



**LITTLE WENLOCK**

**PARISH PLAN**

**2012 - 2022**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose

This Plan replaces the previous Parish Plan which ran from 2003-2011. It is a statement of how Little Wenlock parishioners wish to see the parish develop.

It defines the state of the parish in 2011, summarises existing land use and facilities, and highlights features of special architectural, historical, environmental and social value.

The Plan establishes clear guidelines for the development of housing and buildings, countryside and environment, and community services.

## 1.2 Objectives

- To establish an agreed community vision for the future of Little Wenlock Parish and guidelines for the development of and development in the parish.
- To provide a formal structure within which Little Wenlock Parish Council can consider all planning applications and initiatives within the parish on behalf of its communities.
- To identify local needs within the parish as the basis for the Parish Council and community groups to attract support from the Borough and external funding bodies for the improvement of facilities and services.

## 1.3 Context

National, regional and local planning and policies are changing rapidly. Telford and Wrekin Borough Council has not yet finalised its new long term vision for the future of the Borough but their Local Investment Plan 2010-2013 is of direct relevance. The Parish Plan has been produced against that background.

## 1.4 Structure

The Plan follows the structure of the previous Plan with which we are familiar. There are five sections:

- **The Parish Today** - outlines its history, situation and setting. It describes its present communities, land use, facilities, and features of special value.
- **Parish Development** - summarises the local context and its challenges. The priorities identified through community consultations, the parish's overall vision and key development principles are stated.
- **Housing and Building** - describes local housing priorities. Guidelines governing new housing, conversions and extensions are given as are those for non-residential developments, energy conservation and other aspects of the built environment.
- **Countryside and Environment** - details local land use priorities. Guidelines are established regarding farmland, woodland, minerals, waste and other developments in the open land between the settlements. Public access, wildlife conservation, habitat protection and other important aspects of the rural environment guidelines are detailed here.
- **Community and Services** - details local community facility and service priorities. Guidelines are established to define and support appropriate developments, together with local initiatives.

## **1.5 Production**

The Parish Plan 2012-2022 has been prepared by Little Wenlock Parish Council after extensive consultation with parishioners. There have been detailed residents' surveys and meetings with representative groups.

Action Plans will be produced by the Parish Council annually and the Plan will be reviewed regularly with a complete up-date every 10 years.

## **1.6 Contents**

	page
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. The Parish Today</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Parish Development</b>	<b>1 1</b>
<b>4. Housing and Building</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5. Countryside and Development</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>6. Community and Services</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>7. Consultation Survey Results</b>	<b>35</b>

## **2. THE PARISH TODAY**

### **2.1 Situation**

Map 1 shows our rural parish stretching from the M54 motorway, Wrockwardine parish and Wellington in the north to the Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale parishes of the Gorge and Buildwas in the south. In the west responsibility for the Wrekin is shared with Eaton Constantine parish. To the east lies the ever encroaching Telford conurbation in the parishes of Dawley Hamlets and Lawley and Overdale.

Parts of the former Wellington Rural and Wellington Urban parishes were incorporated into Little Wenlock parish in 1974 during local government boundary revision.

The population of roughly 550 is mainly concentrated into the two main settlements of Little Wenlock and New Works. There are smaller groups of people living at Huntington, Coalmoor, Little Worth, the Steeraway, Willowmoor, Arleston Hill, down Spout Lane and the Moors. There is also the odd isolated farmstead.

### **2.2 The Parish of Yesterday**

The parish has an interesting archaeological and industrial heritage the oldest of which is probably the Bronze Age burial mounds or barrows at Willowmoor. The Iron Age hill fort on the Wrekin is over 2500 years old. This was the tribal capital of the Cornovii, the Celts living in this area prior to the Roman invasion.

A 2005 survey by the Clwd-Powys Archaeological Trust recorded settlement, 126 charcoal burners platforms, boundary stones, track ways, saw pits, quarries and a number of other features. Charcoal production continued into the 1930s implying that the Wrekin woodlands were managed as mixed coppice.

Little Wenlock was an estate of Much Wenlock religious foundation and it is from here that the parish derives its name. 'Gwyn-loch' in Celtic means white place or monastery.

The Domesday Book [1086] describes Little Wenlock as a manor with three hides [some 500 acres ] of arable land and woodland for hunting and swine feeding.

Little Wenlock parish was included in the new borough of Wenlock, incorporated in 1468. It contained sixteen tenements and a mill by the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century with four more tenements at Huntington.

After the dissolution of the monasteries the manor of Little Wenlock developed further and the Hayward family acquired it after the closure of Wenlock Priory in 1540. The Foresters of Watling Street [Wellington] took over from the Haywards. This family descended from Hugh le Forester the 12<sup>th</sup> Century protector of the Royal Forest of the Wrekin.

There is some evidence in the parish that iron was worked prior to the Roman invasion. The latter exploited exposed outcrops of coal and 13<sup>th</sup> Century lime burning has been recorded. Steeraway lime kilns are of 17<sup>th</sup> Century origin, limestone being extracted in this area from the 1250s. Similar old workings can be seen at the Hatch and the Old Quarry Plantation. Coal and ironstone were both being extracted in the 1680s. It was Darby's mastery of the use of coal, instead of charcoal, in furnaces at Coalbrookdale that stimulated the demand for coal in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. At the same time the demand for limestone increased as this was the flux in the furnaces. Three lime works were active in this parish into the last century.

The hard rock, igneous basalt, was quarried along the Lydebrook as recently as the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

during which time the large scale opencast mining of coal and fireclay developed to meet the 'war effort' of World War Two. As the Shortwood, New Works pits closed in 1970 new opencast mining had started and this only finished in the mid 1990s. After a few years of respite the Huntington Lane Surface mine began operations in 2010. Unfortunately, this will obliterate some industrial heritage features in the northern part of the site, just as many were lost to former widespread open casting.

The result of these past activities, such as, the exposed quarry faces, spoil heaps, underground workings, track ways and tramways is a legacy of disturbed ground. Very easy to spot are the Little Worth bell pit mounds.

One of Britain's first railways ran from Little Wenlock to Strethill in 1728.

Parishioners, and especially the Little Wenlock Industrial Heritage Research Group, value this rich and diverse heritage.

## **GUIDELINE P 1 HERITAGE**

**The Parish encourages efforts to record, actively conserve and interpret the visible evidence of its rich industrial, historical and archaeological heritage.**

### **2.3 Landscape and countryside**

The landscape is dominated by the Wrekin, that 407 metre high isolated, steep sided, whaleback of very old igneous rock. Its profile is ridge like and trends south west to north east.

The Wrekin's human dimension should not be overlooked. It is a cultural icon and gives rise to the saying "All around the Wrekin" and the local toast "Here's to all friends round the Wrekin". It is the subject of local legends and the site of the former Wrekin Wakes. The millennium was marked by a lit beacon on the hill and there are annual Wrekin fell races and a barrel races. It is a place for celebration, remembrance and homecoming. A true Salopian has passed through the Needle's Eye, a cleft in an outcrop on the summit caused by a partial dislodgement of a boulder during the Bishop's Castle earthquake.

More than one third of the parish is woodland. Such areas include the wooded slopes of the Wrekin, the Ercall, Lawrence Hill, the upper slopes of Ironbridge Gorge above Buildwas, other extensive areas in the north and east of the parish and Lydebrook valley and its tributaries. Coniferous woodland, mixed woodland and species rich deciduous woodland all occur and much is valued as a prime post-industrial natural regeneration. Large areas are classed as ancient semi-natural woodland of high conservation value. The value of this landscape is highlighted by the inclusion of the whole north western sector of the parish in the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB].

Within the wooded area distinct open areas can be spotted. These are either small assarts of pasture [an assart is the medieval term for the clearing of woodland to create new farmland], the traces of quarrying or restored open cast areas. The Wrekin summit is open and covered with grassy heath and bracken. East of this mixed farming is evidenced by the numerous pastures and arable fields drained by deeply cut wooded dingles which drain to the River Severn.

In its northern part the AONB projects as a narrow finger to include Black Hayes/Birch Coppice. Here, not only does its proximity to the built up area of Telford pose a threat but part is now included in the Huntington Lane Surface Mine site.

Within the parish there are other recognised areas of special conservation and historical importance including Ancient Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Wildlife Sites and

Nature Reserves. Their location is shown on maps 2 to 6 and more detail is given in Section 2.12. It is hoped that newly restored sites, such as the Butterfly Haven at Coalmoor, will be added to this list in due course.

This rich mosaic of woodland, mixed farmland, many thick hedgerows, open water bodies and streams creates an excellent habitat for fauna especially as some of the more valuable sites are relatively inaccessible and quiet.

## **2.4 Roads and Rights of Way**

The roads of the parish are characteristically narrow, with steep hills, sharp bends and limited visibility. Never the less the Horsehay to Wellington road, which passes through Little Wenlock village, is experiencing increasing amounts of traffic with more than a thousand vehicles a day.

The parish has a large number of public rights of way, 34.1 km in all. This is the greatest number of public rights of way in any Telford parish. Two long distance footpaths, the Shropshire way and the Hutchison Way, pass through the parish as does the Much Wenlock loop of the National By-way Heritage Cycle route 45.

## **2.5 Settlements**

It is thought that the Little Wenlock church, St. Lawrence, existed by the late 12th Century. The earliest date on the incumbents list is 1260. The medieval chancel and north aisle were enlarged in 1822 and 1875/6 to serve the increased population.

Rose Cottage, in Little Wenlock, is the oldest house dating from the late 15 Century followed by the splendid Old Hall, Stone House and Manor House in the late 16th and early 17th Centuries. Increased agricultural activity and particularly mineral exploitation in the 18th and 19th Centuries led to the appearance of Home Farm, the work house at Little Worth, the school [next to the church] and the parish rooms [Wenboro Cottage]. Squatter cottages for minerals workers appeared in New Works in the same period. By the early 19th Century there were five public houses in Little Wenlock village.

Most of the individual farmhouses in the parish date from the 17th and 18th Centuries. Such buildings include Upper and Lower Coalmoor Farms, Leasowes Farm, Upper and Lower Huntington Farms, Wrekin Farm, Willowmoor Farm, Steeraway Farm, Gibbons Farm and the Moors Farm. In the 1950s there were 24 working farms in the parish. Today there are five.

Most houses in the parish are of 20<sup>th</sup> Century origin and they are relatively large with 4 or more bedrooms. A third have 3 bedrooms and 10% 2 or less. Actual house numbers and location in settlements will be produced after the 2011 Census as will the ownership : rented ratio.

Given the size of properties and their location more than half of the houses are in Council Tax Band D or above. This contrasts with a figure of about 20% in the whole Borough.

By far the majority of houses are on mains drainage and they have central heating. Lacking a mains gas supply most central heating in Little Wenlock is oil-fired although there is some use of LPG and electric heating. Heat exchange systems and solar panels are making an appearance. New Works is more fortunate and enjoys a mains gas supply.

## **2.6 Population**

Details of population structure will be circulated after the March 27<sup>th</sup> 2011 Census figures have been analysed to give as accurate a record as possible.

## **2.7 Employment**

There are very few employment opportunities in the parish. There are limited opportunities in the working farms, the agricultural and industrial contractor and the retail outlet, a timber frame builder, the land-fill site and two golf courses. The new open cast mining site may offer temporary work. Currently there appear to be no B&Bs which formerly gave some part-time work as did the pub/restaurant which is now closed, but should open later in 2011.

With a dearth of employers in the parish and the proximity of Telford, Wolverhampton and the rest of the West Midland conurbation most employed parishioners work in either Telford or beyond it, however some people work from home.

## **2.8 Facilities**

The major community facility of the parish is the very well appointed village hall in Little Wenlock village. It was completely rebuilt in 2002 with the aid of considerable grants from the National Lottery Community Fund and Onyx Landfill Trust. There is a playing field with a hard surface tennis court, a children's play area with equipment, an outdoor gym, a multi- sport play wall, a small football field and a stone barn with seating and a table.

St Lawrence Church [C of E] has a small but enthusiastic congregation.

The Huntsman public house has been closed for some time but is currently undergoing major works which will see it emerge as a pub/restaurant with en-suite rooms for guests ,a holiday let cottage and 3 others for rent.

There is no shop, school or post office.

## **2.9 Transport**

Public transport is poor. In April 2011 the Twister bus service was discontinued because of the losses it made. Little Wenlock and New Works will be served by the number 69 and number 70 Wrekin Connect Service. The value of taxi tokens will increase to £30 per person per year. People may hold a bus pass or taxi tokens, not both. The latter are intended for people who cannot access a bus route either because of a disability and, or, isolation.. The CVS run a Community Car Scheme, contact numbers are 01952 458059 and 01952 458061. Passengers will be charged 22p per mile based on mileage from the volunteer's home to the passenger's home, to the destination and return.

## **2.10 Community**

In 2005 Little Wenlock won the 2005 Calor Village of the Year award for Shropshire and the Environment award for the North West of England. Community spirit is excellent despite the lack of employment and facilities. Community organisations and groups include the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee, the Parochial Church Council, the Women's Institute, the indoor bowls club, the gardening club, the badminton group, the Shropshire Amateur Radio Club and Lets [a ladies' social group]. Keep Fit. Yoga, Tai Chi and Whist are amongst the groups which meet regularly in the village hall.

The community organisations run many successful fund raising events such as the Christmas Fair and a Burns Night celebration. Large sections of the community and all ages are involved. During the winter there are monthly film shows in the village hall which was the venue for one Any Questions edition in 2010. Quiz nights continue to hold a fascination for many and usually, once a year, there is a professional live theatre production in the village hall. Skittles nights, concerts

and even indoor curling are other activities enjoyed in the hall.

An annual event, which is attracting competitors from afar, is the Little Wenlock Wheeze. Participants enjoy tea and the presentation of awards in the hall afterwards.

## **2.11 Land use**

Much of the woodland is of the mixed deciduous type which has regenerated on old industrial sites. Apart from the rearing of game birds, most is not commercially managed. Large areas are used by walkers, horse-riders and cyclists.

Other recreational land use includes the newly created Horsehay Golf Centre, owned by T&W, and the old Wrekin Golf Club in the north of the parish.

The greater part of the open land is covered by mixed farming. There is no first class agricultural land in the parish. Much of the land was open cast mined and not restored to the farmer's satisfaction. Green fields of pasture land contrast with fields of fodder crops for the livestock and some other arable crops.

Natural regeneration is well advanced in the abandoned quarries. In some pools and larger bodies of water can be seen. The largest have been stocked for coarse fishing.

Open cast mining in more recent times left large holes in the ground some of which have been used for waste disposal. Only the Candles site in Dog in the Lane is still used for this purpose. At the present rate of land-fill it could be 3 or 4 years before all the cells are filled [2015/16]. When it is reclaimed there will be a mixture of agricultural land and amenity woodland.

The other major industrial activity in the parish is the Huntington Road Surface Mine. It will also cease to function at about the same time as the Candles site. Then the parish may return to being almost unique in the Borough by having no industrial activity, Severn Oak and a transport yard represent light industry. New Works residents in particular look forward to a return of tranquillity.

## **2.12 Valuable Features**

A fairly large number of statutory protective and voluntary designations have been used to conserve either the landscape as a whole or smaller parts of the mosaic of habitats and features, the location of most of which is shown in Maps 2-5.

### **2.12.1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB]**

The Shropshire Hills AONB was designated in 1958 under the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949. It includes the **Wrekin** and **Ercall** hills, **Gibbons Coppice**, **Wenlock Wood**, **Maddocks Hill**, **Limekiln Wood**, **Black Hayes** and **Birch Coppice**. [Map2] The aim was, and is, to conserve and enhance natural beauty which includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features and the history of human settlement over the centuries.

### **2.12.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI]**

Such sites are designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 and they offer statutory protection for land notable for its geology and biodiversity. SSSIs are administered through Natural England working with landowners to establish sympathetic management regimes.

There are three SSSIs in the parish – The **Wrekin Hill**, the **Ercall**, together covering 283.3



hectares, and **Lydebrook Dingle**. For location see Map3.

This country's best and most varied exposures of Uriconian rocks can be seen on the Wrekin ridge. Bare rock, like scree soils and open quarry workings, encourages colonisation by rare plants. The low fertility of these areas supports flora and fauna not found elsewhere.

Underlying geology can influence drainage and both factors affect vegetation cover. Thin acid soils covering Wrekin Quartzite bear rowan, holly and downy birch. Beneath them the ground cover includes bilberry, wavy hair grass, heather, creeping soft grass and less common fumitory. Sheep's sorrel and heath bedstraw can be found in the Wrekin summit area..

A striking variety of birds can be seen including three species of woodpecker, seven species of warbler, pied flycatchers, sparrow hawk, redstart, woodcock, buzzard and even peregrine falcon.

On more fertile soils oak and hazel grow with ash and wyitch elm on damper less acidic soils. Here the ground cover is rich and includes ramson, archangel, woodruff, dogs 'mercury and sanicle.

Alder dominates in permanently wet areas.

Coal measures and basalt lie beneath the soils of Lydebrook Dingle which bear a good example of ancient, fairly undisturbed woodland of three types; ash and wyitch elm; oak and birch; and alder. Each type of woodland has its distinctive undergrowth.

Ash and wyitch elm has dog's mercury, tufted hair grass and woodruff. Oak and birch stands have abundant great woodrush, wavy hair grass and bilberry whereas alder stands have giant horsetail, golden saxifrage and pendulous sedges.

Other uncommon species in the Dingle include wood barley and wood horsetail. There is a variety of bryophytes including the relatively rare Hookeria lucens moss. Small leaved lime, yew and field maple add interest.

A variety of insects have adapted to living on decaying wood such as the rare Telford crane fly, Lipsothrix species.

Tufa has been deposited from the lime rich spring water along the sides of the valley.

### **2.12.3 Regionally Important Geological Sites [RIGS]**

Geological sites important for their educational function or as good examples of rock type or geological process are designated as RIGS. They may also be SSSIs. Shropshire Geological Society identified and designated the **Wrekin Hill, Ercall Quarry, Forest Glen , Maddocks Hill and Lydebrook Dingle**.

### **2.12.4 Local Nature Reserves [LNR]**

LNRs are established by local authorities in recognition of their combined educational and conservation value. The LNR agreement involves the passing of bye-laws to protect the site.

Map 4 shows the large **Wrekin, Lawrence Hill, Ercall** LNR: there is a joint management agreement between T&W Council and Shropshire Wildlife Trust. **Limekiln Wood** and **Black Hayes Wood** is the other Nature Reserve in the parish. This area of mixed ash and hazel woodland with very rich limestone ground flora lies just north of current mining operations.

Within the Ercall more than 1,000 species of invertebrates have been counted including the uncommon dingy skipper butterfly. Ripples in the exposed surface of rock were formed by oscillating sea water some 500 million years ago. It is hard to imagine that this land used to be 60 degrees south of the equator.

### 2.12.5 Wildlife sites

Wildlife sites are a non-statutory designation given by county Wildlife Trusts due to the quality of their fauna and flora. The Trusts are keen to identify new wildlife sites. One newcomer is the **Devils Dingle**, part of which lies in the parish.

Map 5 shows how the **Wrekin** wildlife site acts as a buffer round the nature reserve and SSSI. Several of the woodlands are on the Ancient Woodland Register.

**Limekiln Wood** and **Black Hayes** including most of **Maddock's Quarry** constitute the next largest wildlife site in the parish. The quarry has some excellent geological exposures and it was an SSSI.

**Marmers Covert** is a scrub area with hazel, hawthorn, elder and wych elm. More open areas have dog rose and silver birch. There are small tufa deposits.

The **Lydebrook Dingle** wildlife site is a species rich continuation of the SSSI.

During springtime walkers can enjoy beautiful carpets of bluebell and wood anemone. The latter, especially, is disappearing from many areas of the country.

### 2.12.6 Ancient Monuments

The **Wrekin**, Map 6, was designated as an ancient monument because it is one of the few, local, large hill forts. Administration for its protection lies with English Heritage under legislation from the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Act. Evidence has been found of Iron Age human occupation covering several hundred years up to the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD.

More newly designated is an area of industrial archaeology value, in this case coal mining, north and northwest of New Works in an area known locally as **New Works Wood**. This is currently in the surface mine site.

### 2.12.7 Other Valuable Historic Features

Also shown on Map 6 are the **Little Worth** bell pits. These three bell pit mounds are thought to be survivors of late 17<sup>th</sup> Century to mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century mining. Coal was transported from here on a timber railway to Stretthill in 1728. These bell pit mounds are not designated as ancient monuments but they are entered in the Shropshire Historic Record.

### 2.12.8 Listed Buildings

There are 15 listed buildings in the parish, as follows:

Grade 11*	St Lawrence Church, Little Wenlock [LW]
Grade 11	Rose Cottage, [LW] White Cottage, [LW] The Moors, Braggers Hill The Old Hall, [LW] The Old Rectory, [LW] Old Rectory Gate-piers, [LW] Manor House, [LW] Coalmoor Farmhouse, Coalmoor Lower Coalmoor Farmhouse, Coalmoor Lower Huntington Farmhouse, Huntington

Upper Huntington Farmhouse, Huntington  
Home Farmhouse, [LW]  
Home Farmhouse Buildings, [LW]  
The Stone House, [LW]

These are described in Appendix 1

## 3 PARISH DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Local Context

Little Wenlock's position within the Borough of Telford and Wrekin is unique. It is a rural parish containing some of the locality's most valuable and vulnerable assets. At the same time it has great recreational attractions.

### 3.2 Advantages

Proximity to Telford offers employment opportunities as well as good shopping, entertainment, education and healthcare facilities. The planned £30 million Ironstone Development, a retail hub with new school, public house etc, will create up to 400 new jobs even nearer to the parish.

This means that the provision of such facilities in the parish is by no means as vital as it is in more remote rural parishes.

Road, and to a lesser extent rail, access to Telford is good. Road infrastructure in Telford is good.

### 3.3 Disadvantages

The accessibility of Telford's facilities is limited for non car owning/driving residents by distances that are too long for walking and too hilly for cycling. There is a total lack of public transport to and from Telford at the beginning and end of the working day.

The poor standard of road maintenance in the parish and limited winter gritting/snow clearance restricts parishioners' access to Telford's good transport links.

The parish's close position to the Telford urban area confers a number of problems the worst of which are:

- The spread of crime, especially car crime;
- Fly tipping and littering, which is becoming progressively worse;
- Increasing volumes of traffic, much at unacceptable speeds through Little Wenlock village and New Works. This problem is particularly noticeable on the Horsehay to Wellington road. Since the installation of traffic lights and speed restrictions on the A5223 in Lawley the problem has escalated.

The natural beauty of the landscape, tranquillity and bounty of environmental treasures attract some 80,000 visitors a year, many of them from Telford. Visitor impact can have negative effects on the natural environment. They may interfere with the amenity of residents or the needs of the farming community. There is a huge challenge to ensure that the parish remains open and accessible to visitors while preventing the pressures they create having such negative effects.

In order that the rural character of the parish is preserved creeping 'sub-urbanisation' from expanding Telford must be strongly resisted.

### 3.4 Vision

To guide its development over the Plan period the parish has the following vision.

**Little Wenlock wishes to maintain the highest possible quality of life for all its residents within a thriving modern village community and a diverse, tranquil and sustainable rural environment.**

Sustainable means that our use of any resource does not decrease its quantity or quality to the detriment of its use by future generations.

### **3.5 Community Priorities**

Analysis of the Consultation Survey, which was distributed to every house in the parish, identified a number of key priorities [See Appendix 2].

#### **3.5.1 Countryside**

Fly tipping and littering emerged as the topic all respondents feel most strongly about. Of particular concern is the dumping of increasing amounts of commercial rubbish.

Feelings are running almost as high about the protection of wildlife resources in the parish. A significant number of residents are very keen to see more trees planted. Although many wish to see wild flowering verges in the parish a small minority disagree. A majority of people wish to see local ponds cleared out but a minority strongly disagree. It has been pointed out that the ponds in their present state can be a valuable habitat and ecosystem.

#### **3.5.2 Roads**

There is great concern about the poor maintenance of parish roads although a very small number of respondents disagreed. No doubt the many pot holes reduce traffic speeds. There is very strong support for traffic calming in the main settlements and the surrounding narrow lanes, which residents would like to see designated as Quiet Lanes with a 20 mph speed limit.

Another major highway concern is that snow clearance and gritting should be extended to more roads. Roads should be kept cleaner too.

An extension of pavements within the settlements and the use of yellow lines to encourage off-road parking is considered inappropriate by most people. Opinion is divided about the desirability of yellow lines at the foot of the Wrekin to encourage off-road parking although a definite majority favour this.

A majority of residents wish to see street lights turned off at midnight and most people in Crofter's View would like less intense street lighting. A smaller majority of residents would like to see street lighting improved on Wellington Road to allow better traffic calming measures. There is a strong feeling that more energy efficient street lighting should be used.

#### **3.5.3 Recreation and Village Facilities**

There is an almost unanimous desire to see the telephone system updated for IT use. This is particularly urgent as working from home is becoming increasingly common.

The majority of residents wish to see better signage and better maintenance of rights of way in the parish and they would like more footpaths and bridleways. Benches for walkers are asked for in New Works.

A large number of respondents would like to see a regular local produce market in the village hall, perhaps on the Luncheon Club days. Quite a number of people wish for the re-appearance of postal and shopping services in Little Wenlock village and the suggestion is that these be part of a 'the pub is the hub' project.

Residents would like better tasting drinking water and improved recycling facilities although the recent innovations will have gone a long way to satisfy the latter request.

### **3.5.4 Energy Conservation**

The majority of parishioners think that home efficiency improvements should be encouraged and in particular solar panel use. Most would like to see the development of more renewable energy production but wind energy does not find favour.

### **3.5.5 Community**

A well organised emergency plan is the highest ranking priority in this section. It is closely followed by more support for elderly residents although no indication is given of the type of support needed.

More social and sports activities and activities for young people are sought. There is the idea of a summer fete on the playing field. Play facilities for young children are thought to be good but more is needed for older children, such as a cycle track.

Opinion is equally divided about toilet facilities at Little Wenlock church.

The suggestion is made that the village hall should be opened as a proper community centre. On 1 or 2 mornings/afternoons each week it could open as a drop- in centre for tea or coffee.

There is little crime in Little Wenlock yet crime prevention features prominently in the Consultation Survey.

### **3.5.6 Housing and Development**

A slight majority of parishioners think that there should be no new housing built and a similar majority consider there is no need for affordable housing for local people.

A considerable majority believe that any new housing should be built on suitable in-fill sites that do not encroach on agricultural or green space land and that it should be confined to individual units. Such housing should not be confined to the main settlement but be distributed within the parish as a whole.

There is strong resistance in the parish to any further mineral extraction and waste disposal or treatment developments.

A small majority of people believe that more job opportunities are needed in the parish but fewer think that appropriate small business development should be allowed in the parish.

### **3.5.7 Transport**

A sizeable majority would like to see facilities to encourage cycling. Slightly fewer think that we need a better bus service and considerably fewer would like to see a car sharing scheme investigated. These survey results indicate a dissatisfaction with public transport although some of the cyclists may cycle for recreation purposes.

Some older residents, young people and families with only one car are clearly disadvantaged.

## **3.6 Development Principles**

In accordance with parishioners priorities the following key principles have been identified to guide the development of the parish.

- 1. The countryside should be maintained and enhanced, with emphasis on wildlife and habitat conservation and a tranquil and safe rural environment.**
- 2. The mixed farming and the woodland character of the parish should be preserved.**
- 3. Every effort should be made to improve the standard of road maintenance and safety.**
- 4. Residential development should be small in scale, appropriate in design and spread through the settlements.**
- 5. Non-residential development should be controlled to preserve rural tranquillity, protect residents from adverse effects and the environment from damage.**
- 6. Efforts should be made to improve the broadband service to the parish.**
- 7. Community spirit and responsibility should be fostered with facilities and activities attracting and involving as many residents as possible.**
- 8. Initiatives which improve the quality of local life and sustainability of the environment should be promoted.**
- 9. A diverse community mix should be encouraged, with housing and facilities suited to a range of family types and circumstances.**

## **4 HOUSING AND BUILDING**

### **4.1 Key Principles**

**Residential development should be small scale, appropriate in design and spread through the settlements.**

**Housing suited to differing family sizes and needs should be encouraged.**

**Non-residential development should be controlled to protect residents from adverse effects and to preserve the peace and quiet of this rural parish.**

### **4.2 Local context**

Telford and Wrekin Core Strategy Development Plan, Policy CS7, states that development in rural areas will be focussed on three settlements of which Little Wenlock is not one. Outside of these three settlements development will be limited and within the open countryside strictly controlled.

There is an underlying rate of 6 or 7 new dwellings in a ten year period, as demonstrated in the previous Parish Plan. This calculation excludes the single major development of 12 new homes which was opposed by the Planning Authority but granted by Government on appeal.

### **4.3 New Housing Numbers**

In line with Telford and Wrekin Core Strategy and the view of parishioners that this rural parish should not be spoilt by a large quantity of housing the parish considers that new housing should be strictly limited. This is particularly important given the over provision of housing in the 1995-2002 period.

### **GUIDELINE H 1 NEW HOUSING NUMBERS**

**The Parish will seek to limit residential development to the same underlying rate of recent years.**

### **4.4 New Housing Location**

Past housing development has caused an imbalance between Little Wenlock village and other settlements in the parish. It has exhausted infill space in Little Wenlock village. This imbalance hinders the cohesion and vitality of the parish. Appropriate housing development at Huntington and Coalmoor would help to redress this imbalance.

New Works has some infill space as have Huntington and Coalmoor. Moreover, they are nearer to the facilities of Telford, Horsehay and the proposed £30 million retail hub at Lawley. These facts furnish further reasons for encouraging appropriate housing development in these areas of the parish.

Little Wenlock village has no school or shops and very little public transport or employment resulting in no economic or environmental reasons for concentrating new housing development in Little Wenlock village alone.



## **GUIDELINE H 2 NEW HOUSING LOCATION**

**The Parish will support appropriate new housing within the existing housing clusters of New Works, Huntington, Coalmoor and Little Wenlock.**

Great care must be taken to avoid housing sprawl from existing settlements, or extensions to them, encroaching on the open countryside.

## **GUIDELINE H 3 HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**The Parish will resist new residential development in the open countryside outside the existing boundaries of its settlements.**

### **4.5 New Housing Scale**

In order to maintain community spirit and encourage participation in community life the parish seeks to ensure that new housing is integrated into settlements and it is of an appropriate scale to achieve the same end.

To preserve communities with a variety of family types and circumstances the parish wishes to have a range of house size and affordability.

## **GUIDELINE H 4 NEW HOUSING SCALE**

**The Parish will resist new residential developments involving anything other than one or two dwellings on suitable infill plots, while seeking to maintain a diversity of size and affordability within its housing stock.**

### **4.6 Affordable Housing**

Endeavouring to maintain a balanced community the parish wishes to ensure that people employed in the parish, or from families in the parish can afford to live in the locality.

## **GUIDELINE H 5 AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**The Parish will be sympathetic to a small scale scheme of affordable housing for local people if a continued need is identified and provided adequate occupancy controls are in place to ensure the use of such housing for local people in perpetuity. The term 'local' means within Little Wenlock Parish.**

### **4.7 Housing Design**

The parish considers it important that new houses and extensions reinforce local character and visual distinctiveness and that the established features of its settlements are respected. It wishes to avoid incongruous developments and those inappropriate in relation to their effect on neighbouring properties or existing residents.

Designs which minimise heat loss and wasteful energy use are approved of.

## **GUIDELINE H 6 HOUSING DESIGN**

**The Parish will favour proposals for new housing or extensions to existing dwellings that:**

- [a] Blend- in well with its settlements in design, layout and scale, preserving or enhancing their character;**
- [b] Have no unacceptably negative effects on neighbouring properties or their amenity value; and**
- [c] Are designed to minimise heat loss and wasteful energy use.**

## 4.8 Building Conversions

Whilst appreciating the necessity of preventing redundant farm buildings falling into decay and dereliction the parish notes the damage excessive conversion of non-residential buildings to residential use can cause.

Barn conversion in the open countryside is analogous with new housing development there and should only be supported for buildings of special value and where they would otherwise be lost

Residential conversions which do not increase the building footprint would be regarded in a more favourable light if:

- The buildings are in one of the parishes settlements;
- The buildings are a part of a diversification scheme in an existing farm business and create or maintain local employment;
- The buildings are part of a farmstead complex and are needed for affordable housing for farm labour.

### **GUIDELINE H 7 BUILDING CONVERSION**

**The Parish will be sympathetic to the conversion of redundant buildings to domestic use providing:**

**[a] they are of a substantial brick or stone construction capable of conversion without major reconstruction; and**

**[b] they are located within the boundary of an existing designated settlement; or**

**[c] They form part of a specific scheme of farm diversification with adequate safeguards over future ownership and use;**

**[d] They are part of a farmstead complex and are to be used as affordable housing for farm labour.**

## 4.9 Commercial Developments

Commercial development in the almost entirely residential settlements of the parish must be carefully controlled to preserve the peace and quiet and the environment in the immediate environs of these communities. Here the parish especially wishes to avoid noxious smells, additional noise, dust and other nuisances including increased traffic.

Commercial development outside the settlements of the parish is regarded as less disturbing providing the scale, type and design is acceptable.

To maintain rural employment and forestall the dereliction of farm buildings the following commercial uses are amongst those considered appropriate:

Rural craftwork;

Tourist accommodation;

Countryside leisure and recreation;

Business and other consultancy; and

IT and design work.

Any such developments should be located within existing farmsteads and, preferably, within existing buildings converted for the purpose. The parish considers that any development in the open countryside is as undesirable as housing development.

As within the settlements, any commercial development should not cause noxious smells, intrusive noise, dust or other nuisance. Nor should such development lead to a large increase in car or van traffic. It should be of the type that needs little or no HGV service. Many of the lanes in the parish are narrow and far from straight and thus unsuited to any increase in traffic, particularly HGVs.

## **GUIDELINE H 8 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**The Parish will support limited commercial developments if:**

- [a] They are of an appropriate type for the rural area and they are small scale;**
- [b] They are located in existing farmsteads or buildings and, with the exception of small scale tourist accommodation, are outside existing settlements; and**
- [c] They will not cause disturbance or nuisance to residents, or notably an additional volume of traffic on local roads.**

### **4.10 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

The parish values its tranquil environment highly and any type or scale of industrial development is a threat to this.

Industrial development includes temporary activities such as mining and land-filling/waste treatment and permanent development which involves using heavy plant and machinery.

The parish holds very strong views on this matter in light of the fact that large parts of the parish have suffered the cumulative impact of open-cast coal mining over many decades and continue to do so. Despite resistance from the Parish and Planning Authority the Government granted permission for the surface working of 900,000 tonnes of coal and 250,000 tonnes of fireclay on land off Huntington Lane. Work started on site in 2010.

Land-filling on former coal mining sites has caused another set of problems and poor quality land restoration has not visually returned the landscape to its original state.

## **GUIDELINE H 9 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**The Parish will resist inappropriate permanent or temporary industrial developments**

### **4.11 LISTED BUILDINGS**

Listed buildings are an important part of the community's heritage. The parish seeks to protect and preserve these buildings for their architectural and historic value.

The extent to which these buildings are altered, extended or otherwise changed should be controlled and their demolition prevented. In doing so harsh restrictive controls should not be used as the buildings may be left to decay and become derelict. Protection needs to be extended to the setting of listed buildings so that any development in their immediate area does not negatively affect their context.

## **GUIDELINE H 10 LISTED BUILDINGS**

**The Parish will support efforts to prevent the inappropriate alteration, dereliction or loss of listed buildings and resist developments which would detract from their setting**

### **4.12 ENERGY AND WATER SUPPLIES**

Electricity power cuts and water supply failures have reduced in recent years. The installation of back-up generators at the key pumping stations has improved the water supply situation.

Vegetation control along local overhead power lines is thought to be crucial in the maintenance of electricity supply.

## **GUIDELINE H 11 ELECTRICITY AND WATER SUPPLIES**

**The Parish will continue to exert pressure on local utility companies regarding adequate schedules of vegetation removal from overhead power lines and the maintenance of back-up generators at water pumping stations.**

### **4.13 ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

The parish aspires to more sustainable development and supports measures that increase the energy efficiency of buildings and reduce energy consumption. To this end, it would like to see greater use of low energy technologies and maximum use of high standard insulation to minimise heat loss from buildings.

## **GUIDELINE H 12 ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

**The Parish will encourage residents to reduce heat loss from buildings and to make the maximum use of low energy technologies**

### **4.14 RENEWABLE ENERGY**

The parish would like to see a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and an increase in the use of renewable energy sources.

One method is to specify electricity from green sources. Other methods include the use of active solar technology and heat exchange devices in existing and new buildings. The use of geothermal energy is a further possibility for new buildings.

Solar energy collectors will have to be carefully placed and designed so that they do not have an unsightly effect on the appearance of buildings. This will be very important in the case of listed buildings.

Any form of renewable energy generation should not have a detrimental visual impact on the immediate or local environment.

## **GUIDELINE H 13 RENEWABLE ENERGY**

**The Parish will continue to raise awareness of renewable energy and solar technology in particular, encouraging greater use of green electricity together with the installation and use of renewable energy systems**

## **4.15 STREET LIGHTING**

Street lighting within the two main settlements of Little Wenlock and New Works needs to be a balance between safety, security, low energy use, cost effectiveness and minimising light pollution.

New technology lighting systems have provided an opportunity to consider alternative lamp designs. As a trial in 2010 an inefficient lamp was replaced with a LED model that uses low energy, supplies downward projected light and is virtually maintenance free. This LED design lamp will be progressively introduced across the parish as existing lamps become beyond economic repair.

In order to reduce unnecessary light pollution, part night operation of lights [i.e. switched off between the hours 12.00 midnight to 5.00 am] is considered generally to be most appropriate, unless there are specific reasons in certain locations that require all night lighting.

Outside the main settlement areas it is not considered appropriate or necessary to have street lighting of any description.

### **GUIDELINE H14 STREET LIGHTING**

**The Parish will provide street lighting within its main settlements that takes into account safety, security, low energy use, cost effectiveness and minimises light pollution.**

## **4.16 PAVEMENTS AND STREET PARKING**

Road safety remains an important concern for pedestrians throughout the parish. However, this issue will not be addressed by introducing pavements and controlling on-street parking with 'yellow lined lanes'. Such measures would be out of character for a rural environment and more appropriate measures to address road safety are to be pursued.

### **GUIDELINE H15 PAVEMENTS AND STREET PARKING**

**The Parish will maintain its rural character by discouraging the installation of new pavements and on-street parking controls within the main settlements.**

## **4.17 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

The re-organised road configuration through the adjacent Lawley village has resulted in an increased level of traffic passing through the main settlement of Little Wenlock. In general, drivers who do not reside in the parish tend to ignore the 30 mph speed limit. Excessive speed through the main settlement has proved to be a major concern and, as such, solutions to the problem have been actively discussed with Telford and Wrekin Highways Department.

Community views have been sought and voiced. The preferred options would be the provision of 'Gateways' at the entrances to the main settlements, reduction of 60 mph speed limits along Wellington Road, relocating the 30 mph speed limit sign to enable speed camera/gun monitoring, introducing the 'Quiet Lanes' project in appropriate locations and revising the road layout adjacent to the Wrekin pathway entrance. It is considered that 'Speed Bumps' or 'Chicanes' are not in keeping with our rural environment and will not be recommended.

Telford and Wrekin Highways Department are considering a range of proposals suggested by the Parish Council and have stated their wish to involve other partners who have interests in the issue

in order to develop a long term solution.

#### **GUIDELINE H16 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

**Traffic management issues are a major concern to residents and preferred solutions will have a high priority in the Parish's discussions with Telford and Wrekin Highways Department.**

## **5. COUNTRYSIDE AND ENVIRONMENT**

### **5.1 Key Principles**

**The mixed farming and woodland character of the parish should be preserved.**

**The countryside should be maintained and enhanced with the emphasis on wildlife and habitat conservation and a tranquil and safe rural environment.**

### **5.2 Local Context**

Approximately one third of the parish lies within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It contains three SSSIs, the Borough's only Local Nature Reserve and the largest single area of its designated Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland. The parish is thus a sensitive countryside area containing the Borough's most valuable ecological and environmental assets. The close proximity of the expanding urban area of Telford and current, 2011, open cast mining at Huntington accentuate this sensitivity.

### **5.3 Designated Areas**

A major part of the identity of the Borough is symbolised by The Wrekin, that part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty containing the Ancient Monument of the hill-fort.

The parish feels strongly that it is vital that the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, its Ancient Monuments, SSSIs, Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland should be protected from further development and preserved from degradation, both through excessive or inappropriate use and as a result of neglect.

Special concern is expressed for the SSSI at Lydebrook Dingle and The Wildlife Sites at Marmers Covert and Lydebrook Dingle. Their size and isolation renders them possibly more vulnerable. The Ancient Monument at New Works is now part of a working open cast mining site and it is equally important to protect and preserve it and the Little Worth bell pit mounds which are recorded in Shropshire's Historic Environment Record.

As the relationships between these designated areas and their surrounding habitats is very sensitive the parish considers that protection must encompass the land immediately surrounding them. This land provides a landscape setting and context for the designated area and often acts as an important wildlife bridge.

### **GUIDELINE C 1 DESIGNATED AREAS**

**The Parish will use every means in its power to protect and preserve the following designated areas and their surrounding countryside from any developments which would adversely affect them either directly or indirectly:**

- [a] The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;**
- [b] Sites of Special Scientific Interest;**
- [c] Ancient Monuments and features listed in Shropshire's Historic Environment Record;**
- [d] Nature Reserves;**
- [e] Wildlife Sites; and**
- [f] Ancient Woodland.**

**Maps 2-6 indicate the location of these areas.**

## **5.4 Farming and Woodland**

Mixed farming , and to a lesser extent forestry, are the main land uses and these activities have fashioned the post-industrial landscape.

Livestock grazing occurs in fairly small green fields with species rich hedges on the better quality land. Much of the farm land is of marginal quality, being restored grassland following extensive open-cast operations. There are many coppices and areas of woodland. Arable farming takes place on the better land and mostly produces fodder crops.

As traditional dairy, beef and sheep farming has become less profitable the rearing of game birds for the shoot has become an important means of diversification and this has helped to maintain the look of the landscape.

If the character of the countryside is to be preserved profitable livestock grazing should continue and this could entail intensification in order that economies of scale can be realised. The downside of this could be more pollution from a greater number of livestock. Farming is clearly facing a difficult situation.

Similarly a quandary exists in the woodlands of the parish. These areas need to be managed and protected from large scale timber felling and recreational activities that damage their fauna and flora.

### **GUIDELINE C2 FARMING AND WOODLAND**

**The Parish will encourage efforts to maintain the viability of the existing mixed farming and woodland systems, providing they do not involve intensification or diversification of a type or scale likely to cause significant changes to the character of the countryside, the tranquillity of the environment or the amenity of parishioners.**

## **5.5 Wildlife Conservation**

The parish strongly favours the preservation and enhancement of the richness and diversity of the flora and fauna.

Sympathetic management of existing wildlife resources and habitats is needed as is the good maintenance and management of verges. The Parish wishes to see the planting of more native trees and wild flowers.

To achieve the greatest wildlife and landscape value bodies of open water, ponds and streams, such as the Lyde Brook and its tributaries, require careful management. In this respect the clearance of overgrown ponds is contentious as they themselves can constitute a valuable habitat. The restoration and creation of new water bodies is seen as desirable.

The wilderness character of the Wrekin is treasured and measures to protect and enhance the small fragments of heath land in the parish are supported.

Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship schemes , ALS/HLS carried out by landowners and farmers are seen as a means of securing environmental benefits and enhancing biodiversity.

Initiatives that will enhance the quantity and quality of the hedgerow network, such as the restoration, replanting and creation of new lengths of hedgerow, are supported as is the practice



of uncultivated field margins to enhance the biodiversity and ecological value of these areas. For the same reason commitments and undertakings obtained as part of planning applications, conservation agreements and financial and other support for particular projects from grant awarding bodies and organisations are highly valued.

### **GUIDELINE C 3 WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

**The Parish will:**

**[a] Support and encourage all habitat and wildlife conservation and improvement efforts undertaken by parishioners, landowners and organisations;**

**[b] Investigate support and external funding for specific conservation projects; and**

**[c] Work with the Shropshire Wildlife Trust and others, such as the Wrekin Forest Partnership, to achieve the most sustainable environmental improvements possible.**

### **5.6 Rights of Way**

In providing access to the countryside for residents and visitors alike, the parish's extensive network of public rights of way is considered to be a particularly important asset to the community. There are 27.3 km of footpath, 29 km of bridleway and 3.9 km of restricted by-way.

The parish wishes to ensure the greatest possible appropriate use of the existing network through on-going and effective maintenance and adequate signage.

With the increasing volumes of traffic using the lanes of the parish the effective classification of bridleways is important to ensure that the needs of both riders and walkers are catered for.

### **GUIDELINE C 4 RIGHTS OF WAY**

**The Parish will maintain an up-to-date Definitive Statement of existing rights of way, and work to ensure they are classified appropriately and both signposted and maintained effectively.**

### **5.7 The Wrekin**

Over 160,000 people live within 5 miles of the Wrekin and Ercall. Some 80,000 visit it every year. This causes enormous pressure on car parking and refuse disposal. There are no toilet facilities.

The soils of the Wrekin Hill Fort earthwork have deep erosion scars caused by increasing visitor use.

There are serious safety concerns about the road parking. Collection of litter from the bins is not frequent enough and this exacerbates the local litter problem.

The Parish considers that Telford and Wrekin Council should prioritise the maintenance of this asset, one of the greatest in the Borough, before there is a serious accident or/and the amenity is overwhelmed.

## **GUIDELINE C 5 THE WREKIN**

**The Parish will urge Telford and Wrekin Council to develop and implement a plan for the positive management of visitors to the Wrekin and Ercall**

### **5.8 Quiet Lanes**

Several lanes in the parish have a narrow width and include sharp bends presenting a road safety concern. Many of our rights of way, that are used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders, converge on these lanes creating serious risk of accidents with vehicles travelling at inappropriate high speeds for the prevailing conditions. A particularly critical area is related to the lanes immediately surrounding the Wrekin, where recreational use continues to expand.

Traffic management measures are generally not applicable to these locations due to statutory requirements and practical issues. To address these problems raised by the Parish, Telford and Wrekin Highways Department has indicated that during 2011 it will work with the Parish Council, and other interested groups, to develop proposals in order to provide a satisfactory solution.

## **GUIDELINE C6 QUIET LANES**

**The Parish will seek to have specified lanes designated as 'Quiet Lanes' and managed to improve the safety and enjoyment of walkers, cyclists and horse riders.**

### **5.9 Mineral Extraction**

There is a long history of mineral extraction over much of the parish. Although the activities may be relatively short lived, many residents have had to endure considerable dust, noise, disruption, visual pollution and loss of amenity over a protracted period. This experience continues with the current mining activities at the Huntington Lane site.

A return of wildness to some of these areas has brought beauty and biodiversity interest but all too often restorations have resulted in less attractive and less valuable countryside than the landscapes replaced. The parish is of the opinion that the adverse impacts of coal extraction far outweigh any economic or community benefits to be gained from it.

The parish is dismayed that in spite of the ready availability of imported coal, from less damaging sources, coal continues to be mined in the parish in an area upwind from major new housing developments. These operations do not intend to remove the very lowest measures of coal and the parish will resist any such plans in the future.

## **GUIDELINE C 7 MINERAL EXTRACTION**

**The Parish will oppose any further mineral extraction unless an over-riding national need can be demonstrated, sufficient community gains secured and adverse impacts on local residents effectively mitigated.**

### **5.10 Waste Disposal**

Open cast mining has created huge holes in the ground which have attracted land fill operations for many years. Planning permission for the current Candles site expires in 2012 although the voids in the ground will not be filled for another few years, at the present rate of land-fill.

Land-fill operations presented serious problems in the past. Fortunately this is no longer the case at the Candles site where recent extensive work has improved gas management. However, the topography of the site and surrounding area plus certain weather conditions contribute to odour problems.

On the whole, restorations have been a disappointment to local residents. Both venting flare stacks and pipe work are very obvious and flora scarce. There has been a long term gas migration from one restored site adjacent to New Works.

The parish accepts the fact that waste has to be disposed of somewhere and somehow but considers that it has had more than its fair share. It is firmly opposed to any extension of this activity after the completion of the Candles site and would resist waste transfer stations and waste incinerators.

## **GUIDELINE C8 WASTE DISPOSAL**

**The Parish will:**

- [a] Do everything possible to ensure that the current land-fill site causes minimal problems to the local community;**
- [b] Work to secure effective restoration and aftercare of all completed sites;**
- [c] Resist any developments that might create sites suitable for future land-filling; and**
- [d] Strongly resist any new waste disposal activity in the parish after the completion of the Candles site.**

### **5.11 Litter and Fly-Tipping**

The amount of litter deposited alongside the roads is getting worse and especially so near the Wrekin. Volunteer litter pickers struggle to keep on top of the problem and are grateful for Veolia's cooperation.

Recently, in the Wrekin and the Erccall areas volunteers have been assisted by the Borough. The parish needs such help to be given more often. These areas are particularly important for public recreation for the entire Borough and feature prominently in terms of local identity.

Volunteers cannot physically handle the dumping of bulky household and commercial waste. This is particularly found in field gateways, track entrances and pull-ins. This type of waste dumped on private land such as in fields or woodland will not be collected by the Borough who maintain that it is the problem of the land owner! This is clearly an unsatisfactory situation.

## **GUIDELINE C9 LITTER AND FLY TIPPING**

**The Parish will co-operate with the Borough to keep the countryside as free from litter and fly-tip rubbish as possible, developing specific plans of action for major problem areas.**

### **5.12 Verge and Planted Areas**

The parish wishes to ensure an agreed appropriate programme of planned maintenance.

For verges this entails an agreed cutting schedule. The wild flower verges should not be cut when flowers are in bloom or before the seed has set and dispersed.

Hedges should be trimmed in such a way and at such times that they do not obscure road signs, interfere with visibility or reduce the effective width of narrow lanes.

The Borough managed areas of planting, as in Orchard Close, should be maintained in a manner which prevents excessive weed growth whilst avoiding spray damage to plants.

#### **GUIDELINE C 10 VERGE AND PLANTED AREAS**

**The Parish will agree annual maintenance schedules with the Borough for the verges and managed areas of planting for which they are responsible, and ensure that these are implemented effectively.**

#### **5.13 Highway Maintenance and Gritting**

The poor standard of road maintenance, inadequate ditch and gully emptying, limited gritting and limited snow clearance impede and curtail residents access to the rest of the Borough. They also increase the risk of accidents.

Compounding the issue are the abundant large pot-holes and broken up road surfaces. After heavy rain sheet wash from the fields flows across the roads in places and blocked gullies contribute to streams of water on the roads. In winter this water turns to sheets of lethal ice. Mud and debris on the roads present further problems.

Given the dangerous nature of these problems the parish considers that the Highways Department should prioritise tackling these matters. .

#### **GUIDELINE C 11 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE**

**The Parish will work with the Borough to ensure acceptable standards of road maintenance based upon an on-going process of review and action.**

Very limited snow clearance and gritting of single access roads to each village causes difficulties and dangers to residents and non-residents not conversant with the restricted winter programme. Any improvements will be sought.

#### **GUIDELINE C 12 SNOW CLEARANCE AND GRITTING**

**The Parish will seek to improve the winter road clearance services provided by the Borough. The Parish will seek to extend gritting to more roads in the parish.**

## **6. COMMUNITY AND SERVICES**

### **6.1 Key Principles**

**Community spirit and responsibility should be fostered with facilities and activities attracting and involving as many residents as possible.**

**Initiatives which improve the quality of local life and the sustainability of the environment should be promoted.**

**Efforts should be made to improve the broadband service to the parish.**

### **6.2 Local Context**

Telford and Wrekin Borough Council forecast a greater role for the community and voluntary sector in their consultative document 'Our Future'. It is acknowledged that such a move will require the development of expertise and capacity. The need for public bodies, agencies, organisations and voluntary groups to work together to improve communities and their services is stressed. It is intended that the community will be the focus of partnership working.

### **6.3 Improved Broadband Service**

Residents rank faster broadband service as the most important service improvement needed, those who work from home state the most urgent need. The parish wishes to encourage home working as it will strengthen the community and give greater security. In addition it will reduce the volume of road traffic and reduce carbon footprints.

It wishes to secure better broadband service for the students using it for homework, family social communication and recreation purposes too.

#### **GUIDELINE S1 BROADBAND**

**The Parish will seek to improve broadband telephony.**

### **6.4 Emergency Plan**

The penultimate service need indicated by parishioners is for a well organised emergency plan. This has been formulated and is published, in detail, on the Little Wenlock website under the title 'Emergency and Resilience Plan'. All are encouraged to view the document and to relay comments to the Parish Council together with the names of additional volunteers. It is essential that the plan is kept up to date.

It is expected that most need will be experienced in extreme weather conditions and the assistance given via the plan will be that of 'a good neighbour'.

In the event of an incident, residents who think that the E&R organisation should be mobilized in support of the parish should call the E&R Duty Coordinator on 0777259619 or any parish councillor [see parish web-site].

#### **GUIDELINE S2 EMERGENCY PLAN**

**The Parish will maintain and keep up to date its Emergency and Resilience Plan.**

## **6.5 Support for the Elderly**

This service ranked highly in the Survey responses although no particular support was specified.

There is a relatively high proportion of older people in the parish which is isolated from many Borough services. The Parish is keen to provide these people, especially those lacking family assistance, with whatever home support they may need.

Shopping, gardening, odd jobs, laundry, ironing, housework, freezer and fridge cleaning, pet care, errands and form filling are areas in which extra support may be needed. Advice may be required about healthcare, nursing care, residential care, social service entitlements and group activities.

### **GUIDELINE S3 SUPPORT FOR THE ELDERLY**

**The Parish will encourage all efforts to support elderly residents in their homes, working with local organisations, charities and service providers to identify particular needs and promote practical schemes to meet them.**

## **6.6 Local Produce Market, Shop and Post Office**

Most support is indicated for a local produce market and least for Post Office facilities in the Survey. Should a Post Office/Shop re-establish in Little Wenlock there is serious doubt about its economic viability.

There is fierce competition. Such facilities are available locally, for example in Horsehay. Wellington and Telford town centre have Post Offices and a retail park at junction 6 on the M54 has many retail outlets. A new supermarket is to be built even nearer at the Ironstone Development, Lawley. A weekly mobile shop visits Little Wenlock and is currently used by only one customer. Supermarkets offer home-shopping services too.

The village hall or the refurbished Huntsman Inn would be the most cost effective locations for these activities.

Better publicity for the existing mobile shop, supermarket home shopping, 'Veg in a Box', 'Fish in the Box' and any other such services that deliver to the door may be the answer. They would certainly reduce the need for car or bus journeys.

### **GUIDELINE S4 LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET, SHOP AND POST OFFICE**

**The Parish will support any business case made for the re-establishment of a Post Office and shop in Little Wenlock while assisting local home shopping or delivery services to make their availability better known throughout its communities.**

## **6.7 Village Hall**

The single most important community resource in the parish is the village hall. This superb hall was completed in 2002 and is very well maintained by its active committee. The latter consists of elected members and representatives of community user groups. The hall was designed for versatility of use and it is well used.

In addition to the main hall, which can accommodate 300 people, there is a committee room for up to 50 people. It is here where the Parish Council holds its monthly meetings. There is a bar area and a fully equipped kitchen of professional catering standard. There is sufficient crockery, cutlery, chairs and tables for 100 diners. Facilities also include a demountable stage.

Current activities are described in 2.10. The Youth Club lapsed through lack of interest but could function again if young people will attend and if adult volunteer organisers will come forward.

The village hall is hired out for weddings, parties and other similar functions, and commercial use.

## **GUIDELINE S5 VILLAGE HALL**

**The Parish will actively support and assist the Village Hall Committee and other community organisations to develop and improve the facilities offered by the hall and to extend its activity range.**

### **6.8 Playing Field**

The playing field facilities in Little Wenlock village are good. These facilities are well maintained through frequent and regular inspections by members of the Village Hall & Playing Field Committee.

The New Outdoor Gym caters for all ages and all standards of fitness. It is deliberately placed next to the play area for small children so that parents can exercise whilst their children play. The play equipment is modern and varied.

There is a small football pitch, football posts, a hard tennis court, an activity wall and basket ball/netball hoops for ball games. A willow camp is used for imaginative games. There is some wooden outdoor seating and a picnic table.

The renovated barn is used as a meeting place for older children who have decorated the walls and have been provided with metal chairs and a table.

There is a feeling that play activities for older children should be extended and suggestions have been made for a bike track in this area. This and other ideas, for example, for an outdoor bowls mat and a summer fete need further exploration.

## **GUIDELINE S6 PLAYING FIELD**

**The Parish will encourage community efforts to secure improvements and extend activities on the playing field.**

### **6.9 Community Events**

The variety and number of events and activities organised by various bodies for the enjoyment of residents and visitors is well recognised. In addition to the activities described in 2.10 garden open days, barn dances and plant sales have been very successful.

There is the desire to involve as many local people as possible extending participation across the whole parish. Attracting visitors and funds from beyond is also sought.

The widest participation in the range of regular activities is encouraged.

## **GUIDELINE S7 COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**The Parish will do everything possible to support community groups, organisations and individuals in running events and activities which bring together people from across the parish and attract visitors.**

## **6.10 Public Transport**

Public transport is extremely poor. Little Wenlock and New Works are served by number 69 and number 70 Wrekin Connect buses. Some older residents do not have cars and describe this meagre service as their life-line.

Families with a single car and teenagers find it difficult to plan their lives around this skeleton bus service. Frail residents, lacking local family support can experience real problems visiting the doctor, dentist, optician, chiropodist or hospital. Simple shopping trips can be a nightmare. Taxi fares are high as operators have to cover their journeys to and from picking the customer up. At the destination help may be required with walking.

Extra bus services cannot be justified economically. There is a Taxi Token service and a CVS Community Car Scheme, please see 2.9. Volunteer drivers receive 40p per mile of which the passenger pays 55% and the local authority pays the other 45%. Some informal car-sharing already takes place and an extension of this practice would be helpful.

### **GUIDELINE S8 PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**The Parish will seek to extend the CVS Community Car Scheme to assist those unable to access other means of transport.**

## **6.11 Waste Recycling and Disposal**

As a result of the Borough's improved and extended recycling facilities and Little Wenlock's paper bank situated in the Village Hall car park, the parish has greatly reduced the amount sent to landfill. This goes a long way to realising its commitment to environmental sustainability.

The parish continues to encourage as much waste reduction, re-use, recycling and home composting as possible. There is no paper bank at New Works. Income from the sale of waste paper is contributed to the Village Hall Funds.

### **GUIDELINE S9 WASTE RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL**

**The Parish will encourage waste reduction, re-use, recycling and home composting.**

## **6.12 Crime Prevention**

There is little crime in the parish. Isolated incidents of theft from cars, houses, garages and sheds have occurred. The odd vehicle has been stolen although the disposal of cars stolen elsewhere is more common.

A number of 'green lanes', no through roads and other isolated areas have been the scene of car abandonment. A car park in Ercall Wood has had to be closed to prevent anti-social activities taking place there.

Theft, criminal damage and trespass occur on the farms and the poaching of game birds and deer takes place in woodland areas

Some acts of vandalism have taken place in and on the converted barn in the playing field.

No serious fear of crime has been reported from even the most elderly residents nor those living on their own and the parish is eager to maintain the status quo. Crime prevention is a priority to deter criminals and to reinforce parishioners' sense of safety.



An active Neighbourhood Watch programme operates in the parish and liaison with West Mercia Constabulary is close. The co-ordinator of Neighbourhood Watch also co-ordinates Horse Watch.

#### **GUIDELINE S10 CRIME PREVENTION**

**The Parish will do everything in its power to minimise crime, and fear of crime, by encouraging an active Neighbourhood Watch programme and participating in specific local crime prevention initiatives.**

#### **6.13 Education**

Children and young people must travel out of the parish for primary, secondary or tertiary education as there are no such establishments in the parish.

Local needs centred on education tend to be related to access which often means the ability to secure a place at the chosen local school and transport to it.

#### **GUIDELINE S11 EDUCATION**

**The Parish will provide guidance to any residents with educational access problems or concerns, assisting them in whatever way it can to achieve the proper provision from the relevant authority.**

#### **6.14 Support for Young People**

A lack of facilities and employment in the parish and poor public transport makes it difficult for young people to socialise or secure part-time or vacation jobs.

The parish wishes to do more to help young people in terms of local activities and transport.

#### **GUIDELINE S12 SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**The Parish will support the development of organised activities for young people in the parish and help them to gain access to any youth employment transport schemes available.**

#### **6.15 Healthcare**

With no healthcare facilities in the parish access to them presents problems especially for residents without the use of a car. The rural location of the parish means that emergency medical services tend not to be available as quickly as they are in suburban and urban parts of the Borough.

Consequently, the parish recognises the need to ensure that ambulance crews can rapidly locate patients requiring emergency treatment and that they are given the critical information they need to ensure the best treatment accurately and efficiently.

The parish also believes that having a number of local people capable of administering immediate life saving treatment prior to the arrival of paramedical staff would be an asset.

#### **GUIDELINE S13 HEALTHCARE**

**The Parish will implement initiatives to support the provision of emergency care to residents. It will provide advice to anyone with healthcare access problems.**

## **6.16 Local Information**

The parish wishes to ensure that residents are well informed of local services and activities so that they are able to take the greatest advantage of what is on offer and to encourage them to participate in the organised activities. It is thus hoped to foster community cohesiveness.

The range of locally available services include a mobile shop, a tri-weekly mobile library, three supermarkets deliver internet ordered goods, frozen meals on wheels, community nursing, pastoral care and recycling facilities.

A wide range of activities are run by a variety of community groups and organisations on regular and occasional basis.

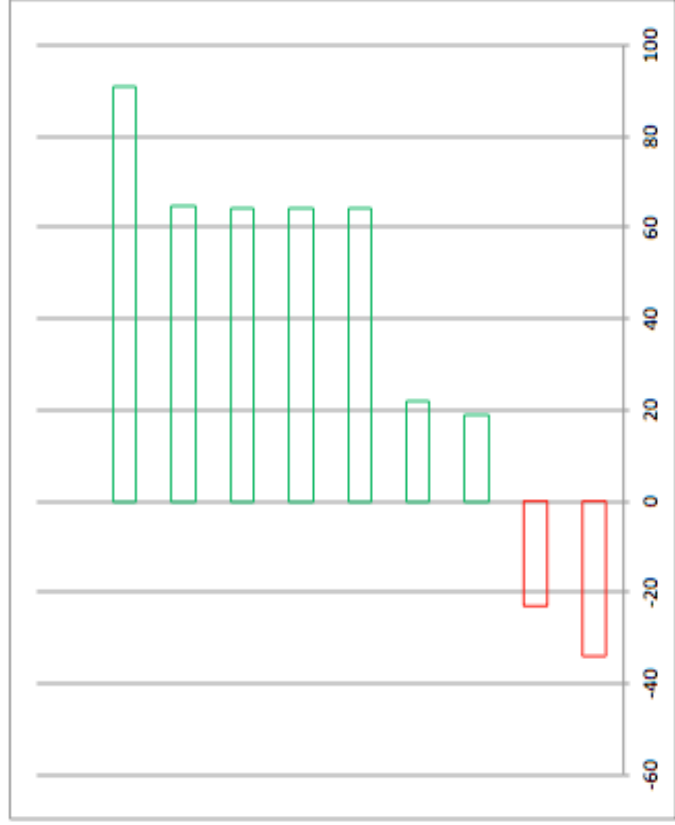
There are notice boards in both main villages and a Parish Information sheet listing services and activities, together with contact numbers, is up-dated and distributed to all residents and it is available on the parish website. A bi-monthly Community Newsletter is produced and distributed to all residences to communicate developments, Parish Council news and details of local activities and events.

### **GUIDELINE S14 LOCAL INFORMATION**

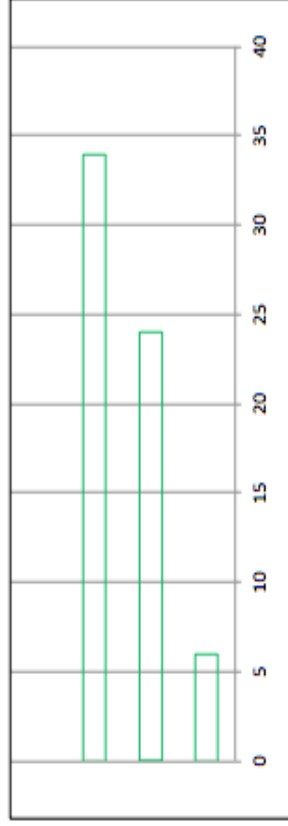
**The Parish will encourage and support initiatives from individuals and community groups to better inform residents of local services and activities, seeking external funding where available.**

Note : Responses are weighted from Strongly Agree (+2) to Strongly Disagree (-2)

**ROADS**

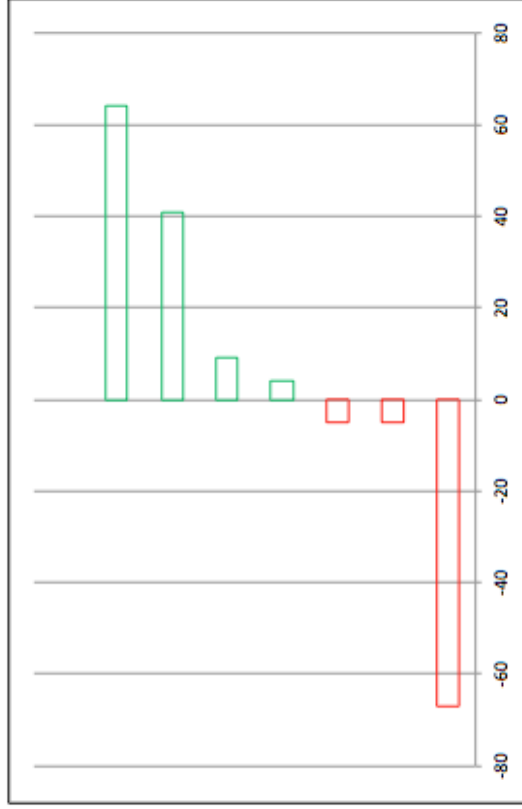


**TRANSPORT**



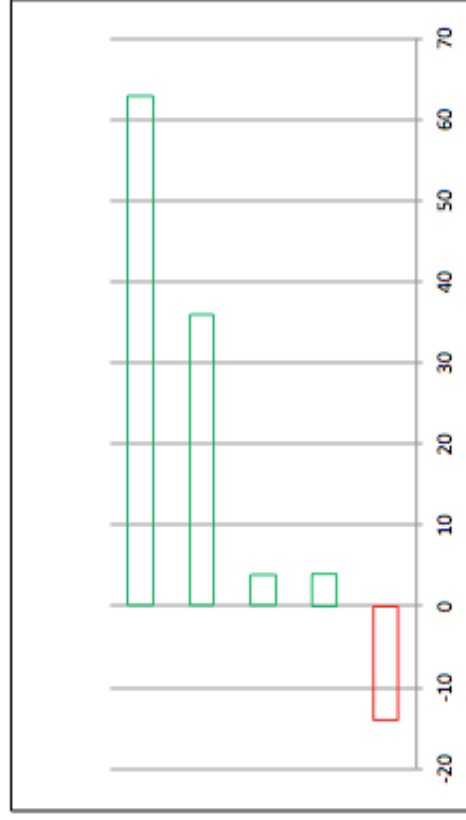
# PARISH PLAN 2012 – 2022

## DEVELOPMENT



- 64 Any new housing should be built on suitable infill sites that do not encroach on agricultural / greenspace land
- 41 Any new housing should be confined to individual units
- 9 More job opportunities are needed in the Parish
- 4 Some appropriate small business development should be allowed in the Parish
- 5 Some affordable housing is needed for local people with a particular need
- 5 There should be some new housing in the Parish
- 67 Mineral extraction / waste disposal should be permitted where appropriate

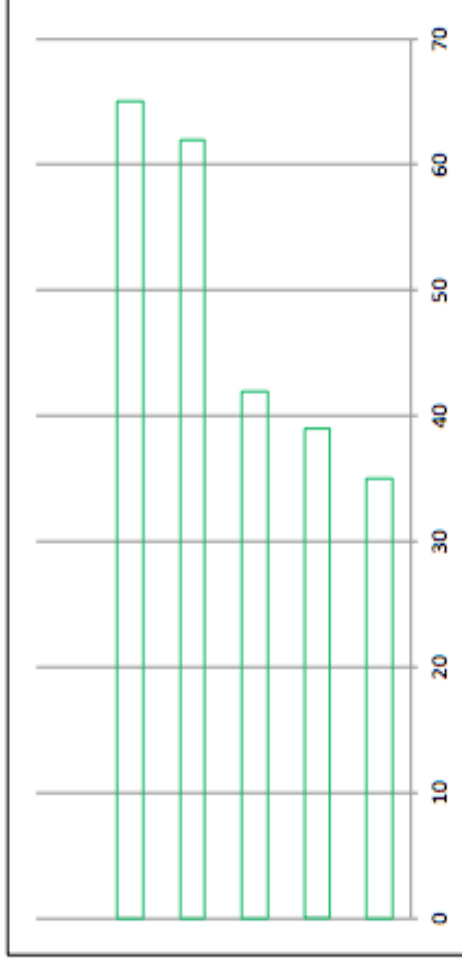
## RECREATION



- 63 We need better signage and maintenance of existing rights of way in the Parish
- 36 We need more footpaths / bridleways in the Parish
- 4 We should develop more sports facilities
- 4 We should extend our play facilities for older children
- 14 We need better play facilities for young children

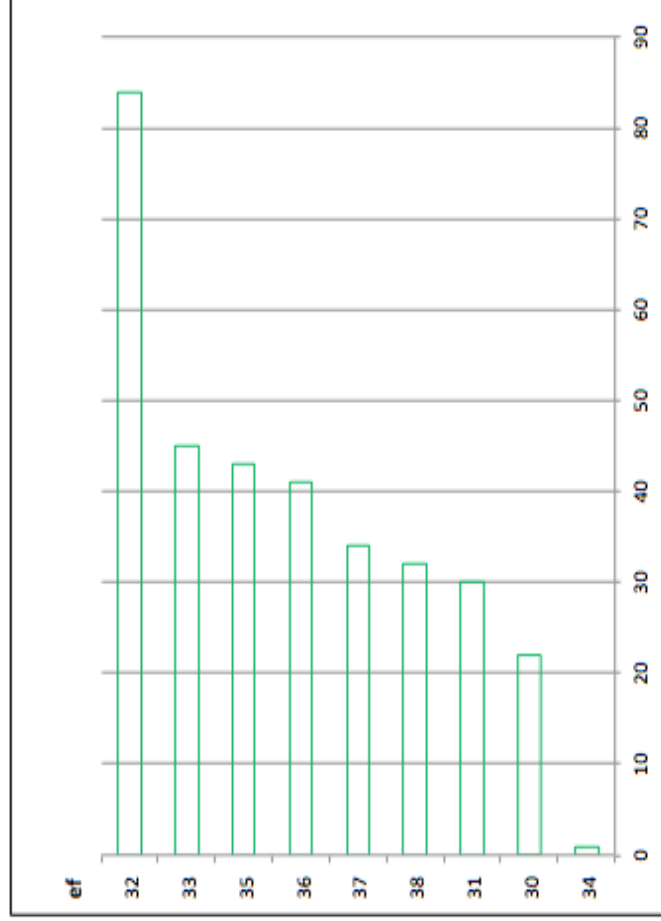
# PARISH PLAN 2012 – 2022

## ENERGY CONSERVATION



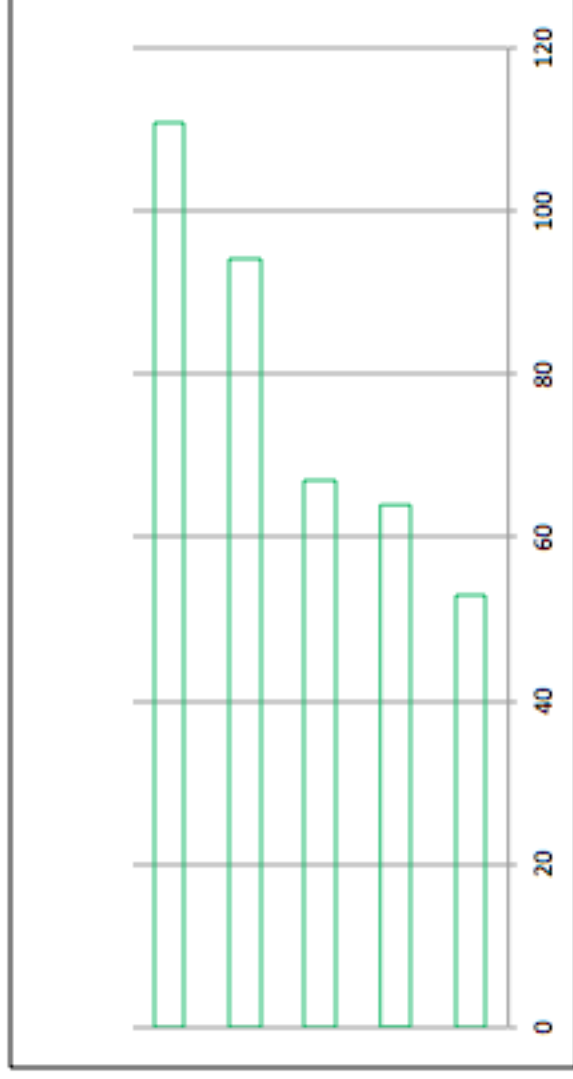
- 65 We need more efficient street lighting
- 62 We should encourage home efficiency improvements
- 42 We need to turn off all street lights at midnight
- 39 We should encourage solar panel use
- 35 We would like to see more development of renewable energy production

## VILLAGE FACILITIES



- 84 We need the telephone system to be updated for Information Technology use
- 45 A regular local produce market should be considered in the village hall
- 43 We should have better tasting drinking water
- 41 We need better recycling facilities
- 34 We should have benches for walkers in New Works
- 32 We need lower intensity street lighting in "Crofters View"
- 30 We need a local shop
- 22 We need a Post Office in Little Wenlock
- 1 We should have toilet facilities available to all, at Little Wenlock church

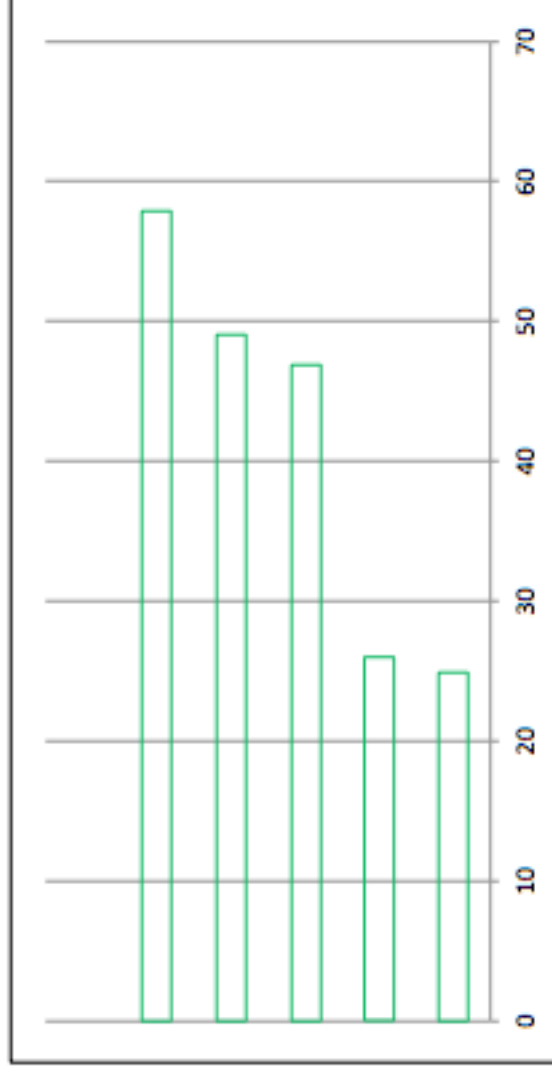
COUNTRYSIDE



- 111 We must control fly-tipping and littering more effectively
- 94 We need to protect wildlife resources in the village
- 67 We should plant more trees throughout the parish
- 64 We should plant flowering verges throughout the parish
- 53 We should clear out local ponds

7

COMMUNITY



- 58 We need to do more to prevent crime in the parish
- 49 We need a well organised emergency plan
- 47 We need more support for elderly residents
- 26 We should develop more social activities
- 25 We need more activities for young people