



The Haseley Community Plan 2014

Information collated from village survey 2013





The purpose of the Haseleys Community Plan is to shape the future direction of life in the two villages. The Steering Group has spent a considerable amount of time consulting with the community. Many residents have stated that they like the Haseleys just as they are: an attractive rural community in the open countryside. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it".

We must ensure that these qualities will still exist in 15 years' time and beyond.

Our community

Our villages have a long history and a proud heritage, going back over a thousand years. For details see

<http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/oxfordshire/work-in-progress/haseley-great-and-little-latchford-and-rycote>

In the mid 19th century the population of Great Haseley peaked at 577, with a further 145 in Little Haseley. Since that time there has been a gradual decline in numbers, as a result of fewer farms operating in the area, and the replacement of farm labour by machinery. There are now about 450 people living in the two villages.

We are a very friendly community with a strong village culture. People clearly enjoy living in the two villages. We have a church, a pub, a village hall and several other amenities. The pub was recently bought by a consortium of over a hundred residents in order to ensure that it will continue to serve the community. A number of societies and clubs are actively supported. We have a large recreation ground (with a cricket pitch and tennis courts) and a separate children's play area, both of which are regularly used by residents of both villages. While the amenities are situated in Great Haseley, the residents of Little Haseley, Latchford, and Standhill are very much part of the community.

Consultation

An **initial meeting** was held in the Village Hall in January 2012 to consider the preparation of a community plan. 30 residents from the Haseleys attended, a number of whom volunteered to form a Steering Group that would manage the process of preparing the Haseleys Community Plan.

The Steering Group has had assistance from the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council ("ORCC") who gave very helpful information on the background and purpose of community plans and provided valuable templates of the methods and procedures used by other villages. The Steering Group paid particular regard to the advice offered in the ORCC Parish and Community Planning Toolkit and its 9-step process that provided assistance at each stage.

A **project plan** was prepared and published on 15th June 2011 that described the manner in which the Haseleys Community Plan would be put together and subsequently implemented. At that time, it became apparent that the preparation of the plan would involve costs, and a grant was applied for from ORCC. In the event, a sum of £685 was received from ORCC and a further grant of £500 was received from the Great Haseley Parish Council.

A series of specific events were held throughout the spring and summer of 2011 at which the benefits of a community plan were explained. These events were all very well attended. Those who came were asked:

- What do you like about the Haseleys?
- What do you dislike about the Haseleys?
- What changes would you like to see in the Haseleys?

This information, together with the input received at the initial meeting, was used to prepare a Questionnaire.

The Questionnaire

The Steering Group prepared a Questionnaire using the information gathered during the consultation events. This gave all residents of the Haseleys the opportunity to participate in the preparation of the Community Plan.

Village organisations were asked to suggest questions to assist in the future planning of their particular activities.

The Questionnaire was then created and copies were delivered by hand to the 196 houses in the Haseleys. A copy was also posted on the Haseleys Community Plan website.

The Questionnaire totalled 19 pages and comprised 61 questions, with space for comments. We also asked for

- information on any subject or issue not specifically raised in the Questionnaire
- the names of those who would like to volunteer to assist in the development and implementation of the Action Plan.

A software programme (SNAP) operated by SODC was used to produce a statistical analysis of the answers received.

Analysing the responses

232 Questionnaire forms were completed, representing a 72% return rate. This is remarkably high and clearly demonstrates the interest that residents of the Haseleys have in the future of the two villages.

The analysis produced by the SNAP software contained a large amount of information which was carefully reviewed by the Steering Group. A number of **working groups**, made up of people who had volunteered to assist with a specific subject (e.g. Roads), each looked after one area. Their task was to determine the priorities and projects to be included in an **Action Plan**. The Action Plan is included as appendix 1.

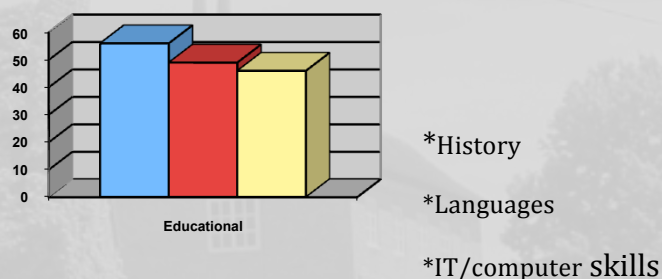
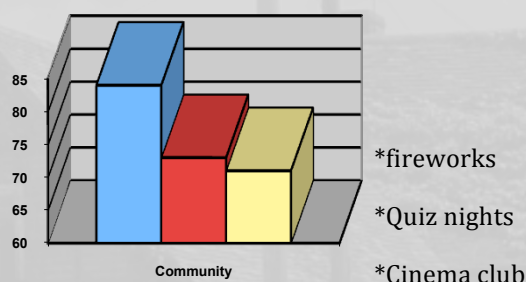


Section 1.

a) Community activities within the villages

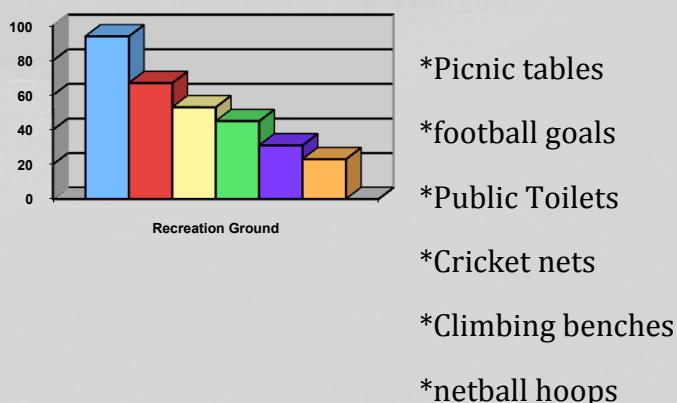
There is plenty going on in the two villages, including the Horticultural Society, coffee mornings, a book club, a pensioners' lunch club, the archive group, tennis, cricket, golf, and Aunt Sally.

The most popular suggestions for new activities were:



65 people of those surveyed would be willing to help in running community activities, which suggests a very engaged and active community. The quiz nights are already an established feature at The Plough.

The section on the Recreation Ground (see Section 2d below) asked what facilities the residents might like to see there. The grounds already have a cricket pitch, tennis courts and a pavilion. The most popular suggestions here were:



17 volunteers put their names forward to assist in the running of the playing fields

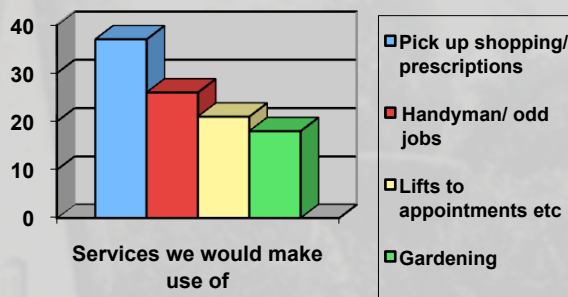
b) Volunteers for support within the community

The sense of community and the support structure in the Haseleys is already strong, active and thriving.

The questionnaire sought to gauge the level of interest in either receiving support in the community or giving support to the community. Two questions were asked:

- 1) What services would you take advantage of, if offered?
- 2) Would you be willing to provide any of the services?

The responses to the first question showed that the most popular services people might make use of are: picking up of prescriptions or shopping; the availability of a handyman or gardener; and lifts to appointments (medical etc.). 36 people expressed willingness to assist in some way.



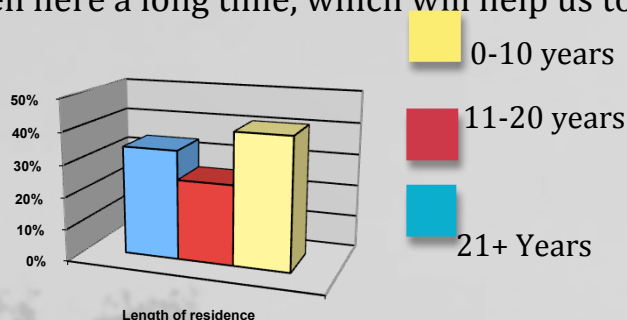
Action: Form a group of volunteers to consider

- What services could and should be offered, and to whom?
- How should decisions be made?
- How is the resource availability managed?
- How can this support be maintained and developed for the benefit of the village residents?

Regular updates on progress will be given to the Parish Council and reported in *The Haseleys*.

c) Countryside and environment

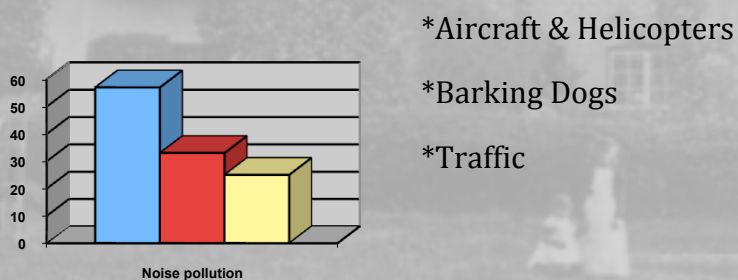
The overwhelming consensus is that **we wish to conserve, protect and improve the rural beauty of the Haseleys and our village way of life**. Many residents have been here a long time, which will help us to achieve this.



Day-to-Day Issues (which can be managed mainly by Haseley residents themselves e.g. through voluntary group activity or by the Parish Council)

- **Dog fouling.** Areas particularly affected: footpaths, pavements and the recreation ground. 69% of respondents thought that dog fouling was a problem. **Solutions suggested** include: owner education, provision of dog fouling signs, more dog waste bins.

- **Light and noise pollution.** Preventing undue light pollution is a major concern. There is little support for installing street lighting. The most common sources of noise pollution were identified as coming from aircraft and helicopters, barking dogs, and traffic noise from the M40 and A329.



- **Litter.** Both the spring litter blitz and the village weekend clean-up (when pavements are tidied, play equipment painted and serviced, and village signs cleaned) will be widely publicised and promoted. But just over half of all respondents thought that litter pollution was not a significant problem.

- **Refuse collection.** The majority of respondents were highly satisfied with the SODC refuse collection system.

- **Footpaths.** These are well used, with only 7% of respondents saying that they never used Haseley footpaths. **Key issues:** Clearer footpath signs, better maintenance, less dog fouling and greater access.

c) continued

Tree planting. Two thirds of respondents thought that the Haseleys would benefit if more trees were planted, with the recreation ground the favoured place for new planting.

- **Wildlife pond.** 58% of respondents supported the construction of a wildlife pond, with the remaining 42% either disagreeing or saying that it was not important to them.

- **Name signs.** Two thirds of respondents agreed that more prominent village name signs should be erected at the entrances to the two villages.

- **Backway.** 50% of respondents supported the resurfacing and tidying up of the entrance to Backway opposite the village hall. 41% were happy with Backway as it is at present.

Longer-Term Issues: (requiring some strategic planning and a more significant financial commitment, and maybe consultation with and action by outside agencies)

- **Making the Haseleys a more environmentally friendly community.**

77% of respondents were in favour of this. The working group on the environment has held initial discussions on:

- alternative fuel and energy sources
- bulk buying of fuel
- home insulation
- landscaping and conservation

d) Children and young people

We have approximately 85 young people under the age of 16 living in the Haseleys. They represent our future.

The survey included a specific question aimed at this group. 11 young people under 16 and 8 between the ages of 16 and 19, filled in the questionnaire.

Mixed response

For those up to 11 years of age there is general agreement that good recreational activities are provided.

For those of 12 and over, opinion is split, with about half saying the provision for recreational activities is good, and half not good.

d) continued

Current and recent provision

- The Cross Field with its swings and playing equipment caters well for the under 12s.
- The Playing Fields offer tennis, cricket and a basketball net, with tennis coaching available on a weekly basis. There are occasional art days, and discos, in the village hall.
- In the past, attempts have been made to run a Girl Guides group.

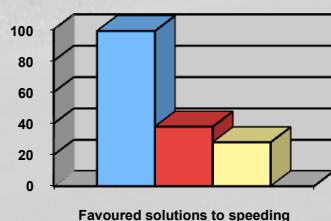
Future plans

- A volunteer group will be convened to identify ways to develop sports and leisure facilities for young people. The group will include representation from the young of the Haseleys. It will seek advice and work closely with the “Young Peoples Coordinator” and participation team from SODC.
- It is hoped that our young people will be motivated to become more involved in the future of the village.

e) Roads, pavements and traffic

The Haseleys are blessed by the fact that they are away from main roads and have little through traffic. Issues that are of concern to residents are:

- Speeding traffic, particularly on Thame Road and Rectory Road. Possible solutions: 20 mph speed limit; random police visits; speed indicator signs.



*20 mph Limit

*Police visits

*Speed indicator or
signs

e) continued

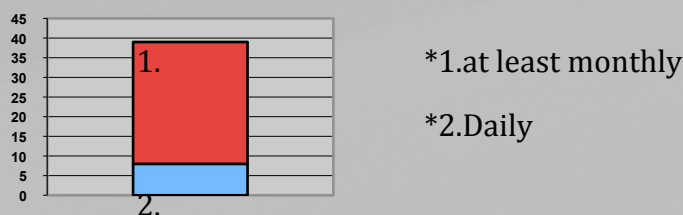
The Parish Council has considered these and discussed them with the Highways Authority. Although the HA is not in favour, this should be looked at again.

- Potholes, and the condition of the highways generally.
- Flooding, particularly by the bend on Rectory Road. The ditches need to be reinstated, and the drains kept clear.
- Parking on pavements. This is unavoidable in view of the narrowness of the main village road. Residents are requested to park their vehicles with consideration for others. Any new development must have sufficient onsite parking.
- Cycle paths. The option of cycle paths to Great & Little Milton and between the Haseleys had the support of over two-thirds of respondents.
- Road junctions. Road safety is a matter of concern at both junctions, off the A329 towards the village. The County Council officers will review with the Police and consider what measures might be put in place.

f) Public transport

Most residents use a car or van as their regular means of transport.

The bus services (103/104/124/Dial-a-Ride) are nevertheless much valued. It is clear that, for an important minority of residents, a regular and reliable bus service is essential for their working, educational and social lives.



Findings of the 2013 Parish Council review of the 103/104 service:

- Heyfordian generally provide a good and reliable service
- Buses are sometimes late or do not arrive at all
- Late evening and Sunday buses would be welcome, but too expensive.

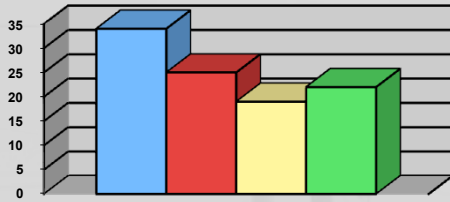
The contract for the 103/104 service has been awarded by OCC to Heyfordian until June 2016. A full review will be carried out in 2015, with a consultation exercise as part of the review process.

Action. If we are to protect these services we need to impress the strength of our support for them on the Parish Council, on our District and County Councillors, and in our response to OCC's 103/104 bus service consultation and review.

g) Communication and technology mobile phone reception

Vodafone is the most popular provider, and most likely to get you the best sign
A majority voted against the erection of an additional phone mast to improve reception.

Most Popular



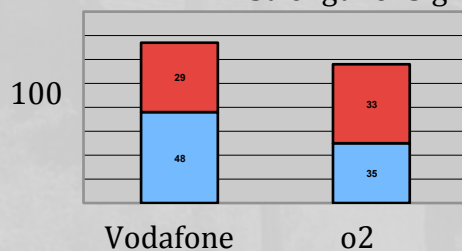
*Vodafone

*O2

*Orange

*Others

Strength of Signal



*Average

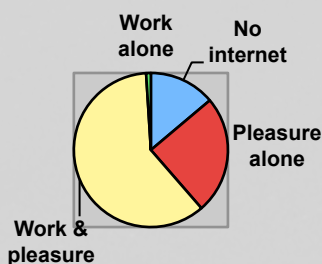
*Good Signal

Internet

Most of us use the internet. A group of volunteers has started looking at ways of improving broadband speeds, and will report in *The Haseleys*. Contact:

Haseley.broadband@btinternet.com

Oxfordshire County Council is funding a project to bring superfast broadband (greater than 24Mbps) to 90% of the county by 2015. In order to persuade OCC to move us up the pecking order, we shall need a campaign (via *The Haseleys*) to get people to register with OCC. The Parish Council has designated Dick Heinrich to be its OCC Broadband Champion.

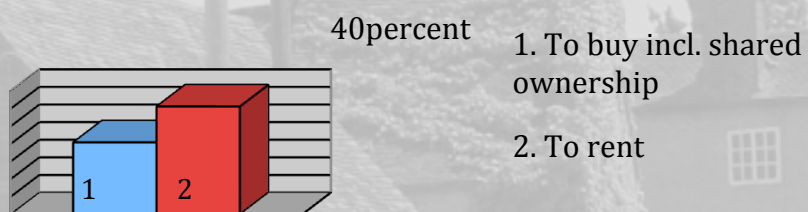


h) Affordable housing

A housing needs survey in 2010 identified a need for 7 affordable units. The following recommendation of 4 units was made:

- 2 x 1 bed house/flats
- 1 x 2 bed house for rent or shared ownership and
- 1 x 3 bed house shared ownership -subject to confirmation.

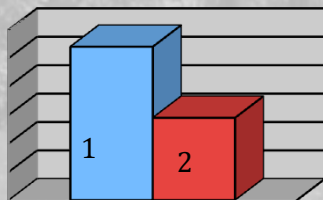
The questionnaire responses showed preferences as follows:



Who for

Out of 120 responses

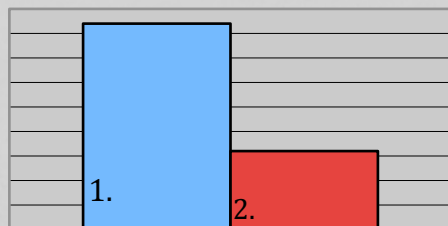
- 1.Only local connection
- 2.Elderly (sheltered)



Number of bedrooms

50 percent

1. 1or 2 bedrooms
2. 3 bedrooms or more



h) continued

An 'exception site' has been suggested (not **normally** eligible for planning consent). The proposed land would be bought and developed by a Housing Association. The housing would be prioritised for people with strong local connections. Potential tenants would be allocated via the SODC housing list. Anna Kennedy* from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council is the Rural Housing Enabler and our link between the housing association and SODC.

There are also other options: see the SODC website, or

<https://www.gov.uk/affordable-home-ownership-schemes/overview>

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/home>

<http://www.housing.org.uk/policy/development-and-regeneration/community-land-trusts/>

<http://www.cohousing.org.uk/>

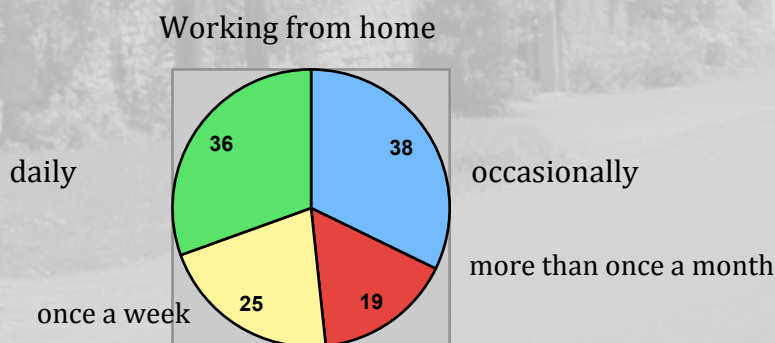
9 people have volunteered to be involved in housing matters.

To join them, or for further information, contact: thehaseleys@gmail.com

* Anna Kennedy has since left ORCC .Our new Housing enabler is Jill Brooks.

i) Home businesses

The Haseleys, like many other rural villages, have residents who either have businesses based within the village, or work for companies based around the country but work from home on occasion.



The chart suggests quite a large community of people working from home at any one point.

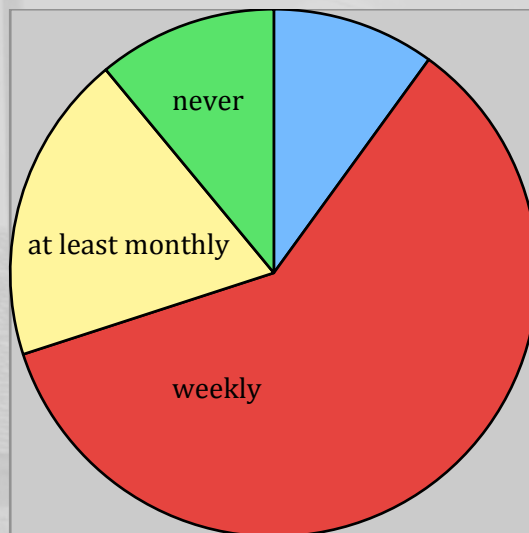
135 people agreed that the community should encourage the development of businesses/ amenities.

17 people put their names forward for setting up a networking/meeting group to share their experiences and to decide what ideas to take forward for future activities.

j) Community shop?

The establishment of a community shop would be a welcome amenity, supportive of the social and economic life of the two villages.

Given that there are shops/post offices in Great and Little Milton, how often would you use a community shop in the Haseleys?



15 people said that they would be willing to help establish a community shop, and 29 said that they would be willing to work there.

The success of a community shop would depend on the enthusiasm and commitment of those who volunteered their help, and on the design of a viable business plan. The development of such a plan would take time and present some challenges, including:

- the securing of startup moneys
- finding suitable premises
- the training of volunteers.

Given the goodwill and active support of Haseley residents, a community shop could become an established part of village life.

Section 2

Other Existing Amenities

This section includes information provided by residents or committees from the villages, and is not derived from responses to the questionnaire

a) The Village Hall

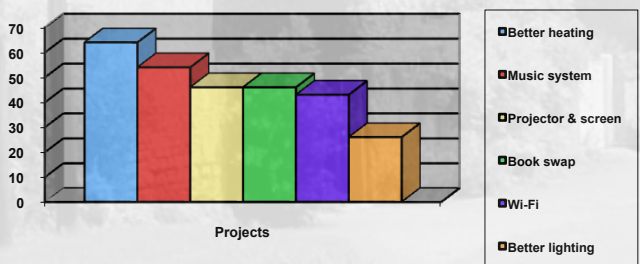
Once a farm barn, the building was converted in the 30's and so makes a very large and light space to be enjoyed by all at a very reasonable cost. The Parish Council gives the Village Hall Committee a small annual maintenance grant.

Recent improvements

- total internal make-over
- refurbished toilets
- new PA system
- new sign
- informative brochure
- all paid for by grant money, kind donations from the village pumpkin show, much fund raising, and donations of time, labour and materials by local individuals.

Current projects

- new kitchen, flooring and heating, for which grants are being sought.
- others for which support was expressed in the survey (some already provided):



The Committee works closely with other village groups. Activities for which the village hall is rented out include the Parish Council meetings, wedding parties, wakes, birthdays, ferret racing, jumble sale, yoga, zumba, music events, farmers' markets, craft and carpet sales, mother and toddler groups, coffee mornings and much more. Additional annual events also come under the wing of the Committee, for example the village Christmas tree and the children's party.

Paul & Lynda Woodrow

b) St Peter's

The church at the heart of the village

The village church is an essential part of any rural community. There has been a church in Great Haseley for at least eight hundred years, and probably much longer. Most of the inhabitants of the village will have been baptised, married and buried here. The gravestones in the peaceful churchyard display names that have been familiar for generations: Cooper, Cross, Shrimpton... In today's world there are fewer regular churchgoers, but St Peter's is packed at Christmas and Easter, and on Remembrance Sunday. We are fortunate to have a committed team of bell ringers who ring two or three times a week, though sadly none of them lives in the village now.

Ours is a particularly beautiful building, with a glorious thirteenth-century chancel that was probably built by the same master mason who created Merton College Chapel in Oxford, and some of the best nineteenth- and twentieth-century windows in the country. The church is now open every day for anyone to visit and to enjoy its effortless beauty and serenity. It is an increasingly popular venue for weddings. Large numbers have come to hear two of the top college choirs from Oxford sing Choral Evensong recently, and other concerts have been well attended. There are plans to provide toilet and kitchen facilities to make such events easier to put on.

We are fortunate to have the services of a full-time Rector, shared with Great Milton and Little Milton. In the nineteenth century it was the Rectors and curates who built the schools and the Village Institute, and did much to foster community life. The old school buildings now belong to the Diocese of Oxford, not to St Peter's, but we hope that a good long-term solution can be found that benefits the whole village.

St Peter's has some trust funds that can help with the maintenance of the fabric, but otherwise it depends on voluntary giving, of money and time. Every year we have to find some £15,000 as our "parish share", which goes to the Diocese as our contribution towards the costs of parish ministry here and what is provided centrally. Heating, lighting, grass cutting, insurance...: all these need to be covered. Our organist and our bell-ringers give their services free, and the church cleaning and flowers are also done by volunteers. There is always room for more! The annual fête raises some money, and there are other occasional fund-raising events, but the bulk is provided by the small regular congregation. Support from a wider circle of friends would be much appreciated, to keep the church open and active for everyone's benefit.

Church affairs are in the hands of the Rector and the PCC (Parochial Church Council). We seek to worship God and serve Christ, not only in church on Sundays but in our daily lives, at work and in the community.

Toby Garfitt

c) The Plough

The Plough pub has always been an important local amenity, drawing people from nearby villages as well as from Great Haseley itself. Over 40% of the residents of the Haseleys visit The Plough on at least one occasion each month, so there was considerable concern when it was announced that the tenant would be vacating the pub at the end of 2011. The Plough was owned by one of the large UK pub-owning companies, which decided to put it up for sale.

A meeting held in the Village Hall during January 2012 attracted 135 local residents who were very interested in the future of The Plough. At the meeting it was explained that there was a real possibility that the pub might close, or be converted into a different kind of commercial establishment. Almost every person present agreed that The Plough was a very important community asset and that every effort should be made to keep it open.

The Haseley Pub Company Ltd was formed, and over £400,000 was raised from over 100 households (the vast majority of which are in the Haseleys) for the purpose of financing the purchase of the property. Completion of the sale took place in May 2012. The property was unfortunately in very poor repair, so a plan for re-thatching the building and making material alterations and improvements was prepared. The plan was approved by SODC. A bank loan has been successfully obtained, as well as a grant from DEFRA / SODC, both of which are being used to finance the work.

With the changes that are being made to The Plough, the local residents are very keen for the opportunity to be taken to improve the appearance of the pub, modernise the kitchen, and enhance the dining experience.

The purchase of The Plough by the community has guaranteed its future as a village pub, and ensured that it will always continue to be an important meeting place and social amenity for the Haseleys.

Peter Cawdron

d) The Playing Fields (Recreation Ground)

The playing fields are a picturesque delight of the Haseleys, with their wide and open landscape and striking views to the Chiltern Hills. Also known as the recreation ground, the fields were given to the people of the Haseleys in 1934 by local farmer and landowner Anthony John Muirhead as a permanent home for village football and cricket teams. The Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association held the land in trust for the village.

For many years the playing fields were managed by representatives nominated by the football and cricket teams, but in the mid 1970s it was agreed that the management responsibility would be exercised through the establishment of a Playing Fields Committee, which is a body separately constituted comprising representatives of the sports teams, the village and parish council.

The land itself was transferred in 2000 from The Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association to the Parish Council which holds it on trust for the village, but management responsibility remains with the playing fields committee.

The committee has responsibility for the care and maintenance of the playing fields and pavilion, including grass cutting, the pruning, felling and planting of trees, and the general upkeep of the pavilion. The committee, together with enthusiastic volunteers, has also worked assiduously to improve the range and quality of facilities available. A new pavilion was completed in 1982, funded by a local benefactor, and the tennis courts were developed by the G.H. Tennis Club with support from SODC and opened in 2001. More recent improvements include a complete refurbishment of the pavilion, the provision of seating for spectators, and a designated car parking area.

Funding for the playing fields comes in part from the Parish Council precept, with additional moneys raised from fees charged for the use of the fields and pavilion. These include fees from cricket teams, tennis club, weddings and social events, and helicopter landing fees.

The playing fields committee is planning for the future with confidence. The Community Plan survey findings show that two thirds of the population of the Haseleys uses the playing fields for sports, leisure, social activities and pastimes. The committee warmly welcomes the many suggestions made for further improvements to facilities, including the provision of picnic tables, additional netball hoops, cricket nets and climbing benches. With the help and support of Haseley people the committee will endeavour to maintain the high standard the playing fields have as a place for competition, enjoyment, relaxation and leisure.

David Pickett (Playing Fields Committee)

e) The Cross Field

The Cross Field, situated directly to the east of the allotments along Backway, is named after its benefactor, Miss Ivy Cross. Ivy was one of three daughters of a long-established Haseley family who owned the bakery and a grocer's shop in Great Haseley. On her death in 1995 Ivy bequeathed the field to the villages as a play area for the children of the Haseleys.

The Cross Field has open space areas for the playing of ball and other games, and for picnics. The traditionally designed and built play equipment includes a balance trail, climbing nets, swings and a slide. The equipment is inspected annually by ROSPA, who publish an inspection report advising of any remedial action to be taken.

The initial capital cost of preparing the Cross Field and installing play equipment was paid out of moneys raised by the Pumpkin Show committee. The field is now managed by the Parish Council, with two councilors having specific responsibility for its management. The parish council is supported in this responsibility by those many parishioners who volunteer for the annual 'Village Spring Clean', held each April. The play equipment is given a thorough clean and service, worn climbing nets are replaced, bark chippings spread and levelled, and swings painted.

The Cross Field is a much used and valued part of Haseley community life. Whether it be a cold and crisp winters day or the warmth of an early evening in summer the Cross Field provides a safe and secure environment for Haseley children to be with their friends, have fun and enjoy themselves.

John Andrews

f) The Millennium Wood

The Wood is of course now 13 years old and has matured very well. It is considered to be a lovely village amenity to be enjoyed by all. There have been some concerns about the management of the Wood, and the view is that the grass between the trees should be cut regularly for optimum enjoyment and amenity. An extension to the Wood should be considered, but also space made available for a wild flower area where grasses and plants would be left in their natural state.

Steve Webster

g) The Haseley Archive

The Haseley Archive was established in the summer of 2010 by a group of enthusiasts who came together to research, collate and archive a history of the Haseleys; from the everyday lives of its people to the broader social, political and economic impact of national and international events.

The Archive has organised and presented a number of exhibitions. These have included 'Haseley Schools and Schooling', 'The Victorian antecedents of the Horticultural Society', and, to celebrate the purchase of The Plough in 2012, 'A history of Haseley Pubs and Brewing'.

Members are currently engaged in a variety of projects. A Haseley 'time line' from 1086 to the present day has been drawn and is being developed. An oral history project is in progress, with the lives of long established Haseley residents digitally recorded for posterity. The Haseleys Community Plan of 1876, inspired by the Rector, Canon Ellison, has been reviewed by the Archive, and provides significant historical evidence of the cultural and social benefits of implementing such a plan. Critical to the success of these projects are the documents, maps, photographs and artifacts which parishioners have kindly lent or donated for the use of archive members.

The Haseley Archive continues on its journey through the history of the Haseleys, using the growing experience and expertise of its members to develop the breadth and scope of its activities.

John Andrews

Response from the Parish Council

First, the Parish Council would like to thank the steering group for all their hard work in the gathering of the data and preparing this report and not forgetting you for responding in record numbers to the questionnaire sent out.

Well the good news is that most of you are mostly happy with most things but the bad news is that most of you are mostly happy with most things which means that there are no big ideas for you and us to get our teeth into. There are however many small improvements that have been highlighted. Some of these the Parish Council can achieve but several, are completely beyond our control although there may be some that we may be able to influence.

We note that enough of you have said that you are prepared to pay a bit more Council Tax so that the Parish Council can do at least some of those items that require hard cash. Several more things don't need much if any money but do need volunteer labour so we will be calling for help and if that is not forthcoming then some of them might not happen.

Great and Little Haseley are already great places to live and now we have a blue print to make them even better if we all work together.

David Simcox. Chair of the Haseleys Parish Council.