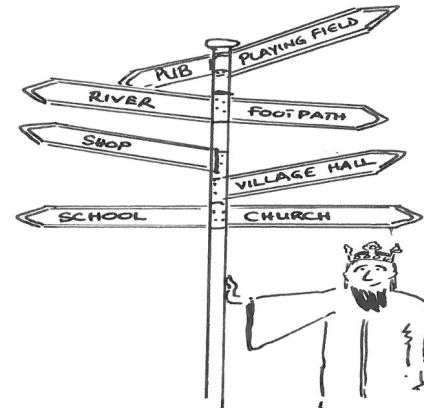


# Community Led Plan Case Study Islip



## The Community...

The village of Islip lies six miles to the north east of Oxford, and is best known as the birthplace of Edward the Confessor (around 1005) and the site of the Battle of Islip Bridge in 1645. Islip once boasted a large number of inns and shops. There are still two public houses, The Red Lion and The Swan Inn, and a thriving volunteer-run village shop.

Islip Village Hall plays host to frequent events, and other businesses in the village include a garage (Islip Motors), three farms, and a doctor's surgery (Islip Medical Practice) which serves many other local rural communities. Islip is well connected for transport links (some might say *too* well connected), with the B4027 running through the centre of the village and easy access from there to the A34 and the M40. A bus service runs to Oxford and a train service to Oxford and Bicester, with plans for future development of a service to run through to London Marylebone.

Islip is a thriving community with much to offer residents and many opportunities for growth and development. But it also faces a number of challenges, notably the speed and volume of traffic that passes through every day, and the now regular flooding of lower parts of the village.

## Getting Started

Islip first considered carrying out a Community Led Plan (CLP) after the Parish Council was contacted by ORCC. A short time later Bloxham gave a presentation at an ORCC event on Community Led Planning. They made it clear that it was a very practical and useful exercise and the Parish Council decided to support a CLP in Spring 2011

### May 2011

#### The Launch Event

Around 40 people attended. There were a lot of issues/complaints voiced as people realised they would be listened to. We came away with a list of volunteers; 12 people to start with.

### June 2011

The Steering Group of independent volunteers was set up and started to consult with local groups and organisations. We were very keen that it was, and was seen to be, independent of the Parish Council. At the same time there were 2 Parish Council members on the group and this helped the group liaise with the Parish Council.

Local displays on the Community Led Plan were set up at Village events; we wanted the whole village to know about the Village Plan. For example at the Bonfire Night we had a stall, talked about the plan with people and had post it notes for people to write down their ideas and views.

At every stage we had different areas of interest such as youth facilities, environment and traffic etc and ensured we were proactive in gaining views.

### KEY FACTS:

**County: Oxfordshire**

**District:  
Cherwell**

**Population: 675**

**Plan Complete: 2013**

***"Whatever the result, the process of carrying out a Parish Plan brings the community together and improves communication at every level which has got to be a good thing"***

Johanna Stephenson—  
Islip Parish Council

# Community Led Plan Case Study-Islip



## The Questionnaire

- Importantly we framed the questionnaire around issues raised from the broader consultation. People felt really empowered when they saw that they had been listened to and questions asked as a result of their comments. I am sure that this is a reason why we got such a good rate of return of the questionnaire as people had a sense of ownership.
- It took a long time to get to the final questionnaire.
- As well as doing thorough prior general consultation the draft questionnaire was sent to a lot of people and then corrected and changed. We also ensured the questions were realistic by consulting with those concerned, such as the village shop.
- The questionnaire itself was designed to be appealing and user friendly; we had entertaining cartoons for example in the questionnaire. We had 5 tick boxes for each question so that a household of up to 5 could give their individual views.

# Community Led Plan Case Study-Islip

## Carrying out the questionnaire

The long summer evenings were essential in helping us to deliver and collect the questionnaires as people were able to do this after work.

A team of volunteers delivered and collected questionnaires from different areas of the village. Questionnaires were anonymous but collectors had a list of households and ticked off those that had been returned. Collectors name and contact details were also on the form. People covered their own area. Collectors also had a chance to talk to people and support those who needed some help to fill in the questionnaire.

There had been one area of the village where return was low. A volunteer, born in the village who knew the residents there and was trusted, went to every household and gave help to those that needed it to fill in the questionnaire and we ended up with a 95% return rate from those households. Collectors were persistent in ensuring questionnaires were returned.

Overall we had a 84% return rate for the questionnaire

**October 2013**

*The completed and published plan was launched.*

### *The Benefits of carrying out a Community led Plan*

From the very beginning there were outcomes from the CLP. Because the wider community felt empowered, more people became involved in community activity. The questionnaire had a tear off slip in which people could enter a prize draw and / or offer to volunteer. 100 new volunteers came forward.

- Communication between the Parish Council and the community has improved; there has been a noticeable difference. More residents are attending Parish Council meetings. More accessible monthly reports in the newsletter to the community are now produced. Minutes of meetings are put on the Village website. The Parish Council understands the community far better and there is a better understanding in the community of what the Parish Council is and what it does.
- The Village website is used more
- The Village Hall is being updated.
- Meetings regarding the bridge and traffic concerns have taken place.
- Dementia Friendly Communities training is being carried out and community support for those living with dementia improved.
- Sub groups are at work to meet different areas of the action plan. Four times as many people are involved than before the CLP
- People know each other better.
- The Parish Council is not second-guessing what people in the community think.
- People are more content because they have a way of expressing themselves and realise they will be heard.

# Community Led Plan Case Study Islip

## Key Action points

- An action plan to improve the village hall is in place
- A vigorous action group is campaigning for road safety
- Plans for a Sports area are being pursued
- Plans for the development of affordable housing are in progress
- A new yearly Village Event for the whole community is starting next year
- We are developing a group of people who are interested in supporting isolated house-bound residents in the community
- The cycle path group is active and pursuing the initiation of cycle routes.

The CLP has given the village a greater voice when talking to the District Council as we have evidence in the Village Plan that we are speaking for the whole community

## ***Words of wisdom for other communities***

- Consult widely. Do not get the questionnaires out till you have engaged absolutely everybody at every stage.
- We underestimated the volume of data. It was a lot of work to process the questionnaire.
- Keep people informed along the way.
- Use all the help offered. ORCC were very helpful.
- Keep the plan alive. The village plan is on the agenda of each Parish Council meeting



## ORCC Website [www.oxonrcc.org.uk](http://www.oxonrcc.org.uk)

Find out who we are and what we do by visiting our website for news and events, publications, funding information and links to other useful organisations.

To find out more about Community Led Planning contact Alan Foulkes

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