

Hartlebury Parish Plan and Village Design Statement



Foreword

Welcome to Hartlebury's Parish Plan and Village Design Statement.

The title 'Hopes for Hartlebury' was used in the early planning stages of this document as it captured the enthusiasm, energy, imagination, views and vision of the people who live, work and play in Hartlebury.

That vision has resulted in this Parish Plan and Village Design Statement.

However, this Plan is only the beginning of an ongoing process. The Parish Council will use the strategic aims and objectives identified by the Parish Plan Steering Group, following extensive consultation, to inform their planning and budgeting and Wychavon District Council will adopt it as a 'local information source' in planning considerations.

The Plan is intended to be a working document which will be referred to and revised annually.

Our thanks go to all who contributed to Hopes for Hartlebury: our Parish Plan and Village Design Statement.

Sandra Hickman
Chair of Parish Plan Steering Group
Vice Chair of Parish Council
June 2016

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Acknowledgments

Special mention and thanks must go to Caro Boughton-Thomas and Christian Walker. Their considerable knowledge and input into this Plan has been invaluable. Special thanks also to Simon Fletcher for his contribution and to Ray Kirby for supplying Community Survey data. Cover photograph: S. Tranter.

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MAP of Hartlebury Parish

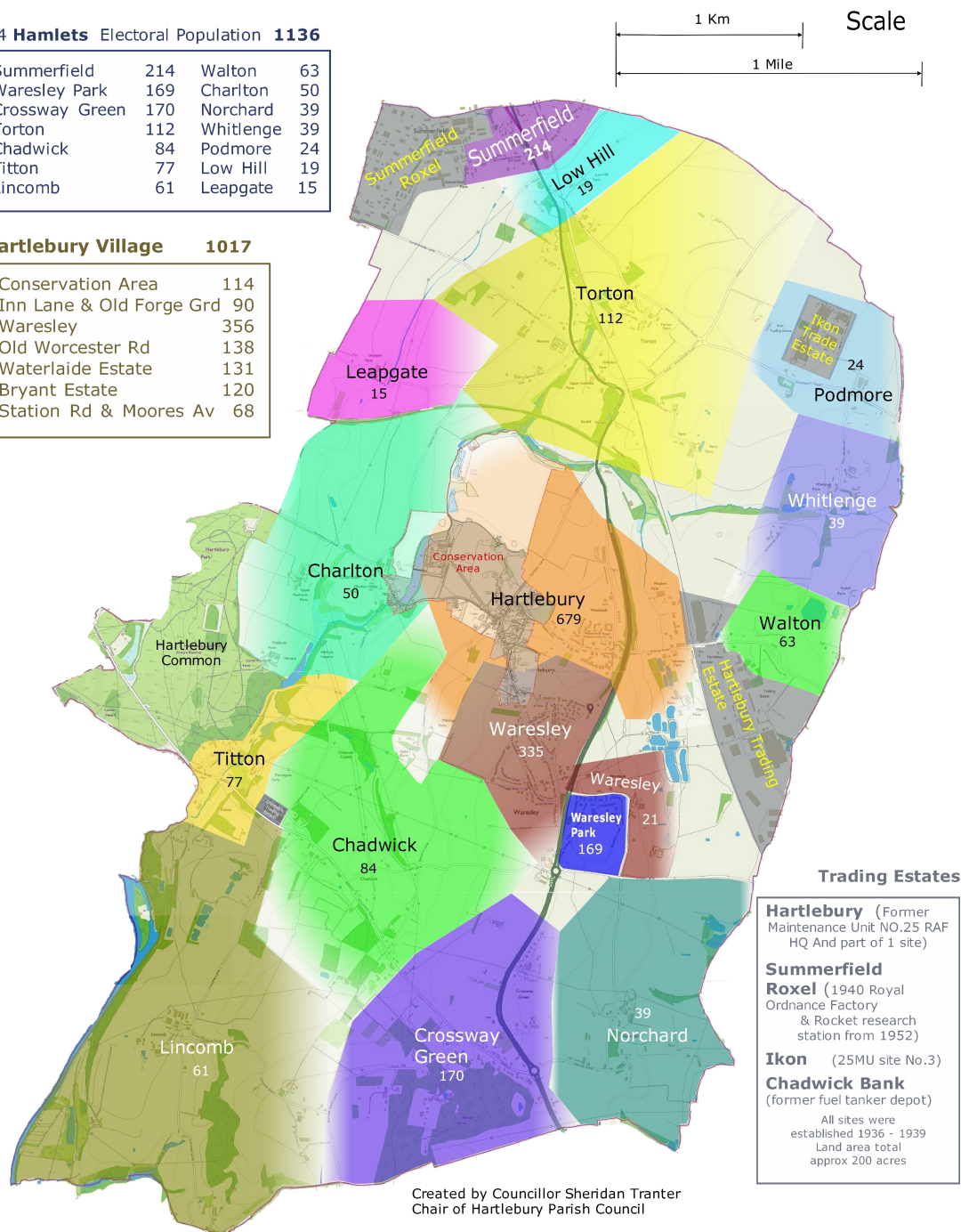
Showing Population Based on the Electoral Register 2014 - 2015

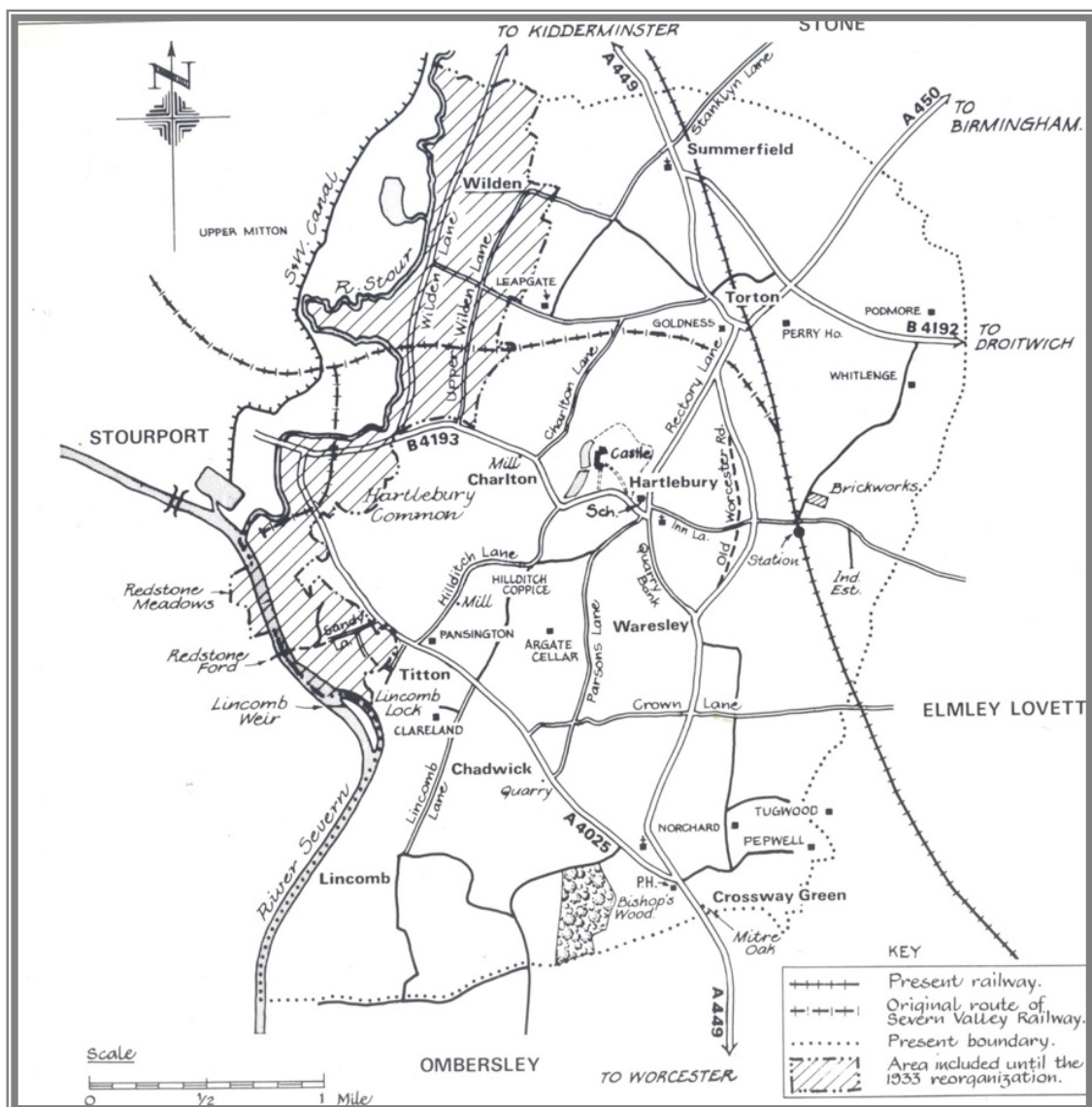
14 Hamlets Electoral Population 1136

Summerfield	214	Walton	63
Waresley Park	169	Charlton	50
Crossway Green	170	Norchard	39
Torton	112	Whitleng	39
Chadwick	84	Podmore	24
Titton	77	Low Hill	19
Lincomb	61	Leapgate	15

Hartlebury Village 1017

Conservation Area	114
Inn Lane & Old Forge Grd	90
Waresley	356
Old Worcester Rd	138
Waterlaide Estate	131
Bryant Estate	120
Station Rd & Moores Av	68





1. Description of the Parish

Hartlebury is the most northerly parish in the district of Wychavon in the county of Worcestershire. It is made up of 14 hamlets and Hartlebury Village (see previous map). It lies south of Kidderminster and east of Stourport, both of which are in the Wyre Forest district. The parishes of Elmley Lovett and Ombersley form its eastern and southern boundaries. Hartlebury Common, 229 acres of heathland with a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), provides a barrier to developing Stourport.

The Parish has an electorate of more than 2100 and is served by a Parish Council with 13 elected members. The village is mainly a rural residential area which is growing constantly. In recent years, the estates of Regents Gate, Waresley Park and Bowbrook Grange have brought in new residents.

The centre of the village, has been designated a conservation area since 1969. A full description can be found in the document prepared in March 2010 by Wychavon District Council entitled Hartlebury **Conservation Area**, which was adopted in January 2011 and is available, with a series of excellent photographs, on line at:

wychavon.gov.uk/documents/hartlebury



Hartlebury Castle, formerly home to Bishops of Worcester for some 800 years, is the jewel in the crown. Worcestershire County Museum occupies the north wing, a fine Chapel the south wing, and the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust has recently been successful in obtaining Heritage Lottery funding to purchase the Castle from the Church Commissioners. The success of the bid is a great achievement and will ensure the establishment of the Castle and Parkland as a major tourist attraction for the village, with the Hurd Library's future in the room built for it by Bishop Richard Hurd in 1783 safeguarded. **The Hartlebury Castle Conservation Statement** was published by Wychavon District Council in January 2008 and is also available on line.



A by-pass constructed in the 1970s takes most of the major traffic out of the village centre and the parish has good transport links, with a regular bus service between Kidderminster and Worcester. The railway station is on the main Hereford to Birmingham line and has an hourly service following recent efforts to ensure that more trains call. Access to Junction 6 of the M5 motorway (some 10 miles away) is via the A449 dual carriageway.

Employment is provided by units on the Hartlebury Trading Estate, which was formed from the former RAF No. 25 Maintenance Unit, created in 1938 and closed in 1977. The largest unit currently on the site is Wienerberger (the former Baggeridge Brick Company) employing some 150 people. Part of the Trading Estate lies in the parish of Elmley Lovett and is served by purpose-built access via Crown Lane off the A449. There are two smaller estates at Chadwick Bank (a fuel distribution centre during the Second World War) and on the Droitwich Road (the Ikon Trading Estate) much of which is just outside the parish. At Summerfield, at

the extreme north end of the parish, is a rocket fuel research station, created by ICI, later taken over by the MoD and now known as Roxel.

Farming has always played an important role within the area and is still a major source of employment, supplying supermarkets and farm shops, of which there are two within the parish. Major areas of land have recently been sold by the Church Commissioners and have been put down to asparagus, which is also sold at the farm gate by established farmers. One of the farms raises and dresses ducks, which are then sold direct from the farmyard. In former years many farms supplied sugar beet to the processing plant at Kidderminster, which has been closed, so they must now send their crop further afield.

2. History and Heritage

2.1 Origin of Parish Name

The spelling of the name 'Hartlebury' has changed over time; it was Heortlabyrig in 817AD, stemming from 'heortla' meaning hart, as in deer, and 'byrig' meaning an enclosed or fortified place. In effect 'The Hill of the Deer'. The land was granted by Burghred, King of Mercia, to the Bishops of Worcester in 850AD. There was an extensive deer park at Hartlebury Castle, which for centuries was the home of the Bishops of Worcester. The house, initially a simple structure which was first mentioned in 1237, changed over the years as it became fortified and crenulated and acquired a moat. The medieval part of the castle, which can be seen today, dates from 1375 - 1395, and is the only part of the moat still in existence.

2.2 History

Through the troubled times of Welsh, Danish and Saxon incursions, Hartlebury sheltered some remarkable history-makers amongst its lords. Before there was a King of England, there was a Bishop of Worcester; before there was a castle at Windsor, there was one at Hartlebury. In those times, the bishop was a temporal as well as a spiritual lord. Some of the bishops were very important in the land, among them Dunstan, who made himself the virtual ruler under weak and irresolute kings, and Wulstan, whose army repressed the rebellion of Roger, the Norman Earl of Hereford, against William the Conqueror. One of Hartlebury's rectors, Miles Smith, was one of the translators of the Authorised Version of the Bible. In the eighteenth century, we see Bishop Hurd establishing a very important library which is much valued by academics today. During the First World War a convalescent hospital was established at the castle in what was once the stable block, but later became a college for clergy. This was run by the two sisters for whom the Pleck House had been built and was staffed by V.A.D. nurses, many of them local.

Hartlebury has grown considerably and is now very much becoming a dormitory village for surrounding industrial areas and modern houses have been built in and around the old village centre. There is now only one of the historic inns left in the village – the White Hart, opposite the church. Sadly, the Talbot Inn, below, is to be converted to housing, with houses to be built in its car park. It faces the Post Office, which itself is a very important part of Hartlebury village life. Hartlebury has little of the olde-worlde charm and appeal of some of the villages in Wychavon such as Ombersley, Offenham and Cropthorne, but it has an interesting history and is generally pleasing to the eye, with a very attractive conservation area and, of course, Hartlebury Castle. It is considered a highly desirable place in which to live. Sadly, today's bishops have moved on from the castle in favour of a style of living more appropriate to modern times.



2.3 Religion

The conservation area is centred on St James's church where the churchyard, park and numerous mature trees provide the settings to many of the village's historic buildings and make a valuable contribution to the village's character and appearance.

The present church of St James the Apostle was consecrated in 1837 but the first mention of a resident priest can be found in the Domesday Survey of 1086, which would suggest that there was some form of church in Hartlebury at that time. Bishop Samson (1096 - 1115) gave the church at 'Heartlabiri' for the use of the Monks of Worcester. The church was rebuilt again in the 13th century, and in the 14th century it was temporarily closed following a murder. Various parts of the church were added through the centuries and in 1818 the rector restored the chancel at his own expense, saying that the church was 'ruinous and unseemly and the most unfitted for its purpose of any within 20 miles'. The present church was built on the foundations of the 13th century building and its total cost was £7,000, the sandstone being quarried in nearby Quarry Bank and Chadwick. There are portions of the earlier buildings still visible in the fabric of the present church. The Congregation of St James has published a very informative leaflet giving a detailed history of the building and these leaflets are available in the church.



Clearing the Leaves, St. James' Churchyard – From an original watercolour by Di Watson

2.4 Conservation Areas and Historic Buildings

The Hartlebury Conservation Area forms the core of the large and ancient parish, consisting of a considerable number of hamlets. There was also a rural farming community, though little evidence of this remains within the conservation area that was designated in 1969 and updated in 2010.

The conservation area is largely unaffected by 20th century development, retaining elements of its historic plan, open spaces and numerous substantial trees. A range of building periods are demonstrated in the historic buildings, the most notable being: Hartlebury Castle, St James's Church, the Old Rectory, Church Cottage, the Old Grammar School and the New Elizabethan School. There are fifty listed buildings in the Parish. One such Grade II listed building is Waresley House. A country house built in the latter part of the 18th Century it remained in use as such until it was converted to a school in the 20th Century, which resulted in some development within its grounds. After the closure of the school planning permission was granted to convert the house to apartments and to develop parts of its grounds for housing.



2.5 Hartlebury Castle and Bishop Hurd's Library

The castle connects the village to significant national history, including the Civil War and the later Restoration, as well as hosting visiting monarchs including King Edward I, Queen Elizabeth I, King George III, and the present Queen, Elizabeth II. Many of the residing bishops have left their mark on the palace, perhaps the most notable being Bishop Hurd who, in 1782, created a purpose-built library that still contains his extensive and unique collection of books including works from the libraries of Pope and Warburton. In recent years the significance of the Hurd Library has begun to be fully appreciated as an important part of the county's, and indeed, the nation's cultural heritage. When in 2008 the bishops' residence was moved to Worcester, the future of the castle became uncertain. With the founding of the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust, the building and immediate grounds have been secured thanks to a £5million grant in 2014 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Work is now underway to turn the castle into a regional heritage attraction.



Hartlebury Castle in Springtime – From an original watercolour by Eve Jones

2.6 Hartlebury Common

Location: just off the B1495 Stourport to Hartlebury Road. DY13 9JB.

OS Grid Reference: 824707

Hartlebury Common comprises some 229 acres of land officially established under the Enclosure Act of 1821. It is unique for two reasons: firstly, it has been 'common land' since at least the mediaeval era and so has never been cultivated; secondly it has Worcestershire's only heathland bog and contains several species of plant that occur nowhere else in the county. The common was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 1979 and, together with nearby Hilditch Coppice, is a biological and geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Regarded as one of Worcestershire's most important nature reserves, Hartlebury Common is noted for its wild plants and over 100 species of moths and butterflies. Fauna include grazing cattle and a variety of woodland birds in the mature oak woods.

Archaeologists, as well as botanists, have declared interest in Hartlebury Common, with Mesolithic and Neolithic artefacts discovered at the site. There is also evidence of a circular earthwork enclosure that may have been used as a religious site, a settlement or an observation post in prehistoric times.

The common is criss-crossed by a series of way-marked paths and is popular with walkers, horse riders and those walking their dogs.

In 1986 an informative book by P.J. Alma, J.J. Tucker and Sara Zaluckyj was published entitled *Hartlebury Common: A Social and Natural History*.

2.7 Footpaths in the Parish

Hartlebury is extremely fortunate to have a network of footpaths within the Parish and, what is more, to have a wonderful volunteer Footpaths Warden who looks after them. He walks the footpaths regularly, taking his secateurs with him, and makes sure that the paths are kept open, properly signposted, and in a fit state for everyone to enjoy. Sometimes he takes a chain saw to clear branches and even fallen trees. He also keeps the grass down by mowing when and where necessary. This is a wonderful service which should not be taken for

granted! Recently details of two circular walks within the Parish have been published as leaflets, showing exactly where these can be accessed. Both are published by Worcestershire County Council and can be downloaded. 'Hartlebury Village Circular' is 1.5 miles long and 'Hartlebury – Leapgate Circular' is 2.5 miles. A growing series of these walks is planned by our warden.



2.8 RAF Hartlebury and Hartlebury Trading Estate

In 1938, with war clouds gathering over Europe, the War Office opened Number 25 Maintenance Unit R.A.F. Hartlebury. Aircraft spares were distributed over seven sites to minimise the risk of enemy attack. The sites were all within a few miles of Headquarters, and most were inside Hartlebury Parish boundaries. The unit was never accurately targeted, although bombs were dropped in the vicinity.

The unit was a major employer of staff in the local area and, at the height of the Cold War, employed well over 2000 civilian staff across the 7 sites. Headquarters and No 1 site, always the biggest in the area, eventually became Hartlebury Trading Estate. The remaining sites trading under other names are still recognisable as ex-military buildings.

The Maintenance Unit had a cricket pitch and pavilion, football pitch, tennis courts, archery club and an amateur dramatic society.

In 1978, following a Defence review, the R.A.F closed operations at Hartlebury and sold the sites to various private companies. Today the Hartlebury Trading Estate is Worcestershire's largest of its type, extending over 200 acres. It offers a space for many small, medium and large companies, with national and international trading links. It still provides jobs for the community and has modern brickworks sending bricks made with Hartlebury clay all across the country. Presently under construction is an Energy from Waste Plant (incinerator) built under Worcestershire County Council's waste management programme.



The Morgan Garage – From an original painting by Di Watson

Situated on the Old Worcester Road, which was formerly the main road between Kidderminster and Worcester, a business was first established here in 1927. At one time a busy filling station and tea room, and for many years the base of former racing driver and aviator Geoff Richardson, the current Morgan Garage is a cherished landmark for many of Hartlebury's parishioners.

3. Current situation of Parish

3.1 Population

Hartlebury has a population of 2,714 with a total of 1,150 dwellings. The breakdown of figures for the population are shown below:-

16% of the total population are under 16	= 435
63.2% of the total population are aged between 16 and 64	= 1716
20.7% of the total population are aged 65 and over	= 563
[taken from 2011 census data]	

As a result of recent housing developments in Hartlebury we can estimate that there may be a further 300 residents to be added to this figure over the next few years.

There are 800 residents over 60. 72% of the population have been classified by ACORN* as 'Affluent Achievers'.

A total of 8.8% of the population work mainly from home and 51.2% drive a car or van to work.

There were 172 crimes recorded during 2012-13 and 90 anti-social behaviour incidents.

(*N.B. ACORN: Taking advantage of the new data environment created by government policies on Open Data, Acorn is a consumer classification that segments the UK population. By analysing demographic data, social factors, population and consumer behaviour, it provides precise information and an understanding of different types of people.)

3.2 Parish Council

Hartlebury is served by a Parish Council, comprising 13 elected members who serve for four years, and a Parish Clerk. The Council also employs a Parish Lengthsman who keeps drains and gulleys clear and on occasions assists the Footpaths Warden.

The Council meets at 7pm on the first Tuesday of every month in the New Elizabethan School. All meetings are open to the public and at the start of every meeting half-an-hour is set aside to take points or questions from parishioners. Agendas for these meetings, together with minutes and relevant information are displayed on Parish Council Noticeboards throughout the Parish, in the Parish Magazine and on the Council's dedicated website www.hartlebury.org.uk

The Council has a variety of powers and duties, all of which impact directly on the community. The members – most of whom were elected or co-opted in 2015 – have undertaken training to enable them to perform their responsibilities to a high standard, but it should be recognised that the actual power they hold is limited and that the major initiatives and decisions have to be undertaken under the auspices of Wychavon District Council. The area the District Council covers is vast and Hartlebury is right on its north-western border.

We are fortunate to have a District Councillor who lives in the Parish and who was a member of the previous Parish Council. He also attends many of our Parish Council meetings and makes sure that Hartlebury's concerns are well-represented at District level.

3.3 Education

Hartlebury Church of England Primary School

The primary school is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school, funded by central government via the Local Authority. There is a close link between the school and the Parish Church and two foundation governors are appointed by the Parochial Church Council. The school was originally built in 1878 when the then rector, Revd. John Haviland, gave part of his orchard for the purpose. There have been many additions and alterations over the years, especially since the war, but the Victorian building is still in daily use. Following many years as a First School, under the recent Wyre Forest Review the school opened as a new Primary school in September 2007, catering for children from 5 to 11. The school has capacity for 175 children and is almost full. At the end of their time at Hartlebury pupils usually transfer to Stourport High School and there is close co-operation between all of the schools in the Stourport "pyramid". The school was rated "good" in its latest Ofsted report in September 2013 and in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools in March 2012 it was stated that "Hartlebury is an outstanding Church School in which children are enabled to flourish spiritually, physically and academically". From September 2014 Hartlebury has been taking children from 3 years old into their Early Years Unit within the main school building. The Unit

is now a non-maintained, school-based provision, managed by the Primary School. This ensures a smooth transition for the children who move into the Primary phase of their schooling.



The New Elizabethan School

There is also a small independent fee-paying school in Hartlebury, occupying the buildings of the historic former Queen Elizabeth Grammar School.

The Cambian New Elizabethan School is a day school that offers opportunities for boys and girls aged from 7 to 19 with a diagnosis of communication difficulties, autism spectrum conditions, complex needs and challenging behaviour.

The school states that each child receives an Individualised Education Programme, which is tailored to meet their specific needs and is supported by a multidisciplinary team that includes: psychology, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, specialist teachers and support staff. When last inspected by Ofsted in 2013 there were 21 pupils on the school roll.



3.4 Religion in Hartlebury today

The Parish Church of St James is open every day from:

9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. March – October

9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. November – February

Church services are held every Sunday morning and there is a regular and loyal congregation. The first service in each month is lay-led.

The church is the focal point in the Conservation Area and is widely recognised in the community as an important landmark and historical building, as verified by answers to the Survey. It is a Grade II* listed building and is highly-valued by its regular weekly congregation. However, churchgoing in Hartlebury has dwindled over recent years – as in so many places – and no longer plays the important part in people's lives that was once taken for granted, particularly in a village. The loss of a resident priest was keenly felt and Hartlebury is now just one among seven parishes to be served by one incumbent. As in so many villages, the Parish

Priest is no longer to be seen walking his dog, greeting parishioners and available to be talked to, or ignored, according to the feelings of those he (or she, these days) encounters. This is a huge change and has surely affected the sense of 'belonging' that many people used to feel.

The beautiful Queen Anne former rectory was sold off in the 1980s and two modern houses served to accommodate clergy until the home of the shared parish priest became an equally modern house in the neighbouring parish of Ombersley – whose parish church, in common with Hartlebury, was also designed by the Victorian architect, Thomas Rickman. Those who wish to attend a Methodist church must go to Stourport and Roman Catholics have the choice of the modern church in Vale Road, Stourport, or the more ancient building next to Harvington Hall. Bishop Philpott built a chapel of ease at Crossway Green, which is easier for people to reach than the parish church, and also served the people of Norchard. It stands beside the A449 within what is today's parish burial ground. The mission church at Summerfield, known affectionately as the 'tin tabernacle' has long gone and has been re-developed as a private house. As in so many places, the upkeep and maintenance of the church buildings is a problem, with an ageing congregation and fewer people prepared to shoulder the responsibility.

In the community survey 83% of respondents said that St James' Church was very important or fairly important to them.



3.5 Amenities

There are a number of successful businesses which operate in the Parish.



The village itself is fortunate to have an excellent Post Office and General Store and also a hairdressing salon. There is also a small general store on the A4025 at Titton, providing take-away meals for those who work on the nearby Sandy Lane Industrial Estate.

The Talbot public house, one of the oldest buildings in the village, has recently closed down but there are still a number of thriving pubs in the Parish: The White Hart – on the opposite side of the B4023 road to Stourport, immediately opposite the church; the Tap House in the converted former railway ticket office; the Mitre Oak is a roadhouse at Crossway Green on the A449; and, on the main road toward Kidderminster, The Mare and Colt, serving Summerfield.



The Parish Hall, built in 1953 to celebrate the Queen's Coronation, has recently been refurbished to a high standard and further improvements are planned – together with the development of the car park and old tennis courts to provide further village amenities. Flats which flanked the Village Green, built at the same time as the Village Hall, have recently been demolished and replaced by a row of modern, more attractive houses – and, as part of the same scheme, further housing, at the north end of the Old Worcester Road, has also been provided. Behind these new houses are the allotments, which are worked mostly by people who live in the village and these are kept in a tidy and productive condition. There is a strong sense of community amongst the plot holders with a number showing their produce at the annual Gardening Show.

3.6 Public Transport

There is a regular bus service between Kidderminster and Worcester that diverts from the A449 and passes through part of the village and there is now a much-improved hourly train service, with trains to Birmingham, via Kidderminster; to Droitwich and Worcester, regularly stopping at Hartlebury station. The train station is a shadow of what Hartlebury enjoyed in the heyday of steam, when Hartlebury Junction was the starting point of the Severn Valley Railway. [Visit the Hartlebury History Society website www.hartleburyhistory.com/station.html for a truly fascinating account of Hartlebury's railway origins dating from 1852.]

3.7 Community Activities, Clubs and Societies

Hartlebury History Society

The History Society was formed in 1996, following an initial meeting in the Lindsey Room at St. James Church, when a Committee was established. The Committee is elected annually by the members and meets regularly. The function of the Society is:

'To present interesting and regular speakers on a variety of topics, where possible with special reference to Hartlebury and Worcestershire, but often more wide-ranging; and to research the life and times of the Parish'. Research is carried out by a sub-committee and/or any interested members when topics are identified.

The Society meets at the Parish Hall, at 7.30pm, on the third Thursday of each month (except August). Details of speaker for the evening are available on the membership card, on the HHS website and in Hartlebury Parish magazine.

The Society publishes *Discovery* magazine bi-annually containing a variety of historical articles. The magazine can be purchased from the Society and Hartlebury Post Office at a cost of £2.

Annual subscriptions are: Single £9.00; Two members at the same address £16.00

The entrance charges at meetings are: Members £2.00; Guests £3.00. *All are most welcome!*

New members are always welcome, and can join by completing an application form available from Members Secretary, Carol Priest on mandcp@talk21.com.

Visit www.hartleburyhistory.com

Hartlebury Gardening Club

Hartlebury Gardening Club was established during World War 2 as part of the "Dig for Victory" campaign. Several members have allotments, but most tend their own gardens with flowers and possibly a small vegetable plot. The Club meets once a month, at the Parish Hall, on the first Thursday in the month at 7.30 p.m. A speaker or demonstration is the usual format. Visits to gardens of interest are also arranged. The annual flower show takes place at the Parish Hall in September. This includes vegetables, flowers, art and crafts, together with a photographic competition and one just for children. New members are always welcome. Membership £4 per annum single, or £6 double.

Hartlebury Poetry Group

"Poetry fettered, fetters the human race. Nations are destroyed or flourish in proportion as their poetry, painting and music are destroyed or flourish."

William Blake

For almost 20 years a small group of poetry devotees have met to share and enjoy a mutual love of poetry, and at the same time discover and re-discover both the well-loved familiar old favourites and the new exciting poets writing today.

Known as the Hartlebury Poetry Group, meetings are held monthly in members' homes, currently on the last Monday afternoon in each month. It is a diverse group with eclectic tastes which have taken them to the four corners of the globe in the verse and prose they have read. As with any creative activity, sharing poetry, and reading it aloud, greatly enhances the pleasure of the poems, and this is very much the aim of the group. "Genuine poetry," said T.S. Eliot "can communicate before it is understood," and this has been the experience of the group.

Poetry-reading as a group is fun, and with this in mind the group would like to grow, gain new members and take a role in village activities. Anyone interested in joining this small relaxed group should contact: Diane Maughan on 01299 250821.

Hartlebury W.I.

2015 was the 100th anniversary of the Women's Institute organisation and the 94th anniversary for Hartlebury W.I., so this is a well-established group whose aim is to provide all kinds of opportunities for all kinds of women. For some it is an opportunity to meet and make friends; for others it is a way of learning new skills and for some it is the campaigning aspect of the organisation which will be of greatest interest.

Meetings are held monthly, on the second Wednesday at 7.30 pm (except August) in the Parish Hall. Visitors are always welcome and are encouraged to just turn up, or contact a Committee member, who will be happy to accompany them for a first visit. The programme is varied and includes speakers on many different topics: craft and cookery demonstrations; music; keeping fit; first aid; wine-tasting; campaigning on local, national and international issues, and many more.

In addition to the monthly meetings there are also craft sessions, 'ladies who lunch' and many very different trips to places of interest. Activities and trips are also provided by Worcestershire Federation of W.I.s who can bring together interest groups from across the county. Denman College in Oxfordshire is also an exceptional national resource which provides a full programme of courses, and includes an award-winning cookery school.

The W.I. comes in all shapes and sizes. Newcomers can be involved in the way that suits them and are encouraged to come along and give it a try. They can be assured a warm welcome.

Hartlebury Art Group

The Hartlebury Art Group was formed in 2005 when a group of aspiring artists of all abilities met to enjoy and encourage each other in the creative pursuit of painting. This is a mixed group who actively support local events and charities. The first venture was selling paintings at a fete raising funds for The New Elizabethan School. The next outing was in the Parish Hall where paintings were sold to raise money for the fledgling Friends of Hartlebury Castle and The Hurd Library. Then an auction of paintings and promises was held at the British Legion to raise money for the fight against the incinerator. There have also been exhibitions in the Parish Hall, Village School, and Hartlebury Castle, all of which raised some funds for those venues.

In 2008 the first calendar of village life was published, illustrated by the group's paintings. The calendars were well-received and all the money raised went to a local charity. The calendar has become an annual event and has enabled the group to donate many hundreds of pounds to various local charities. In addition, cards have been produced and a mural for the Queen's Jubilee, which is currently displayed in the Parish Hall. The group work in all mediums and presently meet weekly at Hartlebury Castle. The aim is to continue to enjoy artistic pursuits while at the same time contributing to local events and charities. Some of their work can be seen in this Plan.



Virginia Creeper, just changing colour – From an original painting by Diane Maughan

Hartlebury Walking Group

The group was formed in 2004, with the aim of enjoying walking the footpaths in the Parish of Hartlebury and neighbouring areas, thereby getting to know the locality and other people from the village. It is an informal group without a committee. There is no formal membership or fees and the group is not affiliated to any formal rambling group or similar organisation. Walks normally take place on the 3rd Saturday afternoon of each month (except December), meeting at 1.15 pm. for a 1.30 pm start. Members of the group take it in turns to lead a walk, usually of around 4 – 6 miles. The schedule of walks and start-points are provided in advance and the arrangements are co-ordinated by Carol Priest who can be contacted on mandcp@talk21.com.

Torton Turds F.C.

Torton Turds Football Club grew from the remains of an older Hartlebury Football Club, The Taveners. It was founded in a pub (where else) by Alan Moule and has now been playing in the village for over 40 years.

Originally playing on the fields of St Gilbert's Boys School, the team played local teams on a friendly basis. In other words, no league fixtures, no punch-ups, and no arguing with the referee.

Later on a management structure was established consisting of Treasurer, Secretary, Manager and Fixtures Secretary – all of whom were elected unopposed at the first annual general meeting. The playing season is from September to April, playing both home and away games on Sunday mornings. The aim of the team has always been to encourage a spirit of camaraderie both between players and opposition teams. It is fortunate that there are a number of like-minded opposition teams in the area with whom a rapport has been built up. Football kits are, and have been, sponsored by many local businesses and gratitude goes to the Parish Hall Management Committee and the Parish Council for allowing the team to use their facilities.

In the 40-plus years of the team's life there have been over 120 players of all abilities who have played, and the policy has always been 'if you want to play, just bring your boots and you will be welcomed'. There are, in the village, generations of local families who have played for the club, and now their sons and grandsons (sometimes in the same match) are continuing the tradition of Sunday morning football on the Village Green.

The club is a mixture of light-hearted humour and responsibility, camaraderie and competitiveness, and it is hoped that these values are demonstrated by the players. It is the aim to continue to build a successful team and support the local community.

Since the year 2000, when the team held their first charity ball, the Torton Turds have raised significant sums of money which they have donated to charity. The ball has been held every two years and has never needed to be advertised, as tickets have always sold out without any outside publicity.

The Parish has reason to be grateful to John Maughan and his colleagues for all they have done to build and sustain this thriving group.



Celebrating Victory, Torton Turds F.C. – From an original watercolour by Alan Jones

In addition to the clubs and societies described above, there are at least two book groups who meet together informally and have done so over a number of years.

The '*Friends of Hartlebury*' are a group of people with the welfare of the village at heart. They arrange fund-raising events and hold periodic craft fairs at the Parish Hall, and the organisers have distributed sums of money by way of grants within the parish. They welcome applications for consideration.

The '*Queen Elizabeth 1 Foundation*' administers the buildings of the former Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and holds funds from which Trustees make grants. These are available for educational purposes to young people who approach them and fulfil the criteria laid down. Advertisements, from the Clerk to the Trustees, appear in the local press.

Parish charity funds

Several charitable trusts exist within Hartlebury parish. These include: four – 'Hannah Eyre', 'Mary Hurst's', 'William Hyde's' & 'The Almshouse' - which are 18th and 19th century bequests where the Parish Priest and Church Warden(s) are the trustees; a 17th century fund – the 'Samuel Manninge' charity - where two Parish Councillors and two residents are trustees; and the previously mentioned Queen Elizabeth 1 Trust.

The church's funds produce small amounts each year. Parishioners should approach the priest or church warden in the first instance.

The Manninge charity has a slightly larger amount available once a year for people facing financial hardship. It aims to make a payment during the summer, welcomes applications from parishioners, and it advertises during the spring each year.

The Queen Elizabeth 1 Trust makes grants to young people, for educational purposes. Applications can be made all year round.

All these charities have their own criteria for considering grants. All are only open to people resident in the (ancient) parish of Hartlebury.

3.8 Recent Developments

In more recent years there have been various developments, some more welcome than others. The Parish Hall has benefitted from being upgraded to incorporate showers for the football team and an enlarged updated kitchen for various functions. A committee organises the Hall's business and a variety of events are held there.

Two local garden centres have diversified to provide cooked food and other activities.

A VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) has been erected which has some deterrent effect on speeding traffic, although speeding and heavy goods vehicles through the village remain a problem.

The former Hartlebury railway station building has been converted to a public house and restaurant, with its own on-site micro brewery.

The railway signal box, also a landmark, was taken down by Network Rail in November 2012, as part of a larger regional scheme.

The Grade II listed Talbot Hotel was sold by its owners, the brewery, and is awaiting conversion into three dwellings. This is an important building historically and a landmark in the village. Sadly, it is not in the part of Hartlebury village designated as a Conservation Area where it would be offered some protection. The Parish Council and individual parishioners have strongly contested planning applications with regard to this building and have been dismayed to see it fall into disrepair.

The loss of the British Legion was also keenly felt by various members who met there as it was open daily and had been a thriving club in its day.

Villagers, in the main, had some considerable disquiet about the development of a 92 property housing estate with access off the Old Worcester Road.

The approval by Worcestershire County Council of an Energy from Waste plant (incinerator) in the Green Belt at Hartlebury Trading Estate, which is due to be commissioned in spring 2017, has been the most contentious and unwelcome scheme in recent years.

3.9 Crime and Policing

Hartlebury has a relatively low crime rate and Police presence is felt through the patrols made by the Community Support Officers who, when possible, attend Parish Council meetings and, when they cannot attend, send in a short report, covering such things as burglaries and petty theft from outbuildings, etc. Neighbourhood Watch is felt to be important so that residents can keep an eye on what is going on within the village and the scattered hamlets. However, a major source of annoyance is the high level of fly-tipping, especially when the contents of trailers full of conifer cuttings are dumped at night, blocking the lanes which connect different areas of the Parish. Even more distressing is when similar loads are dumped on farmland, where the farmer/owner has to take responsibility for clearance. This is seen by residents as very unfair and is extremely difficult to control. The use of the Smartwater crime-prevention system throughout the Parish is currently being explored, as a deterrent to thieves and to facilitate the recovery of stolen articles where crime has unfortunately occurred.

4. Parish Planning

4.1 Purpose and Process

Purpose

Parish Plans were introduced in 2000 as part of the government's Rural White Paper.

The reason for completing a Plan for Hartlebury is to provide:

- Direction and focus for the work of the Parish Council based on what people want

And in addition to provide:

- An information source on Hartlebury for Wychavon District Council
- Information for local developers
- Weight for Planning Decisions
- Evidence for Planning Appeals
- A source document for the Parish Council to justify their comments on Planning Applications
- Evidence for external funding bids

Process

Whilst the Parish Plan was initiated by the Parish Council, it was overseen by a Steering Group comprised of Parish Councillors and community volunteers. The contents of the Plan are a result of the work of that Steering Group following extensive consultation with all stakeholders* in Hartlebury.

- The process of collecting views began with a comprehensive 2013 'community survey' of all the households in Hartlebury. That questionnaire resulted in a **34% response rate**
- This was followed in 2015 by an open consultation event for all stakeholders which was held in the Parish Hall



- The views of young people were collected through a dedicated questionnaire
- Interviews were carried out with some local business-owners and farmers
- The Primary School undertook a project which was presented to the Parish Council
- A dedicated email address (hopesforhartlebury.hpc@gmail.com) was set up to receive comments and feedback
- A drop-in event was held in 2016 for comment on the proposed aims; to help prioritise the identified aims and objectives in the action plan; and to comment on the Village Design Statement
- A six-week period was allowed for comment and feedback on the draft Parish Plan

*Stakeholders = Residents; businesses; representatives from schools, church, clubs and societies, farms etc.

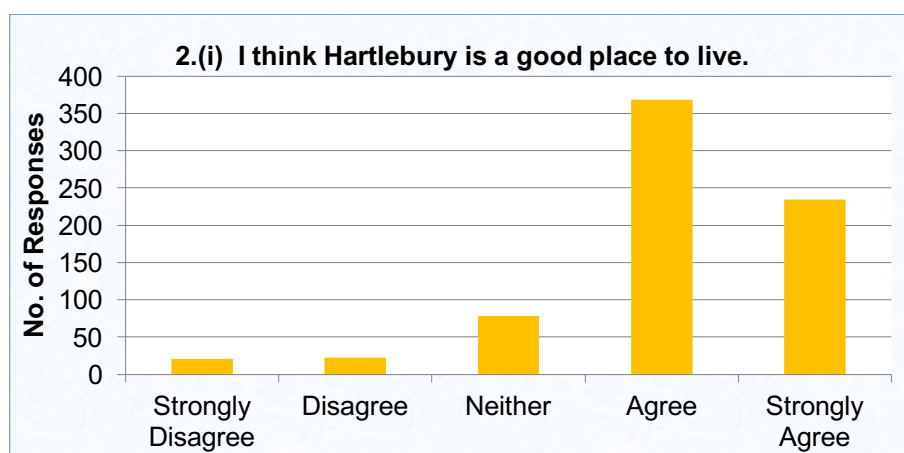
4.2(i) What people like about the Parish and want to retain

The vast majority of residents who responded to the community survey were homeowners (38%) and a total of 65% of respondents were over the age of 45.

It is evident that most people enjoy living in Hartlebury.

'Hartlebury is pretty amazing'

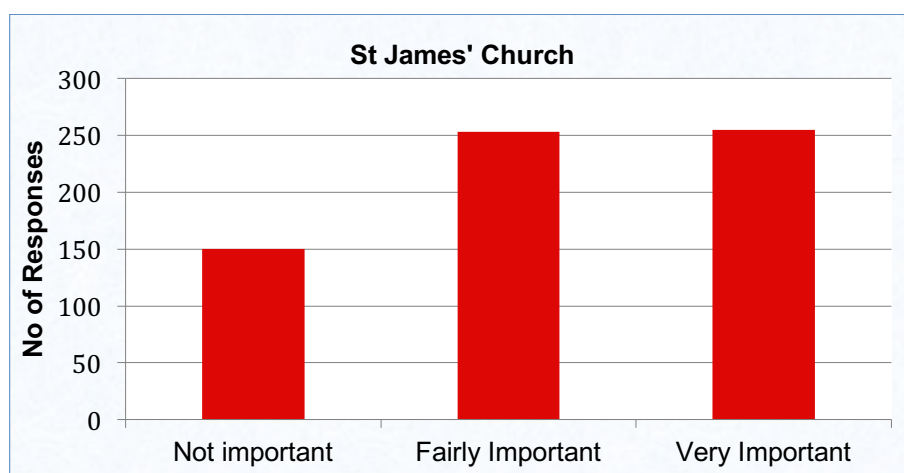
Quote from Hartlebury C. of E. Primary School Presentation to the Parish Council



Of those that responded to the community survey 63% of the respondents had lived in Hartlebury for more than 10 years, 32% of whom had lived in the parish for more than 20 years.

It is apparent that there are a number of specific factors about the parish that are important to people and that they want to retain.

At the consultation event a range of such factors were identified. The Post Office and the Parish Hall were mentioned and agreed by all those present as being very important. Some people also mentioned the Church, allotments and countryside footpaths. These views are reflected in the community survey findings.

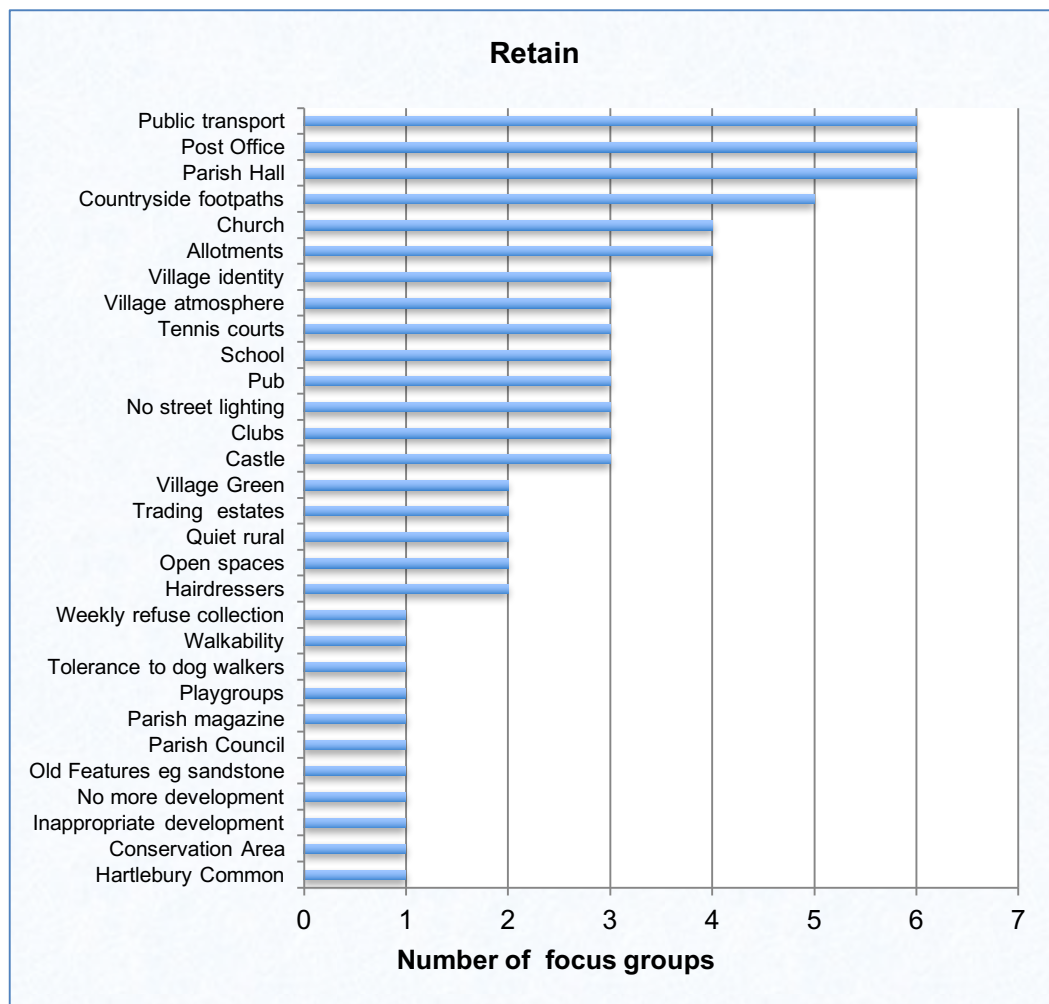


In the community survey 76% of respondents said that the Parish Hall was fairly or very important to them.



At the consultation event public transport was also highlighted as being important yet in the community survey only 22% of respondents said that they regularly use these services.

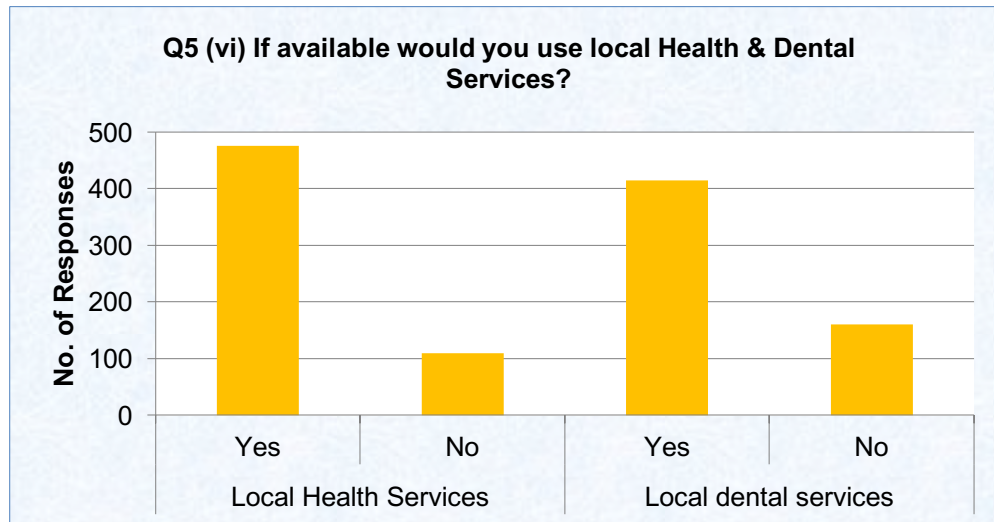
The full range of what people identified at the Consultation event:



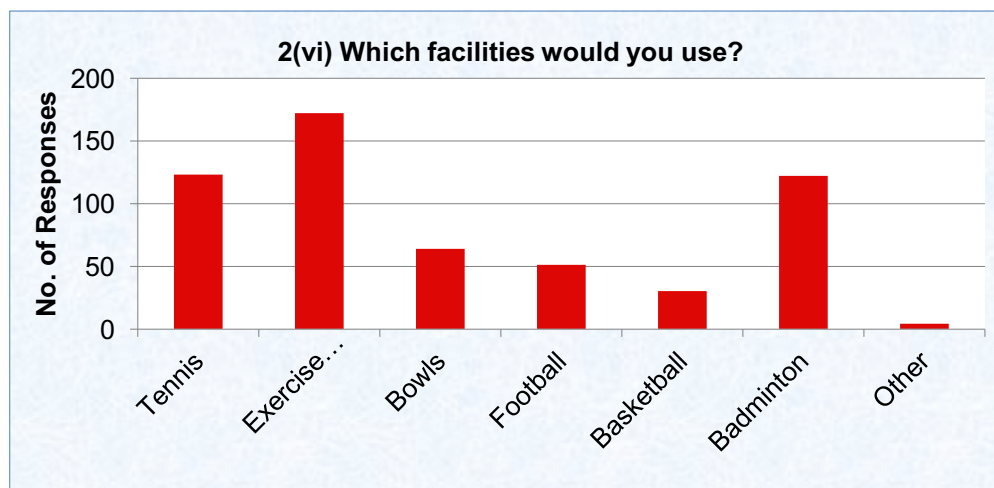
4.2(ii) What people think the parish lacks and needs to gain

At the consultation event people were very clear about what they thought the parish was lacking and needed to gain. In total 37 different needs were recognised, but the predominant need identified was for a local medical centre.

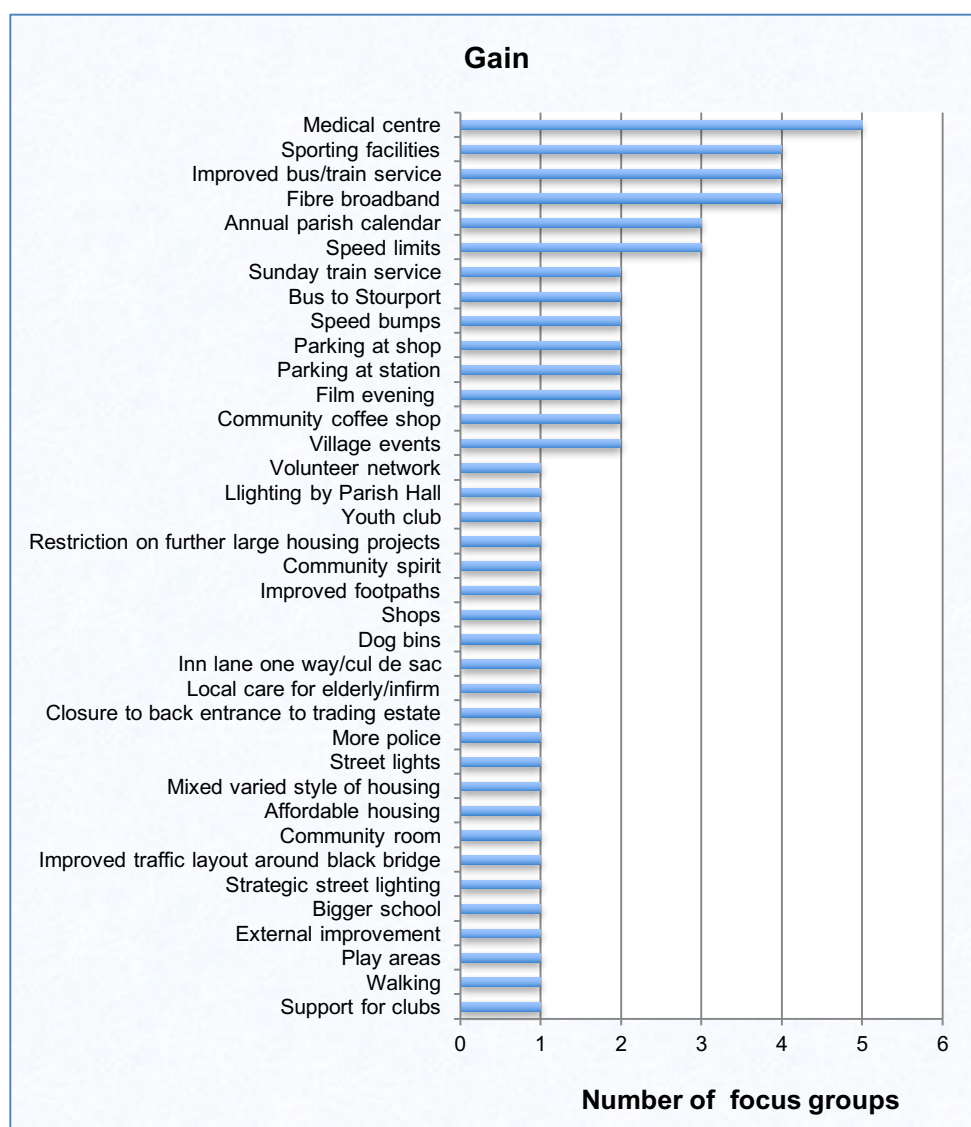
This view reinforces the feedback from the community survey where 81% of those who responded said that they would use a local health centre if one was available and 62% said that they would make use of local dental services.



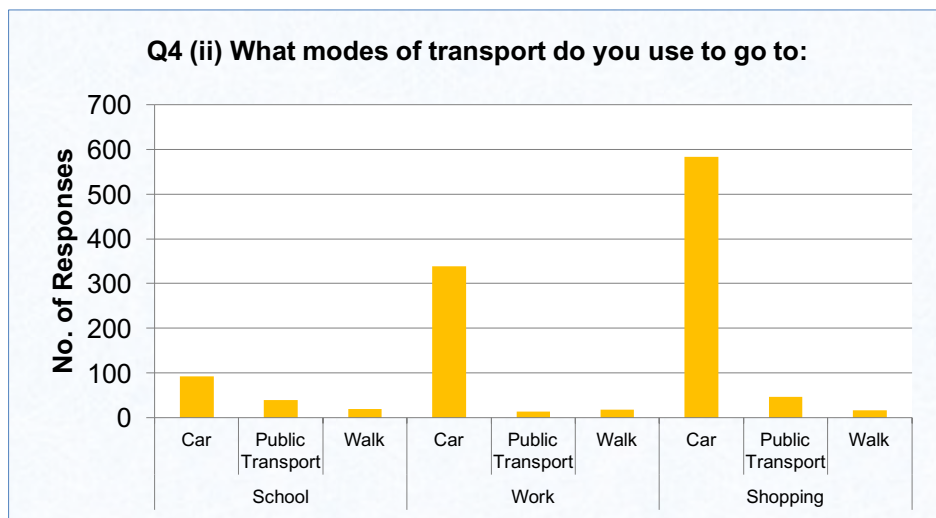
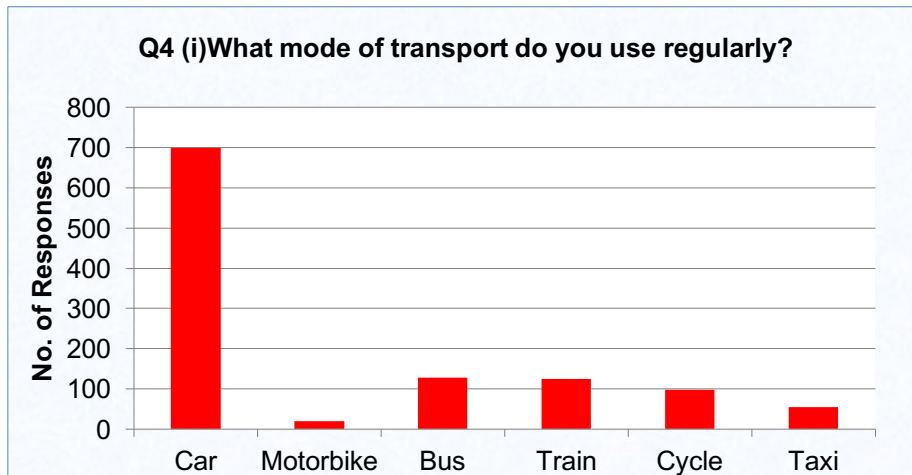
Sporting facilities, improved bus and train services, and fibre broadband were also identified as lacking. In terms of sporting facilities survey respondents highlighted a range of facilities they would use if available.



The full range of what people identified at the Consultation event:



Related to improved public transport, a Sunday train service and a bus to Stourport were specifically identified as being needed. Whilst transport services are important to people to be retained and improved, it is apparent from the community survey results that from those that responded these services are not widely used and car-use predominates.



A range of other factors identified, such as an annual parish calendar/diary, a film evening, more village events and a coffee shop, were mentioned with the view that they could each aid village unity.

'We need to give people a sense of pride in the village.'

Quote from community survey

4.2(iii) What local people dislike about the parish and think needs to improve

At the consultation event stakeholders in the parish were adamant that parking, specifically at the top of Inn Lane and around the Post Office area, heavy traffic through the village and fly-tipping were the most problematic issues for them. These issues also featured strongly in the community survey.

'Parking needs to be improved on Inn Lane.'
'It is becoming increasingly dangerous at the White Hart junction at school start and finish times.'

Quotes from community survey

Heavy Goods Vehicles driving through parts of the village and speeding was a concern, as was dog fouling, and the restricted bus service was mentioned yet again. Many of these issues also featured prominently in the community survey.

'The entire family feel strongly about the amount of traffic the trading estates bring into the village and the lanes. The back gate at Hartlebury Trading Estate should be kept closed and only the main entrance used, as was intended.'

'Not appropriate that refuse lorries constantly stream through the village.'

'The number of HGVs using the Old Worcester Road are becoming a nuisance – annoying and damaging the road surface.'

'Something should be done about speeding especially around the school area as walking is sometimes dangerous'

'There is too much traffic going too fast.'

'There is a massive problem with speeding which needs addressing.'

'Not enough is being done about speeding.'

Quotes from community survey

'The interviewee is particularly concerned about the volume of HGV traffic on Old Worcester Road, particularly vehicles carrying waste and feels that we should re-route some of this traffic, perhaps by improving the old access roads to 25 MU'.

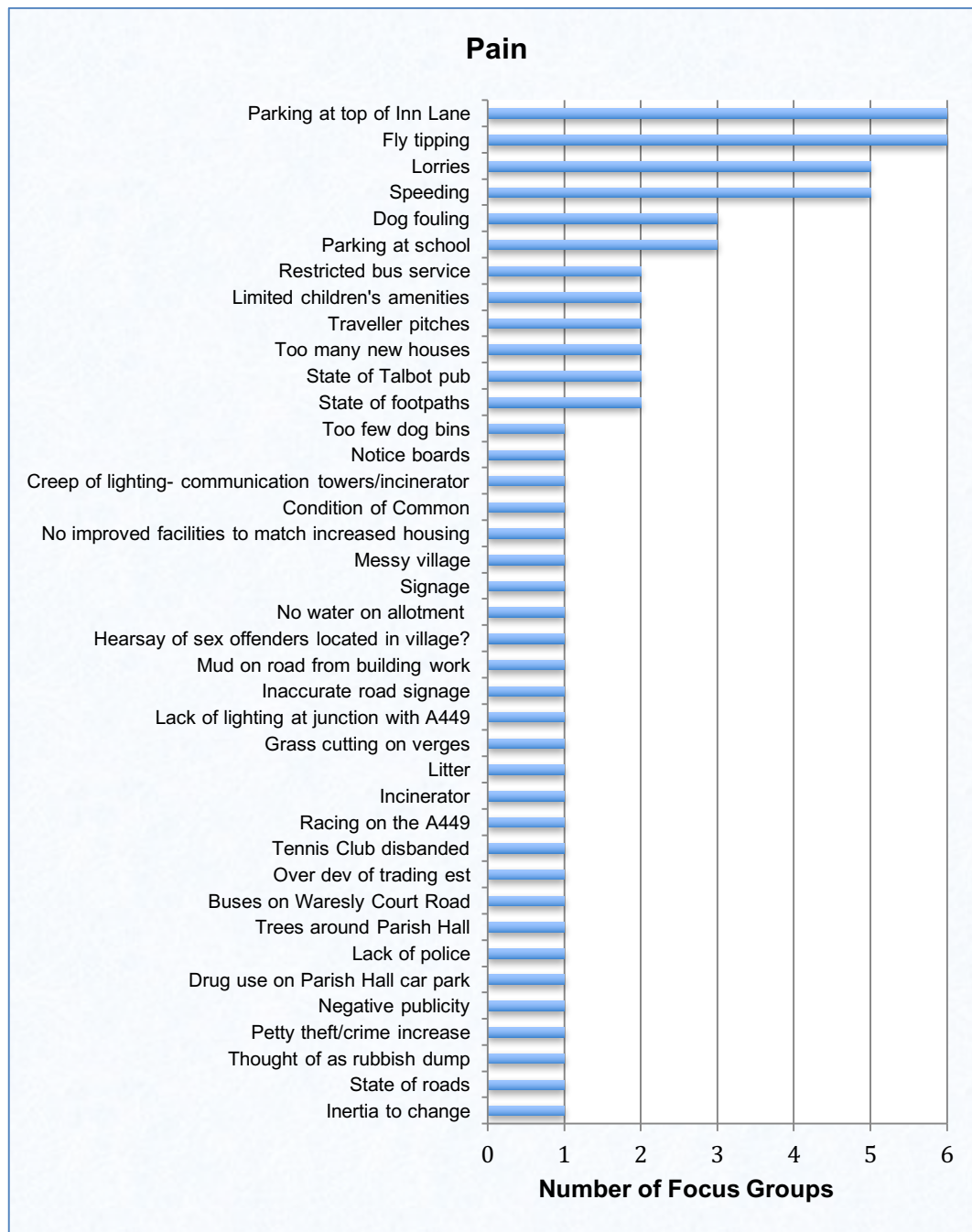
Quote from interview with local business owner

One local business-owner who was present at the consultation event publicly recounted his personal experience of fly-tipping near to his restaurant and outlined the considerable financial and reputational cost to his business.



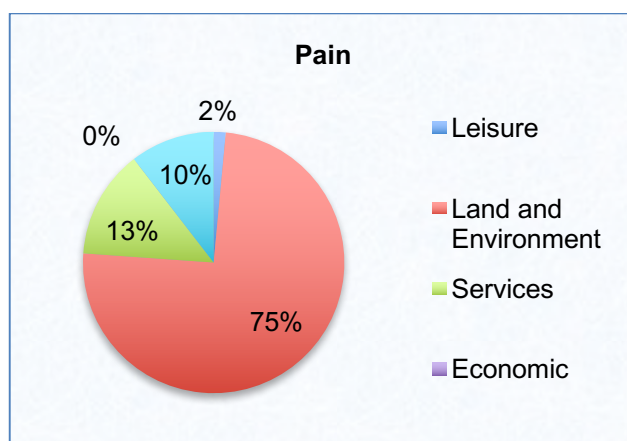
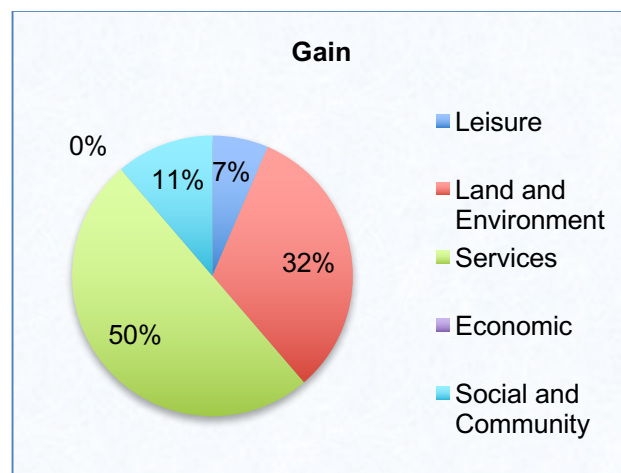
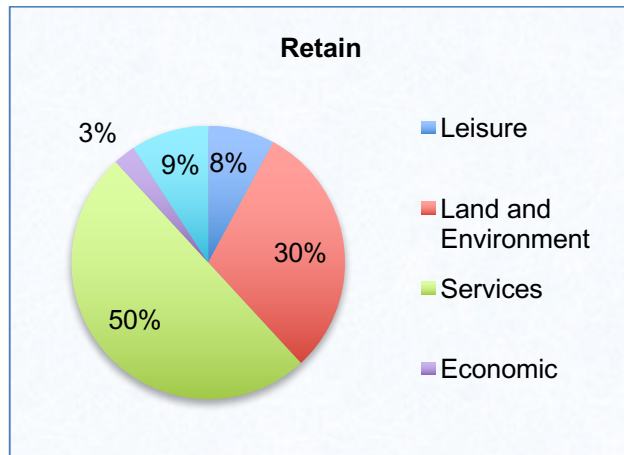
Councillor Neil Davis's photographs highlighting the problem of fly tipping in Hartlebury.

The full range of what people identified at the Consultation event:



4.3 Consultation Outcomes by classification

When the results of the consultation event are classified into the key areas of: Services and Amenities; Land and Environment; Leisure; Economic; and Social & Community, what is immediately apparent is the similarity in percentage responses in what people think the parish needs to retain and what it needs to gain. Whereas the concerns, at least for people who attended this event, relate predominantly to very different areas.



Services and Amenities

A total of 50% of responses in terms of what people want retained in the parish relate to services and amenities. Specific services which were mentioned throughout are bus and train services. This is echoed, albeit to a limited extent in the community survey.

'I would like more trains from Hartlebury. I have to park at Kidderminster and pay for parking when I live within walking distance of Hartlebury.'

Quote from community survey

The key amenities which people want to see retained and in some cases further developed are the Post Office and Parish Hall and its surrounds. It is somewhat surprising that the Church and Castle were not mentioned by all.

'Develop the village hall.'

'Like to see a new park as the park we have is outdated. Large playing field with not enough for young children.'

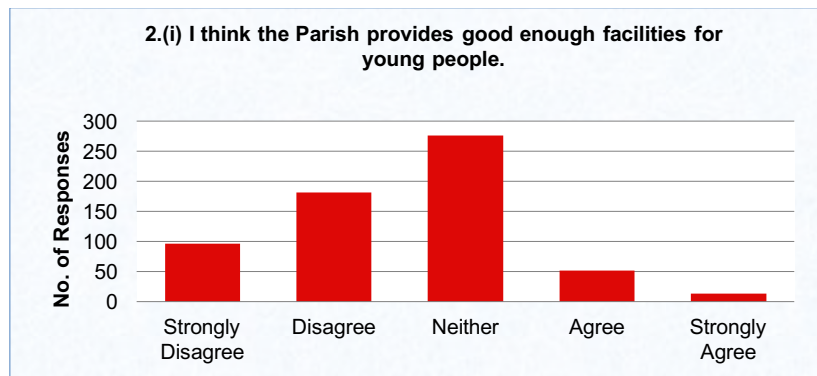
'It is vital that Hartlebury has a community centre available for local clubs. It is important for cohesion of young and old.'

Quotes from community survey

The need for a medical centre in the parish is most apparent. Concern was expressed in the survey carried out that infrastructure was not keeping pace with developments in the parish, most notably with the absence of medical facilities.

Leisure

Feedback relating to leisure activities is somewhat limited, concentrating mostly on the parish's only existing sporting facilities: the tennis courts, and lack of activities for children. When asked in the survey about the provision of facilities for young people the following rather mixed picture seen below was obtained. This could reflect the mixed age-range of respondents. However, it is very likely that with the increase of new housing in the parish there will be greater demand for facilities for children.



After visiting many different locations in the parish, pupils from Hartlebury C of E Primary School concluded in their presentation to the Parish Council that the refurbishment of the tennis courts was certainly their priority

'I didn't like anything about the tennis courts' 'The tennis court was so bad'.

'I don't like the tennis court because it is old and rusty. The floor is cracked. You would trip up on the floor and the poles are unbalanced. There is litter all on the floor. I don't like the tennis court'. 'The tennis court is greasy and horrible'

'Litter, more litter, even more litter'. 'I don't like the tennis court. Bad condition. Woeful!'

Quotes from Hartlebury C. of E. Primary School Presentation to the Parish Council

The pupils also offered suggestions as to how the children's play area could be improved.

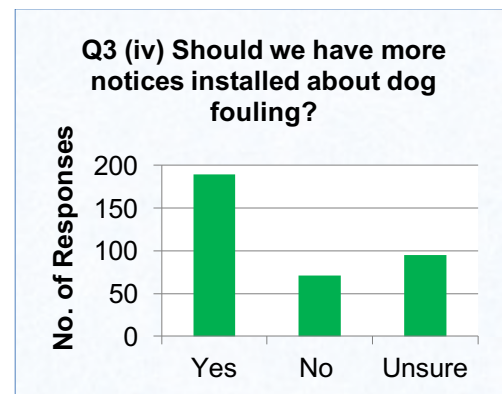
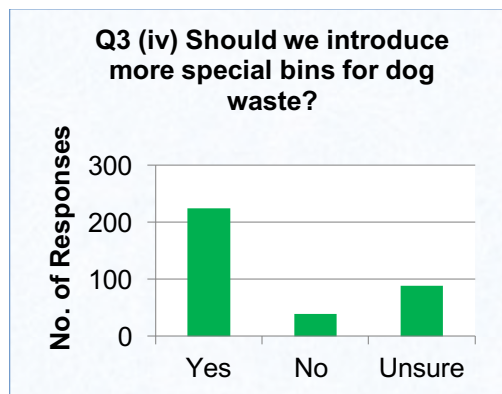


Economic

Perhaps surprisingly, little feedback has been gained from any form of consultation relating to economic development in the parish.

Land and Environment

Issues relating to land and environment form the majority (75%) of the feedback in terms of what the parish needs to improve and address. Predominantly relating to issues of parking, speeding, fly-tipping, dog fouling and housing development. These concerns are also reflected in the community survey. Respondents to the survey indicated that they thought an increased number of dog bins and increased signage could be used to address this issue, although a number remained unsure that this was the solution.



Countryside footpaths, the Village Green and the allotments are identified as being of real value and should be supported and preserved. This is already recognised as a key responsibility for the Parish Council.

'The Village Green is a real asset and should be used for more things e.g. fetes, social events, sports days for children'.

Quote from community survey

There is real concern expressed in feedback from all forms of consultation that recent housing developments are likely to put a strain on the existing parish infrastructure and that future large-scale development should be vigorously resisted and opposed.

Social and Community

There are many references in all of the feedback obtained relating to 'softer' community aspects with some suggestions as to how to address and encourage community spirit, such as introducing film evenings, opening a coffee shop.

'I am concerned that the village core will become a historic relic swamped by dormitory housing estates.'

'Control development to control demand for services'

Quotes from drop in event

"Too much housing, not enough amenities. No thought how extra people will affect local amenities"

'Green belt land should be developed to improve the countryside, not for more housing'.

'The character of the village is undermined by housing developments'.

'No more development in Green Belt land, encourage Brown Field sites first'.

'More effort should be made against unwanted development'.

'Allowing so many housing developments risks turning a beautiful village into a suburb of Kidderminster'

'No more housing in the village, infrastructure can't take it'

Quotes from community survey

'He (the interviewee) suggests that the increases in housing and population cannot continue without the infrastructure to support it. In particular, he points out that there is only one village shop, which with the demise of the Talbot Inn, now has inadequate parking.'

If new housing is unsupported by new local facilities, the village will become a satellite of other places and the sense of community will disappear'.

'This interviewee, in common with others, also considers that increasing the population of the village without improving the level of local amenities will result in a loss of the sense of community and feels that to some extent, this has already happened.'

Quotes taken from interviews with local business owners

Generally, having more village events to bring people together - co-ordinated by an entertainment committee - and adopting an annual parish calendar seem to be popular solutions.

'We need to give people a sense of pride in the village'

'I would like to see more cultural events in the village'

Quotes from community survey

'We need to make Hartlebury feel like a village because at the moment it doesn't have that feeling'

Quote from drop in event



Cottages, Old Worcester Road – From an original by pen and wash by John Clayton

5. Summary of Hartlebury Parish Strategic Aims and Objectives

From the house-to-house community survey carried out a theme emerged from the results that the Parish Council need to do more to listen to the people of the parish. This is a key aim of this Parish Plan.

'Hartlebury needs a clear set of achievable goals.'

'The Parish Council should work with and for the people, not against them. The local community should be listened to.'

Quotes from community survey

After analysing all the feedback from the complete consultation process, the following have been identified as the key Strategic Aims and will therefore provide the direction and focus for the work of the Parish Council and its committees for the period 2016-2020. They will also be used as an information source and evidence of community opinion with external agencies.

Strategic Aim 1 (SA.1) Reduce speeding and flow of heavy traffic around the parish.

Strategic Aim 2 (SA.2) Improve parking in Hartlebury village.

Strategic Aim 3 (SA.3) Improve and increase parish amenities.

Strategic Aim 4 (SA.4) Improve the image, presentation and general cleanliness of the parish.

Strategic Aim 5 (SA.5) Retain village character and encourage unity and cohesion.

Strategic Aim 6 (SA.6) Retain and improve public transport.

These aims, together with associated objectives, have been used to form the following **Action or Improvement Plan**.

Following further consultation with parishioners at a drop-in event at the Parish Hall in April 2016 the objectives have been prioritised to reflect their opinions.

6. Hartlebury Parish Improvement Plan

It is the responsibility of the Parish Council, working with relevant external agencies, to implement the Parish Improvement Plan:

SA.1 Area for Improvement: Reduce speeding and heavy traffic around the parish		
Specific Objective	External Agencies	Priority
Identify areas of specific problems; gain evidence to support solutions and implement solutions.	West Mercia Police Wychavon District Council Worcestershire Highways Authority Hartlebury Trading Estate Biffa Waste Services Ltd	High

SA.2 Area for improvement: Parking in Hartlebury Village		
Specific Objective	External Agencies	Priority
Identify and implement solutions to parking problems at top of Inn Lane and around Post Office area	West Mercia Police Worcestershire Highways Authority	High
Identify and implement solutions to parking problems around Hartlebury C of E Primary School	West Mercia Police Worcestershire Highways Authority Hartlebury C of E Primary School	High
Identify and implement solutions to parking problems at Hartlebury Station	West Mercia Police Worcestershire Highways Authority Relevant Rail companies	Medium

SA.3 Area for Improvement: Improve and increase parish amenities		
Specific Objective	External Agencies	Priority
Investigate the possibility of a medical centre in the parish	Worcestershire NHS Trust N.H.S.	High
Support the Parish Hall and improve the surrounding area	Parish Hall Committee Wychavon District Council	High
Improve amenities specifically for children	Wychavon District Council RoSPA Hartlebury C of E Primary School and N.E. School	High
Improve sporting facilities: in particular the tennis courts; football pitch and surrounding Village Green area.	Wychavon District Council Sport England Parish Hall Committee Football Team Hartlebury C of E Primary School and N.E. School	High

SA.4 Area for Improvement: Improve the image, presentation and general cleanliness of the parish		
Specific Objective	External Agencies	Priority
Identify predominant areas of fly-tipping and implement solutions	Wychavon District Council	High
Tackle issue of dog fouling		High
Tackle issue of litter in the village and lanes		High
Investigate the condition of The Talbot building and the progress of the planning application (Grade II listed building)	Wychavon District Council	High
Investigate other areas of the parish for visual improvement		Medium

SA.5 Area for Improvement: Retain village character and encourage unity and cohesion		
Specific Objective	External Agencies	Priority
Control future in-fill development in line with the Village Design Statement and actively oppose new large developments and any development on Green Belt	Wychavon District Council	High
Introduce an annual Parish Diary	Parish Magazine Societies, clubs etc. Hartlebury C of E Primary School and NE School St James's Church	High
Encourage a village coffee shop initiative with appropriate support for a planning application	Wychavon District Council	Medium
Introduce an Entertainment Committee	Parish Hall	Low

SA.6 Area for Improvement: Retain and improve public transport		
Specific Objective	External Agencies	Priority
Introduce regular direct bus route to Stourport	Diamond Bus Service	Medium
Introduce Sunday train service	London Midland Rail Service	Low

7. Context for the Village Design Statement: the village and its setting

Hartlebury lies approximately two miles east of Stourport-on-Severn in rolling rural Worcestershire countryside. The agricultural land is Grade I, highly productive, further benefitting from natural springs and aquifers for irrigation. Pockets of red local sandstone can be seen in cuttings and embankments around the village, traditionally used as masonry, but to the east lies deep extensive deposits of clay used to make Hartlebury Bricks, both at the works dating from the Victorian era near the railway station, and from a modern plant located on Hartlebury Trading Estate.

Springs issue to the east, north and west of the village around a spur of land on which the main village is located. This topography provides extensive views into the wider landscape to and from the village.

Hartlebury lies on a primary north-south trunk road, the A449 which now by-passes the village with a dual carriageway. Congestion on this road at peak times is noticeable and access and egress to the village can be difficult. A residential development at Waresley Park, east of this busy road, remains unfortunately divorced from the main village. The death of a young girl crossing the A449 to get home at Waresley Park starkly demonstrated this. This and other fatalities have been instrumental in bringing traffic-calming measures and speed restrictions to the A449.

The primary architectural character of the village is of relatively open-spaced residential properties of a variety of sizes, ages and styles, and it is this variety which the key feature characteristic and charm of the village. This open spacing of the village is punctuated by nodes of more densely-grouped buildings.

The primary node is the centre core of the village, in the Conservation Area. This comprises of St James' Parish Church, a large elegant Victorian church, set high above the junction of Parsons Lane, Quarry Bank and Stourport Road. The White Hart pub, is hard set right on this junction and, with the Old Bakery opposite - both of three storeys in height - anchors the visual centre of the village. Extending away from this are elegant compact cottages mixed with much larger houses with deeper frontages. Behind the pub is the village County Primary School and immediately to the west lies a fine avenue of lime trees to Hartlebury Castle, set in magnificent parkland. Being the former home to the Bishop of Worcester, this Grade I listed building has been recently purchased by a trust formed by local people to retain the historic architectural and landscape value to the locality. The castle, also houses the County Museum in the extensive ancillary buildings. The village core has been granted Conservation Area status, but there are other nodes characteristic to the village worthy of note.

At the top of Inn Lane, at the junction with Old Worcester Road is the village Post Office and Shop, a vibrant and popular facility. Along with a hairdressers this forms another cluster of denser buildings. Opposite, the architecturally-listed, 17th century Talbot Public House is the primary visual feature (now closed but subject to conversion plans to residential use) contrasting with a series of attractive close-knit artisan cottages extending down Inn Lane.

Another nodal point which identifies Hartlebury is Waresley, at the junction with Waresley Road and the Old Worcester Road. Here there are the remains of small cottages once fronting the original Worcester Road and which would have serviced Waresley Court, a large country house, replaced with the Waresley Court Estate of Council houses in the 1950s. This development had the foresight to provide a large public open space, now the Village Green, close to the recently refurbished Parish Hall.

Between these main cluster-points are dwellings and buildings of varying age and character, some set close to the road, others set deep into the site, some closely spaced, others set wide apart. So Hartlebury has a delightful mixture of small, with larger more substantial dwellings.

Further away are the outlying clusters of attractive dwellings and farm buildings at Crossway Green and the picturesque Charlton area with former mill, workshops and agricultural buildings, which would have been associated with the castle.

Substantial post war residential development in the village has been focused within and around the three node points. Namely:

- Waresley Court in the 1950s
- Wilson Road in the 1960s
- Regentsgate (north of Inn Lane) in the 1970s
- Waresley Park (remote from and to the east of Waresley) in the 1980s
- In-fill between Old Worcester Road and Waresley Road (Bryant's development) in the 1990s
- Current additional infilling is continuing.

In-fill development within Inn Lane, Waresley Road and the Old Worcester Road has also increased the overall building density.

The accommodation that these more recent, larger-scale housing developments have provided is of a high standard and is well-landscaped and cared for by residents. But the unimaginative uniform design in style, spacing and type is at odds with the original grain and texture of the village. These developments have tended to change the character of the village to a more bland and suburban appearance.

By necessity, such new 'volume' housing is required and helped bring in new life and vigour to the village. However, if such housing is to be added to the village, its design could have better-echoed the character of the village in which it is built, such that the development achieves its own sense of place; a sense which is individual and identifiably "Hartlebury".

Hartlebury is a desirable place to live and it is our intention that it should remain so, not only for new residents entering the village for the first time, but for existing residents, too.

The Hartlebury Village Design Statement gives an opportunity for residents to offer a guide to developers as to how they would want to see their village enhanced rather than spoilt by new development.

'The direction thrust is turning Hartlebury into a town. I do not agree with this. Good villages are rare and should be retained'

Quote from drop-in event



Hartlebury Village – From an original oil by John Clayton

Hartlebury Village Design Statement

A Village Design Statement is a term of English rural planning guidance that describes the distinctive characteristics of the locality, and provides design guidance to influence future development and improve the physical qualities of the area. Detailed design policies are set out principally under SWDP6, SWDP21, SWDP24, SWDP25 in the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) which was adopted in February 2016. More detailed design advice and guidance is provided in the 2010 Wychavon Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. This will be updated to reflect the relevant policies set out in the SWDP in due course, but the guide contains advice and guidance that is still relevant to delivering new development that is appropriate to its setting.

Every village has its own special character and it is our aim to ensure that any further development in Hartlebury will be based on a considered understanding of the village in its environment and that any change will enhance our quality of life rather than erode it. In the past there has been significant development to the east of the village with housing developments in the 1970s, 1990s and a further ninety-two houses are under construction in the central area in 2016.

These changes have dramatically changed the village with loss of open farmland and hedges that have altered the look and feel of the village; such change can cause deep unhappiness and resentment. The development of the Trading Estate, a former wartime RAF stores depot, has also changed that part of the parish and its surrounds very significantly over the last seventy years. This has accelerated in recent years with the empty clay pits being used for the disposal of domestic and contaminated waste and, further, with the construction of a waste incinerator which was bitterly fought against by local residents.

In this Design Statement as part of our Parish Plan we have sought to highlight the best-loved aspects of our village with a view to a) safeguarding them for the future, and b) influencing any future changes. It has been compiled and written by a group of village volunteers, who are united in their vision of a thriving community in the twenty-first century.

Drawing guidance from the Conservation Area's character statement as well as the recent community consultations, the following recommendations have been prepared for use by:

- Statutory bodies and public authorities
- Planners, developers, builders, architects, designers and engineers
- Local community groups
- Householders and businesses

1 Recommendations for maintaining character

- 1.1 It is not desirable to target new housing on existing open sites in and around Hartlebury Village which have strong recreational, ecological, heritage or conservation characteristics.
- 1.2 It is important to retain a suitable village boundary to protect against sprawl.
- 1.3 It is most important to preserve the allotments.
- 1.4 Both built heritage and archaeology in the village should be protected.
- 1.5 The character of the Castle, its landscaped parkland and wider setting should be protected and enhanced.
- 1.6 Road and street signs should be restrained in design and duplication should be avoided. The style of these and street furniture needs to highlight the village character and if coordinated would unite the nature of the dispersed settlements of the village.
- 1.7 Cables should be sited underground and a real effort made to reduce the number of poles carrying telephone and electricity wires: although it is noted this is an aspiration in a landscape with significant cable coverage.

2 Recommendations for developers

- 2.1 There are opportunities for designing interesting new buildings that will sit comfortably with the north Worcestershire traditional styles. New buildings do not have to be copies of old ones but they should respect them.
- 2.2 As there is not a predominant traditional style in the village, there is scope for a variety of sympathetic influences e.g. timber-frame, brick, stone and render. Modern and traditional vernacular architecture may be suitable. It is the suitable choice and quality of materials, and appropriate and correctly executed details that echo around the village, which is important to maintain.
- 2.3 There is variety in size, style, design and spacing characteristics in Hartlebury village. This pallet of opportunity should allow designers to replicate “Hartlebury” in new development buildings in a modern and imaginative way. A new development should develop its own “sense of place” and sit comfortably within its surroundings with areas of both openness and intimacy. Carefully combining both large (generally not higher than two storey with the occasional two and a half and three storey) and small buildings can complement each other in an attractive composition, both in relation to the existing village buildings and to each other.
- 2.4 As demonstrated elsewhere in the village, a larger landmark building carefully positioned, around which complementing buildings are carefully grouped, should not be ruled-out. For example, the group of cottages at the top of Inn Lane; The Old Bakery; The Old Rectory.
- 2.5 Any development that needs landscaping to disguise or hide it, is not worthy of being built in Hartlebury.
- 2.6 Landscaping of new development should be there to enhance the overall visual composition and this should be demonstrated in proposals for the short- and long-term.
- 2.7 Opportunities to enhance views, centred on the church tower for example, or the termination of vistas, and for the making of new vistas should be carefully considered and demonstrated at the design stage. Such manipulation of topography and village setting should be considered from within and around the development site out to the rest of the village and the wider community beyond. Developers should be aware that the views have a two-way aspect.

- 2.8 Developers should take into account the relationship of new buildings with existing properties and should seek to use traditional materials such as local stone with the aim of sympathetic harmony.
- 2.9 The size and scale and positioning of a new building should respect and enhance that of adjacent properties.
- 2.10 Rooflines in the vicinity should be carefully assessed before altering an existing building or building a new one. Roof height, pitch, orientation and material used should complement existing rooflines.
- 2.11 Villagers feel that the rural character of the village depends on retaining space around houses and preserving rural views. The Village Green is a designated protected open space and from the car park of the Parish Hall there are fine views, which should likewise be preserved; as should the view across towards Elmley Lovett from the point where the Old Worcester Road joins the A449. Likewise, the view is two-way; developers should demonstrate that their designs enhance the view of the village seen from further afield.
- 2.12 It is recommended that the curtilage of dwellings within the village should be spacious. Hartlebury distinctively does not have higher-density housing at the heart of the village – this sense of space and feeling of openness needs to be maintained.
- 2.13 Further reinforcing of the “hard edge” (A449) to the village by permitting high-density housing on the outskirts should be avoided. Any further housing development on the edge of the village should be suitably landscaped with native trees and hedging to blend with the surrounding countryside rather than creating enclosed housing estates.
- 2.14 Where new developments are being considered, the provision of additional footways to link housing with the centre of the village is a necessity. New footways should link with the neighbouring path and road networks. The new paths are important and should be designed to be safe, comfortable and pleasant to use.
- 2.15 Local red stonewalls are a feature of Hartlebury in the Conservation Area (e.g. around the Church and Castle) and should always be preserved. Where new buildings or alterations to existing buildings are planned it should be noted that the impact on older nearby properties can be softened by using local stone for new walls. Field hedges or low open fences may also be appropriate.
- 2.16 The Village has never had street lighting and maintaining this policy has been part of developments to date and this should be retained. Businesses on the industrial estate should be encouraged to reduce lighting when their business is not operating.
- 2.17 Where new names are required for streets or buildings, these should continue to be chosen in consultation with the Parish Council who should ensure that suggestions reflect the history of the site, or the village.
- 2.18 Any new development should have adequate parking and should not have the potential to impact on already identified problem areas.
- 2.19 It is recommended road-layouts for new developments should be softer-edged and less regimented in layout, avoiding hard kerbs and allowing for shared surfacing where possible.

3 Recommendations for maintaining the environment

- 3.1 Strategic trees should be planted with native species and entrances to the village can be enhanced with planting.
- 3.2 The planting of Worcester's orchard trees should be encouraged. They are suitable for small gardens and are a local feature.
- 3.3 Education is vital to ensure wildlife enjoys protection, especially along the old millponds and brook.



4 Recommendations for maintaining community

- 4.1 Affordable housing should be encouraged so that young people are able to afford to remain within the community and to retain their local ties. The mixed housing styles encouraged in the design recommendations should encourage and allow this.

5 Recommendations for measures to monitor flooding

- 5.1 Flood control responsibilities for the village should be clearly understood and monitored by Hartlebury Parish Council.
- 5.2 Planning permission for new development should only be given when it has been properly established that the accompanying sewage system is proved to be adequate.
- 5.3 Drainage map/diagram records should be regularly updated and made available for public inspection.

Afterword

Thank you for reading Hartlebury Parish Plan and Village Design Statement which was formally adopted at the Parish Council meeting of October 2016.

If you are reading this Plan as a newcomer to the parish we hope that you will find it an interesting guide as to where you have come to live. We would like to welcome you to Hartlebury and hope that you will soon settle in and become part of the local community. We also commend to you the Parish Magazine; a useful monthly resource which can be delivered to your home or which may be obtained from the church or Post Office.

This Parish Plan and Village Design Statement will now become a working document for the Parish Council which will be reviewed annually to measure progress against the strategic aims and objectives.

We hope that this will go some way in achieving your 'Hopes for Hartlebury.'

Hartlebury Parish Council
October 2016