indicated that there are problems with surface/storm water flooding in the area.

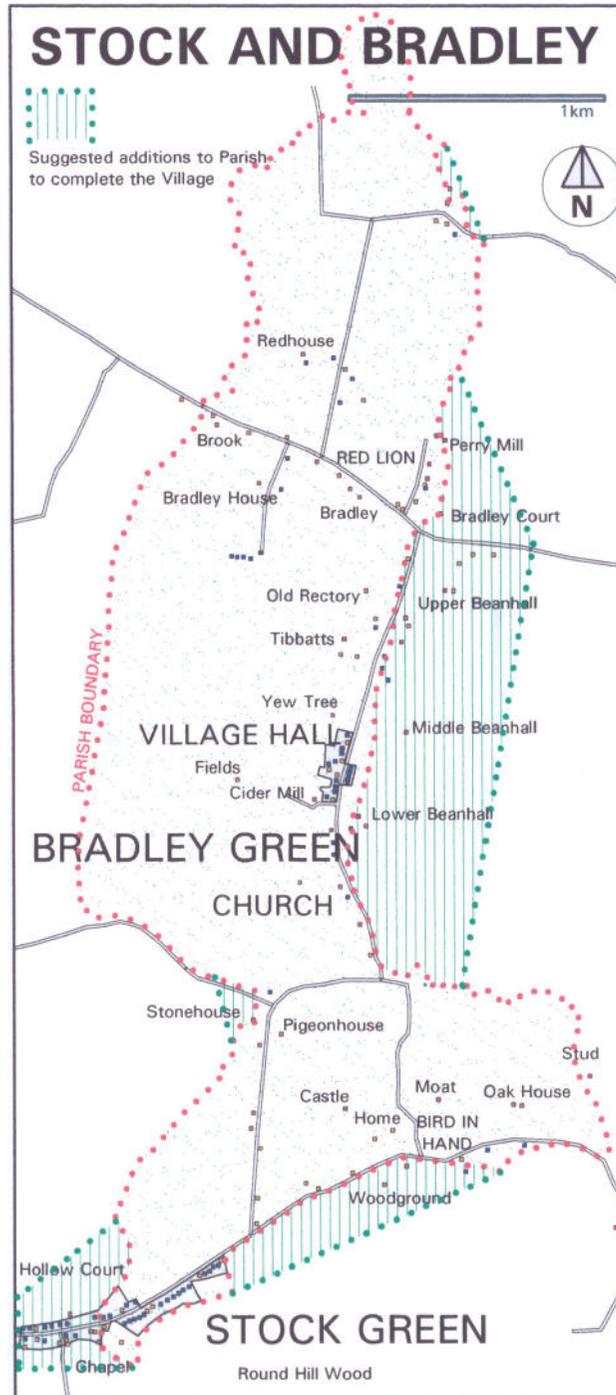
Foul Water

Residents rely on a mix of private systems for foul drainage with a majority (93%) using septic tanks and a minority using soakaways/cess pits. There has been an increasing incidence of smell nuisances reported and it therefore remains the responsibility of all residents to ensure the proper function, by regular emptying and maintenance, of these private systems to prevent nuisance to neighbours.

There is a history of problems at Stock Green due to foul drainage entering the ditch courses, stagnating and causing a significant environmental nuisance and much distress to the residents. Residents have found themselves caught between a disagreement over responsibility between Wychavon District Council, who are responsible for the ditches, and Severn Trent Water who are responsible for sewerage. Finally, in February 2006 Severn Trent Water confirmed their commitment to the commencement for detailed feasibility and design of a project to provide sewerage and local treatment for 46 dwellings in Stock Green. This is good news for the residents affected, but will take time to come to fruition due to the requirement for land acquisition, planning permission, and drainage consent for the new treatment works. The key to success lies with residents maintaining the pressure on Severn Trent Water to provide a solution within their current 5-year expenditure cycle otherwise it could be several years before construction starts on the project.



VILLAGE



VILLAGE ENVELOPE

Within the parish boundary there are 129 residential properties.

Adjacent to the parish there are a further 46 properties. Although they are in either Stock Green or Bradley Green they are in fact in the adjoining parishes of Hanbury, Inkberrow or Feckenham inspite of the fact that they are some distance away from those villages and have little or no connection with them. All properties are liable for Council Tax but only those within the Parish pay the parish precept, effectively the owners of 129 properties pay for the Parish services enjoyed by all 175 properties. Currently all seven parish councillors live in the villages but three live outside the parish, because of this anomaly. The Wychavon District Council consults the Parish Council only on planning applications within the parish. For other applications within the villages but outside of the parish, the adjoining Parish Councils are consulted which can cause concern to nearby residents.

In Bradley Green some the houses on the east side of Church Road are within the Borough of Redditch, whilst the remainder, and most of those on the west side, are within Wychavon District. The access drives to those on the east side are all within Wychavon, but Redditch Borough are responsible for collecting their refuse. The residents of these properties also come within the Borough of Redditch for elections and have to drive out of the village to vote.

In Stock Green, the houses at the southern end of Earls Common Road are in the Parish of Hanbury. Several years ago houses at the northern end of Earls Common Road, which were then in Inkberrow parish, were incorporated into Stock and Bradley.

As part of the Parish Plan the Boundary Commission should be asked to review this situation and in consultation with the Parish Council, Borough of Redditch and Wychavon District Council redefine the parish boundary to include all the houses in the villages.

ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

The Conclusion to the Parish Plan requires an Action Plan to summarise the issues that will need to be taken forward for more detailed investigation and consideration. The success of the Parish Plan will be wholly dependent on the motivation and support of Stock and Bradley Parishioners as further volunteers will be needed to form Working Groups to tackle the issues head-on and progress the Action Plans. Please help if you can to help make the Parish Plan a reality and something we can all be proud of.

Road Safety

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Determine whether the recent changes to speed limits have been effective at reducing speeds.	Establish feedback from Worcestershire County Council (WCC) following the recent induction-loop traffic survey and the Police following the recent speed camera monitoring.	Parish Council	HIGH
2 Campaign for a scheme to promote safer roads for all roads users without adversely affecting the existing environment valued by so many residents.	Formation of a Road Safety Action Group to take on the issues on behalf of the community, including a review of the provision of footpaths	Parish Council, WCC and the Road Safety Action Group	HIGH
3 Protect historical features associated with Transport	Review whether the Worcester Cross Milestone can be repaired and protected. Determine other historical features of local interest that may need protection and how best to achieve this.	Parish Council and interested volunteers	LOW

Accessibility

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Provide support for people without access to a car	Assess and understand the scale of the problem, both now and in the future. Investigate the Feasibility of a Rural Transport Partnership or Grant Scheme Investigate the Feasibility and support for a Voluntary Transport Scheme.	Parish Council to promote with the assistance of interested volunteers.	MEDIUM

ACTION PLAN

The Environment

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Provide protection for important trees and ponds	Establish the status of important Trees or groups of Trees and consider the potential application of Tree Protection Orders. Establish the environmental significance of ponds and whether a National or Local designation can be applied to safeguard them	Parish Council to promote with the assistance of interested volunteers or an Environmental Champion or Working Group and with the help of affected landowners and Wychavon District Council.	MEDIUM
2 Provide protection for the remaining ridge and furrow areas.	Identify the sites and establish whether SSSI status or an appropriate National or Local designation can be applied to protect them.		MEDIUM
3 Consider the extension of measures to protect the quality of the countryside.	Review the application of Government incentives schemes including Countryside Stewardship Agreements and determine the possible interest for extension to other areas within the Parish		MEDIUM
4 Glass recycling initiative to extend to Stock Green	Lobby Wychavon to extend the scheme	Parish Council	HIGH
5 Provision of a skip for garden waste	Investigate whether Wychavon will fund a scheme and where it could be sited to be of use.	Parish Council with the support of an Environmental Champion or Working Group	MEDIUM
6 Keep Village tidy	Discussion with property owners to encourage good-neighbourliness.		MEDIUM

Church and Chapel

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Financial support for urgent repairs for the Church	Establish the scale of works required, the timescales involved and suitable cost estimates. Review sources of Grant aid, donations and the effectiveness of Fund-raising activities.	Parochial Church Council with the support of Parishioners and Parish Council	HIGH
2 Improvements to the field road access to the Church	Negotiation with the owner of the field road regarding access arrangements. Determine the scale of improvements required, estimate costs and consider further with possible benefactors.		MEDIUM

ACTION PLAN

Education

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 To improve availability of Adult Education for Parishioners.	Investigate local needs and the degree of support; identify suitable providers and determine how the financial costs can be met.	Seek volunteers through The Chronicle with the support of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee in conjunction with all relevant public/private bodies.	MEDIUM
2 Determine the requirement and support for a Play Group and Youth Group and instigate if sufficient demand is demonstrated.	Undertake a Feasibility Study to identify the need within the community and determine sources of funding. Establish a Working Group to promote and make a reality.	Parish Council with the support of volunteers	MEDIUM

Leisure and Amenities

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Keep the Village Hall open with appropriate leisure activities of interest to the whole community.	Ongoing support will be required from the Parish to maintain a viable Village Hall	Parish Council , Village Hall Committee and all Parishioners	HIGH
2 Assess the need and viability of a shop or a drop-in centre based at the Village Hall	Establish the level of real interest and support within the Parish and possible sources of any Grant funding. Determine financial viability in a report to the Village Hall Committee and Parish Council	Seek volunteers through The Chronicle with the support of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee	MEDIUM
3 Safeguard access and use of bridleways and footpaths	To be reviewed and regularly maintained to the agreed standard	Footpath Officers and landowners in association with the Highways Authority.	MEDIUM
4 Encourage a more proactive approach to membership of Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch and other relevant neighbourhood security groups	Publicise availability and benefits to individuals in fighting crime in the community.	Parish Council together with interested parties.	MEDIUM
5 Understand the relationship with Community Police, recognise their Representative and use their services where appropriate.	Raise the profile of the Community Police Representatives and how they can be of service to Parishioners	Parish Council and Community Police	MEDIUM

ACTION PLAN

Communications

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Faster Broadband to be made available	Petition BT with a list of all local residents who would be interested in a faster connection.	Parish Council	MEDIUM
2 Maintain the quality and interest in the Chronicle	Review ways of encouraging more contributions and support from Parishioners.	Chronicle Editors with the support of Parishioners	MEDIUM
3 Establish a Parish Website	Confirm the support amongst Parishioners and undertake a Feasibility Study to determine the viability and Grant availability and a strategy for making this happen.	Seek volunteers through the Chronicle with the support of the Parish Council	MEDIUM
4 Provide free local newspapers as available in surrounding Towns and Villages.	Determine what local newspapers could be sourced free of charge and with minimal cost for distribution, or alternatively develop a strategy for collection from a central location.		MEDIUM
5 Greater village representation	Local person to be sought to champion village issues to the wider media.		LOW

UTILITIES

Surface Water Drainage

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 No flooding affecting properties	Identify properties concerned due to poorly maintained ditches and watercourses and address issues	Parish Council and District Council in conjunction with affected residents.	HIGH

Foul Water Drainage

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 No smell nuisance	Residents to review their current provisions and ensure a proper programme of maintenance and repair are followed.	All property owners are to recognise their responsibilities and maintain existing systems.	HIGH
2 Unacceptable situation at Stock Green to be resolved without further delay.	Maintain momentum with Severn Trent Water to provide a viable solution without adverse delay	Parish Council and concerned residents	HIGH

ACTION PLAN

Electricity Supply

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Reduce disruption to supplies serving the Parish	Lobby Electricity Provider and MP	Parish Council	MEDIUM

Gas Supply

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Establish support for a mains gas supply	Petition of support to be organised and sent to National Grid Transco asking for a free quotation for a new supply Feedback costs to residents and establish the level of support and financial commitment.	Parish Council	MEDIUM

VILLAGE ENVELOPE

Goal	Action	By Whom	Priority
1 Revise Parish boundaries at Bradley Green and Stock Green	Request a review of Parish Boundaries by the Boundary Commission,	Parish Council to initiate	MEDIUM

REFERENCES

Supporting Parish Plans, Wychavon District Council

www.countryside.gov.uk

Dealing With Traffic Issues In Rural Areas, Project Report, The Countryside Agency.

<http://wychavon.whub.org.uk>

www.magic.gov.uk

Noake's Worcestershire, Page 326, Stock and Bradley

www.visionofbritain.org.uk

