

# South Stoke Village Plan

2011



# Introduction

Village Plans were initiated by Central Government as a way for rural communities to express their views and aspirations and to become more involved in the planning and development of local services. In summer 2009 South Stoke Parish Council (PC) appointed an independent Steering Group to identify the views and wishes of all its residents on local matters, and to prepare a Plan with the aim of addressing the issues raised.

## Plan Objectives

The overarching objective of the Plan is to maintain and improve the quality of life in South Stoke.

The Plan aims to reflect the concerns and

wishes of the majority of residents

The Plan aims to be realistic, taking into account services provided elsewhere; the limited availability of volunteers and the current economic climate.

The Plan aims to have clear, prioritised and practical recommendations.

In producing this Plan it has become obvious that effective implementation will depend upon a closely co-ordinated effort involving the Parish Council and independent Project Groups set up to deliver specific actions, as identified in the Plan. Continued engagement with the wider community will be essential.

## Key Actions

Assess the feasibility of setting up a Village Shop

Improve the local bus service so that it better meets the needs of the village

Undertake improvements to the recreation ground

Look again at the viability of providing a new village hall to better serve the needs of the village

Create a safe, traffic –free cycle route between South Stoke and Little Stoke

Set up more community activities

Assess the feasibility of generating power from renewable sources

Arrange a 20mph speed limit on the village roads

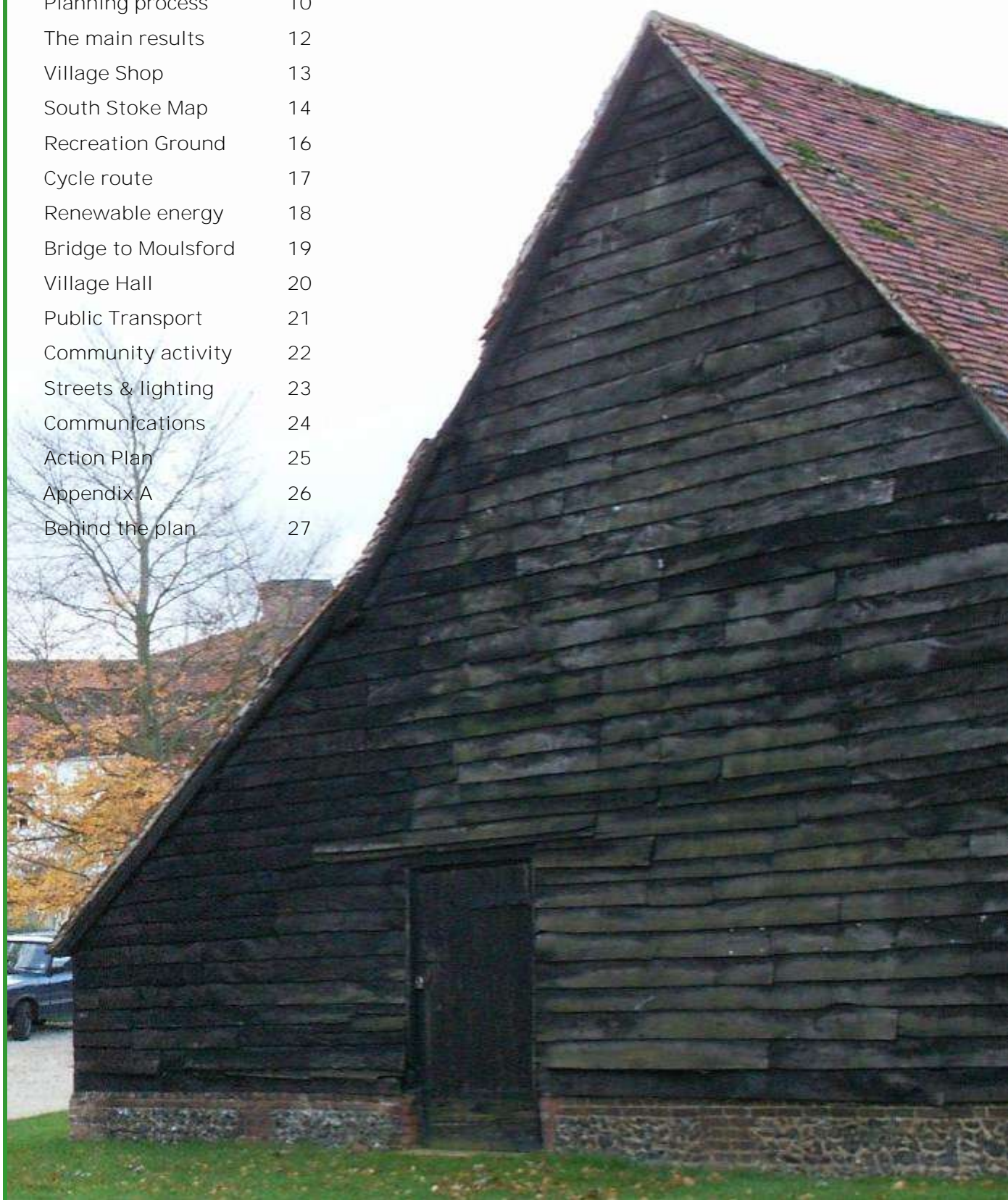
Explore the feasibility of building a bridge across the Thames to join the communities of Moulsoford and South Stoke

Improve the quality and speed of telecommunications links to the village



# Contents

A brief history	4
South Stoke today	6
Village profile	9
Planning process	10
The main results	12
Village Shop	13
South Stoke Map	14
Recreation Ground	16
Cycle route	17
Renewable energy	18
Bridge to Moultsford	19
Village Hall	20
Public Transport	21
Community activity	22
Streets & lighting	23
Communications	24
Action Plan	25
Appendix A	26
Behind the plan	27



# A brief history

The River Thames has been flowing through this area for about half a million years, since the end of the last ice age. As the ice to the north of the Chiltern Hills melted, water spilled over the chalk and formed the Goring Gap eventually eroding back to capture a new route for the River Thames, which previously drained east past Watford.

The earliest traces of man in the area are flint axe heads and an arrow head from the Middle Stone Age, between 9700 and 5500 years ago. These were found locally and were used by these Mesolithic hunters.

The New Stone Age began about six thousand years ago, and was marked by the beginning of farming activity in the area. We know that Neolithic men lived here because various stone implements have been found, and various earthworks have been identified that are thought to be of similar age to Stonehenge. These include an enclosure and burial barrow near Barracks Farm, and domestic rubbish found in a pit uncovered **north of Cameron's Clump was Carbon dated** at 5650 to 5350 years old. Neolithic arrowheads, scrapers and a polished flint axe were found at Little Stoke. It is thought that people have walked or ridden the Ridgeway Path since Neolithic times. It is one of the oldest tracks in Britain and runs along the main street in South Stoke.

Bronze Age stone tools have been found, from about 4000 years ago and earthworks characteristic of Bronze Age settlements exist near Ivöl Barn. The Icknield Way crosses the parish and is also thought to have been in use

during the Bronze Age.

The nearest Iron Age feature is probably Grims Ditch, an earthwork running from Mongewell up to Nuffield. It dates from the late Iron Age/early Roman era.

The Romans arrived in this area about 43 -47 AD.



Local evidence includes a probable Roman settlement north of Little Stoke and a large number of Roman coins that were found at South Stoke, dating from 254 to 268 AD. A number of pieces of Roman pottery have also been found in the parish as well as some examples of Saxon pottery.

By 1000 AD the area was on the boundary between Wessex and Mercia, when Ethelred the



unready was the Anglo Saxon King.

### Middle Ages (5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Century)

It is believed that South Stoke had been given to the Bishop of Dorchester before the 10<sup>th</sup> Century, but it is not known what the local people thought about that. The earliest written record of South Stoke is after the Norman Conquest in the Domesday Book of 1086. By then the village had been given to the Bishop of Lincoln and was called *Bishopstoke*, but soon after it was transferred to Eynsham Abbey and became known as *Stoke Abbas*.



The most tangible evidence of our medieval **history is St Andrew's Church, much of which** is 13<sup>th</sup> Century. It still has some 14<sup>th</sup> Century glass. There is written evidence from medieval times, including mention of a windmill on the hill towards Grove Farm, which was in use from around 1220. The Manor House stood next to the church and in 1366 consisted of a hall, kitchen and chambers, with fish ponds nearby. The fish ponds to the north of the village probably also date from this time. Early in the 14th century the name *South Abbotestok* is found and *South Stoke* came to be commonly used to distinguish the village from the nearby North Stoke and Little Stoke. Eynsham Abbey owned the village until the dissolution of the monastery in 1539.

In 1546 King Henry VIII gave South Stoke to the new cathedral of Christ Church in Oxford. Much of the surrounding land is still in their ownership.

There are several 16<sup>th</sup> Century buildings in South Stoke today: the leaning wing of Corner House on Ferry Lane; the dovecote at Manor Farm, which housed 1,000 nests and is the largest in the county; Devonshire House

and Fulbrook House on The Street.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> Century the main building of the Perch and Pike public house, the Manor House and Stoke Abbas

are all well preserved and on The Street.

The main 18<sup>th</sup> Century building in the village is the Malt House, also on The Street and in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the railway arrived opening in 1840. The chief 19th-century buildings are the Old Chapel, built in 1820 for the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, the red brick school and the Old Vicarage, built in 1869 on the site of an older vicarage.

The village expanded towards the B4009 in the latter part of the 20th Century, with various small developments since, notably along South Bank, Chapel Close and The Gardens.

# South Stoke Today

South Stoke is a small Oxfordshire village situated about 6 miles from the market town of Wallingford and two miles from Goring-on-Thames.



*The Dovecote*

South Stoke lies along the east side of the River Thames, which separates it from the village of Moulsoford on the opposite bank.

It is surrounded by beautiful countryside and enjoys a predominantly rural atmosphere. The Parish includes large tracts of open farming land on the chalk hills to the east of the village and a broad strip of species-rich riverside wetland and meadows. The Parish also includes

the hamlet of Little Stoke and a group of small businesses including an airfield near Icknield farm.

The Great Western main line railway runs through the village on an embankment, with the nearest station at Goring & Streatley and **with Brunel's beautiful Moulsoford Viaduct crossing the river to the north.** The village is bordered on the east by the main road along which a sporadic and lightly used bus service operates to Wallingford and Goring.

The main street in the village includes most of the older buildings and is quiet, the only through traffic being the cyclists and walkers **on the ancient Ridgeway Trail and Swan's Way** bridle path which passes through here. The main village facilities are on the main street; The Pub, Primary School and Church, with the village hall close by.

In common with much of Southern England the previously mainly agricultural nature of the community has changed in the last 40 years and whilst there are still traces of these agricultural origins the village is now populated predominantly by people who earn their living outside the parish in London and elsewhere in the Thames Valley.

South Stoke has become a largely residential village. This change has been accompanied by the loss of village facilities that in some cases had survived for generations. There has been no shop in the village since 2000, no post office **since the late 1970's and no ferry to Moulsoford since the late 1950's.** The allotments were closed long ago. There is a village hall,



which in the past hosted many lively events, but it is long past its best, has limited facilities and is now under-utilised. Public transport is ineffective so the vast majority of residents rely on their cars to get around.

St Andrews Church is part of The United Benefice of Goring with South Stoke and services

are shared with the other local churches. The church has recently been successfully used for a variety of non-secular village activities.

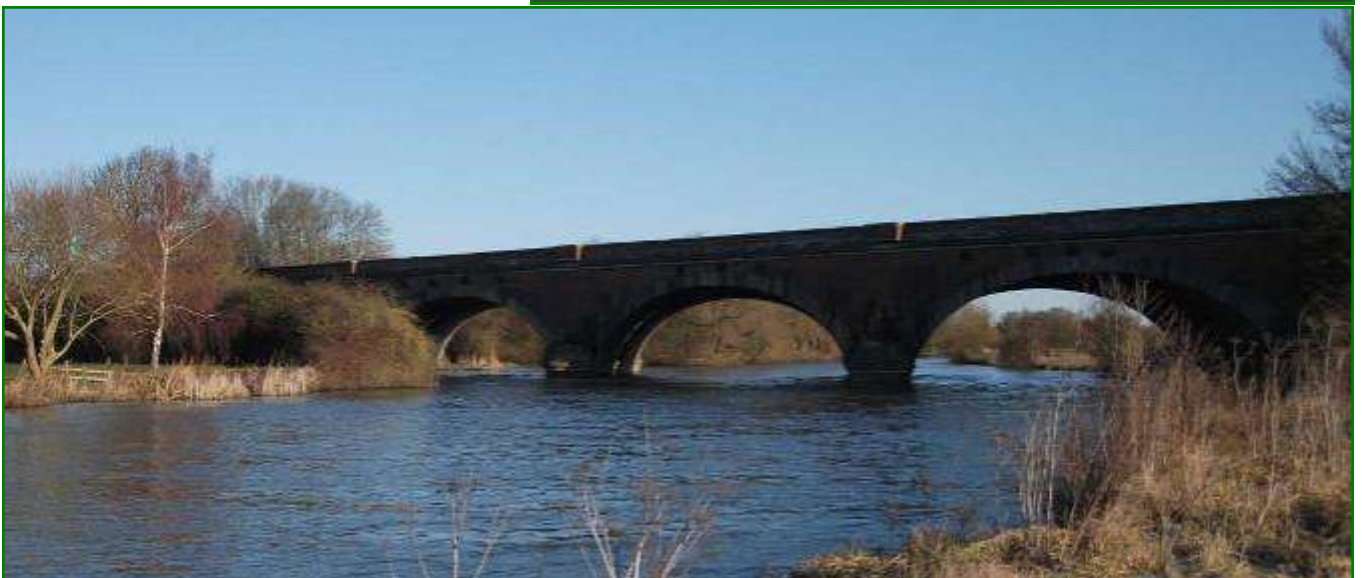
The cricket club finally disbanded in 2007, and no league football has been played on the recreation ground since 2008.

There are various local clubs and activities including: Bell Ringers; the fishing club; village **ramblers; darts in the pub; The Women's Institute**, Parents Association and church activities.

Whilst the village is generally more affluent than it has ever been, there are fewer community activities than in the past.



*Clockwise from above : South Bank, Chapel Close, built **1968. Brunels' Moultsford viaduct**, 1840.*







*South Stoke is fortunate in having a pub, a primary school, a village hall and a church*





# Village profile

The 2001 census showed that there were 458 residents living in 199 households, of which 64 were rented. 28 households had no car.

Almost half of the working population were in managerial and professional occupations.

There are now about 250 households in the Parish, and a population of about 470. The Parish has just under 20 small businesses – only two of which have more than 10 staff, the remainder mostly employing less than three people.

A number of people are regular commuters from nearby Goring station or commute by car, as opportunities for local work are limited.

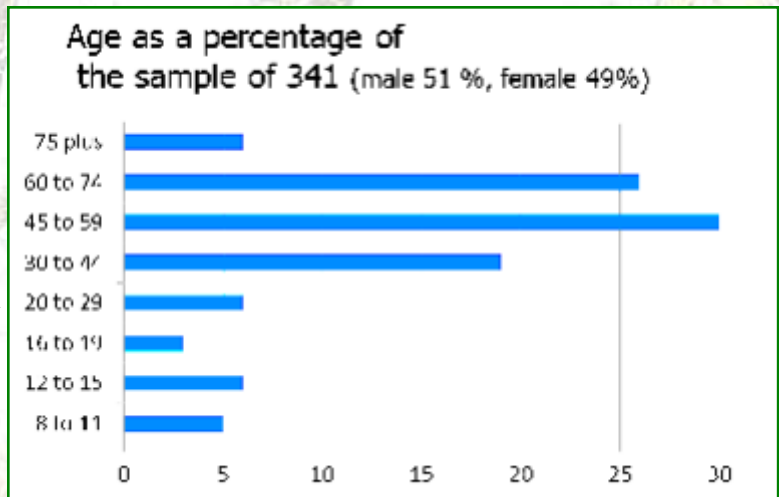
There is a variety of housing in the village including large houses with land, detached and semi-detached houses, bungalows and some local authority rented accommodation. However, there is a lack of mid-range housing or flats to attract young families or single people, and this has an effect both on school numbers and village activities.

## Survey response

In our 2010 main survey, we delivered 407 survey forms and had 341 returned. This represents a response rate of 83%, which compares very well with other Village Plans in the area.

The response was from a good cross section of the people living and working in the Parish and the age profile of the respondents was in line with our expectations.

*2010 Age profile from survey results*



Your Collector: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Versions 4th April 2010 **South Stoke Village Plan**

**STOP! DO NOT THROW AWAY! MIGHT BE IMPORTANT!**

- This is your opportunity to influence the future of South Stoke and what facilities are available to you
- The questionnaire may look long, but it is mostly tick boxes that can be completed quickly
- Filling it in should take no more than 15 minutes of your time

In May 2009 The Parish Council called for volunteers to develop a Village Plan. We set up a group and have consulted widely across the community. This consultation included a first round survey in which we spoke to most of you. We identified some interesting popular issues and in order to get further information about these we have produced this second questionnaire.

The data we collect will help us compile a plan for the village. Responses will be treated as confidential and anonymous.

Of course, once we agree what we want to do, we will need, as a village, to find resources and ways to make these things happen. We may get some assistance (mostly as advisors) from other agencies, but much of this will have to be done by the residents of the village. We hope therefore, that you will fill in your name on the back of the sheet as a volunteer. On collection this sheet will be separated from the questionnaire to preserve your anonymity.

This project is supported by Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, an independent registered charity that aims to improve the quality of life for those who live or work in rural Oxfordshire. ORCC has checked this questionnaire.

For more information or help, please visit [www.southstoke.org/parishplan](http://www.southstoke.org/parishplan) or contact your Collector named above.

**Your chance to WIN £100 per household!**

If you and your family members complete this questionnaire fully and fill in the address slip at the end it will be entered into a LUCKY DRAW for a single cash prize for the winning household in South Stoke Parish.

The winning address will be published in the South Stoke Newsletter.

**Please complete this form by Sunday \*\*\*\*\***  
Your Collector will come for it

# Planning process

The Parish Council's proposal for the production of a Village Plan was presented at the Annual Parish Meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009 and at a further public meeting held on May 19<sup>th</sup>, at which Cllr. Ward and Anton Nath from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) described the process of developing a village plan. Volunteers were requested and the Village Plan Steering Group was formed, meeting for the first time on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Based on experiences from other villages a programme of actions was produced and a preliminary survey was carried out involving all people working in the village and village residents over the age of 8. This identified the **'Likes' and 'Dislikes' of those living and** working in South Stoke and provided many suggestions for the improvement of village life and the enhancement of the community.



*Village Plan exhibition tent at the May Fair 2010*

Open meetings to identify issues

Distribute likes/dislikes questionnaire

Analyse results

Write main questionnaire

Distribute main questionnaire to all households & businesses

Analyse results

Discuss with PC and public consultation meeting

Draft Plan for submission to PC/SODC/OCC



Several events were staged in order to engage with all sections of the community.

One weekend in November 2009 the committee hosted a drop in session in the village hall to promote the results of the survey. Posters had been prepared, refreshments were available and the ongoing process for the village plan was explained.

In early 2010 discussions were held on how to engage more with all age groups in the village to get them thinking in more detail about the needs of the village now and in the future.

During the weekend of the May Fair the steering committee manned a display tent in the garden of The Perch & Pike. The aim was to re-engage with residents prior to holding one major event in the village suitable for all age groups.

**A 'Party on the Rec' was held at the end of May.** Attractions included a family treasure hunt, ice cream van, beer/wine tent, BBQ, live music and wonderful weather. Many villagers turned out and there was a very happy atmosphere!

## The main questionnaire

Considerable effort went into developing the questionnaire from the issues identified in the original survey. This was piloted with **the Women's Institute and advice was taken** from ORCC, OCC and SODC. Finally, the questions were prepared in a suitable format for data processing by SODC.

House to house delivery and collection of the questionnaire was again undertaken by committee members and supported by volunteers.

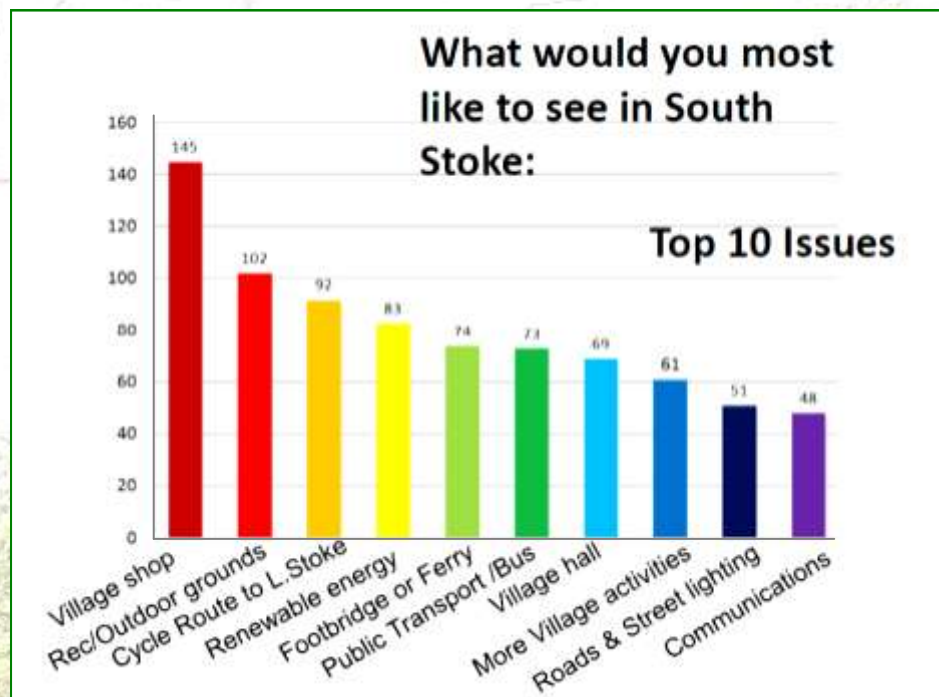


*Roy Mason-Apps singing at the "Party on the Rec" May 2010*



# The main results

The results of the main survey were analysed by SODC and the Village Plan Steering Group. A large number of issues had been raised by the villagers (summarised in Appendix A) and as resources would not permit all of them to be addressed at once, it was decided to concentrate initially on the ten most mentioned issues.



The results were presented to South Stoke Parish Council and the ongoing actions were fully supported. The steering committee made the recommendation that responsibility for both public transport (buses) and issues around speed limits and speeding on roads in the village should remain with the Parish Council and would be inappropriate for a project group initiative.

A public meeting was held in September 2010 to present the results to the residents and a call for volunteers was made to set up independent project groups to pursue specific actions that had been identified. An immediate response by volunteers during this meeting was extremely encouraging **and ratified the community's desire to work** towards improvements in both the environment and facilities within the village.

Throughout the village planning process the steering committee has sought to maintain momentum. This needed to be carried

forward wherever possible into the start-up of the various project groups.

A proforma for the project group feasibility studies was produced to guide the projects. Grant money from the ring-fenced budget held by the Parish Council was agreed for small costs incurred.

Active groups are now working on the feasibility and viability of: a community shop; improvements in the play facilities and the recreation ground; an off road cycle route from South Stoke to Little Stoke, renewable energy resources for the benefit of the village community and improvements in communications.

Additional project groups are in the planning stage but the available time and energy are limiting factors for all community enterprises. No additional offers of help with these projects will be turned down!



# Village shop

Many residents will remember the South Stoke Shop which closed in 2000. Changes and developments in a community are inevitable, but it is interesting that ten years on South Stoke residents, business workers and school children voted a new community shop as their number one wish for the village.

The shop project committee has been meeting regularly since September and is exploring in detail the feasibility (is a shop practical and possible) as well as the viability (does a shop here have the ability to be sustainable).

Statistics within the questionnaire show a desire for a wide range of goods and services and, including all age groups, the possibility that around £2,000 might be spent each week in the shop. The project committee began by enlisting advice and guidance from the Village Shops Development Worker and Community Development Team Leader, Jane Barker from ORCC (Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council) who attended the first meeting.

The committee is following the steps in the **ORCC publication "How 2 Create a Community Shop"**. **12 community shops in Oxfordshire** have been visited by committee members and an in-depth questionnaire was completed according to an agreed format. Questions asked ranged from: the legal status of the shop/company model; acquisition of premises; size of the village and profile of customers; square footage of the shop; value of stock; what sells well; opening hours; staffing and many more. There is now have a wealth of data, an appreciation of the tasks and an



*South Stoke Village Shop with Ray Allum, 1988*

overwhelming sense of the enthusiasm and culture of co-operation in the community shops that were visited.

The benefits that a community shop brings to a village are hard to measure but there is evidence of a welcoming, friendly community spirit where folks are more aware of each other and their needs. Delivery of goods to temporarily housebound people is only one of the practical ways to help.

The committee has embarked on in-depth investigation into options for premises and funding; which company model would be best; the setting up of a business plan; communication and exploring the requirements for planning permission. A temporary solution to shop premises would provide the opportunity to test the sustainability of a shop in a practical and meaningful way rather than relying on second hand evidence from other villages. Every village is unique and South Stoke has its own character, needs, wishes and hopes for the future; worth working hard to achieve.

Left hand of pair for 1:25 000  
map of parish



Right hand of pair for 1:25 000  
map of parish

# Recreation ground



Many villagers would like to see improved facilities at the recreation ground. This was the second most popular issue raised in the response to the questionnaire.

The recreation ground is the only piece of open ground in the village which is owned by the Parish and apart from three somewhat tired pieces of play equipment it is basically just an open field. There are no longer any regular teams using it.

The sports pavilion which used to stand in one corner had become dangerous and was recently dismantled.

Of the 323 responses to this issue, 50% asked for new play equipment and 53% asked for benches to be provided. Many people wanted to see some football goals

and more frequent mowing and rolling.

When the Village Plan was launched, a Playground Group had already been established and it obtained a grant towards creating a new design. This group then got a professional design drawn up for an improved playground, within a better laid out recreation ground. This was approved by the Parish Council and is shown above.

The Playground Group, now renamed the Recreation Ground Group, is currently applying for grants from several organisations and if funds can be found it is hoped to undertake the transformation in the winter of 2011/2012.

Any offers of help would be gratefully received, please contact Kevin Flynn.



# Cycle route

The survey results showed a strong local demand for a safe cycling route to be provided between South Stoke and Little Stoke to complete the off-road route to Wallingford.

Cycling is growing in popularity and is increasingly seen as a healthy and sustainable way of travelling shorter distances.

There is a one-mile gap in the bridle path between Goring and Wallingford. This gap is between South Stoke and Little Stoke, and currently the alternatives are either the B4009 or a public footpath, shown on the satellite photograph below.



The same gap affects the Swans Way bridle path which runs from near Milton Keynes to Goring. The stretch of Swans Way on the dangerous B4009 is the only road section on the entire route.



The South Stoke Cycle Path Project Group aims to fill this gap to provide a safe cycle path between Goring and Wallingford.

The simplest way to achieve this would be to upgrade the existing footpath, shown in blue. However, a new route has been proposed which appears to have some advantages.

The proposed new Route B is shown in red on the satellite photograph. It utilises unproductive land, routes users away from livestock and the line of sight of the Manor House and has the potential to release agricultural land if the footpath can eventually be permanently re-routed.

The South Stoke Cycle Path Project Group is very active and is in negotiation with the two landowners. The group is optimistic that a **solution can be agreed in time for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in Summer 2012.**

The group is also working on improvements to the surface of the cycle route over the Ridgeway Path to Goring.

# Renewable energy

The renewable energy project group has been set up in response to the high level of interest expressed through the village plan results.

The project group has worked on four main activities:

1. The definition of the scope of and execution plan for the project including the identification of current energy-related legislation which will impact residents in South Stoke in the short and medium term.
2. The business plan for two possible village-level options to use village land on which a project could be constructed to generate energy from renewable sources. The two favoured options are a wind turbine generator and a photo-voltaic array.
3. An analysis of the renewable energy technologies currently available to householders and to South Stoke as a community. The output of this work to be issued on the South Stoke web site in February 2011.
4. Establishing wind speed data for a potential local wind turbine site

The next steps for the project group will be to develop the business cases for the first two options and to begin a consultation process to establish models for a viable enterprise. The next steps are planned to include:

- Surveying potential sites
- Consultation with the village plan committee and the parish council
- Consultation with residents
- Development of a preliminary environmental impact statement and discussion with qualified environmentalists
- Preliminary discussions with SODC planners



- Initial discussions with potential business partners
- Financial viability modelling

The project group meets monthly and would welcome further members as it moves into a period of high activity.



# Footbridge or ferry?



Moulsoford and South Stoke are the only communities on opposite banks of the upper Thames that are not connected by way of a bridge.

There are 76 bridges across the navigable non-tidal River Thames below Lechlade. Of these, 13 are railway bridges, 46 are road and 17 are footbridges.

The newest footbridge is Bloomers Hole footbridge near Lechlade, which was built in 2000. This was the last bridge needed to complete the Thames Path National Trail.

There seem to be many potential advantages of having a connection here, for example:

- Moulsoford lacks a State Primary School, and South Stoke School sometimes does not have sufficient children.
- Moulsoford lacks a public house and it would be nice if the Perch & Pike was busier.
- A whole series of new walks would become possible.

Perhaps a ferry would suffice?

This subject was a popular choice amongst villagers, but a Project Group has yet to be formed and volunteers are sought.



*The slipway at Ferry Lane, with Moulsoford on the opposite bank: site of a new bridge?*

# Public transport



Improving the bus service was the sixth most important issue to villagers. This was not surprising as it is frequently brought up at the annual village meeting as a major point of concern.

Many people wanted to have better connections with trains at Goring Station.

Unfortunately, however our bus service is not used by the vast majority of villagers, who prefer to use their cars - even with fuel around £1.30/litre.

The buses frequently run with just one or two passengers on board.

After a combined effort in 2010 with representatives of other villages on the route, an extra four services per day and some better timings at Goring were introduced in Autumn 2010. Despite this and the associated publicity effort, usage remained very low and consequently some of these services will be withdrawn in June 2011. OCC will review their subsidised services later this year and further substantial cuts seem likely, in line with the

county's 40% cut in its overall bus subsidy budget.

Is there an answer to this problem? .... Just possibly there might be a case for a community bus service –

- Using more appropriate mini-bus size vehicles
- More frequent services to both Goring and Wallingford, especially morning and evening
- Providing a commuter service to/from Reading, and/or a school service to Woodcote
- Possibly routing through the centre of the village/The Street



A project group to address the economics of such ideas will shortly be set up.



# Village hall

The village hall is clad with corrugated iron, it has poor insulation and is somewhat out-dated. The structure is approaching the end of its useful life. It was built over 100 years ago, as a temperance hall and was subsequently moved to its current site in 1907. It seems that its original purpose was not being fulfilled, and so it was moved closer to Stoke Abbas to allow a closer eye to be kept on its use.



There appear to be a few options:

The land it occupies has some restrictions set by Christ Church College Charity. There is no possibility to extend the hall, access is tight and parking facilities are extremely limited. As the hall ages it becomes less and less at-



tractive to those who might want to hire it. The revenue raised from lettings is expected to decrease and even now they fall well short of covering the costs incurred.

If anyone has any inspired ideas, please contact Roy McMillan - 07770 592667.

1. Do minimum to keep it usable. It is likely that in the next ten to twenty years the cost of maintenance and insurance to the required standards will become too much for the limited resources of the Parish.
2. Continue to make small improvements and possibly improve its facilities.
3. Find another site and build a new Hall, maybe combined with some other facility
4. Use an alternative existing building.

# Community activities



## *Beating the Bounds*

The response to the survey showed a clear demand for a greater number of community activities and a long list of suggestions has been compiled.

There are many well supported community activities, including the regular and thriving May Fair and bonfire night fireworks.

**Last year there was a "Party on the Rec" with local beer, music and barbecue and in the last couple of years "beating the bounds" was well supported.**

There was a successful celebration of the church bells and a terrific Talent Show.



## *Bell ringing*

The Annual Open Gardens day continues to be well attended and it seems that all kinds of community event are very popular.

It was great to see the Pantomime return this year and classes in the village hall include Line Dancing and Pilates.



## *Pantomime cast 2011*

There is a good monthly newsletter, as well as a village website at [www.southstoke.org.uk](http://www.southstoke.org.uk)

The main obstacle to making community events happen is finding people to help organise things. Discussions have started about some new events, so if anyone wants to help with a street party for the Royal Wedding, or **another "Party on the Rec", or a talent show, or anything else, please let us know!**



*Sarah Phipps and Primrose, probably.*



# Streets & lighting



Current speed restrictions and speeding within the village were issues addressed in the questionnaire.

The response showed that these issues are of concern to many. An overwhelming majority believes that speeding is a problem on all the roads.

The general feeling is that the 30mph speed limit on the B4009 needs to be adhered to and the smaller roads in the village should have a new 20mph speed limit.

This is something that will be discussed further by the Parish Council.

Villagers were also asked if they were happy with the current level of street lighting in the village. At present there is one streetlight, in The Gardens.

Most people would not like to have any further street lights, and therefore no further action will be taken.

*South Bank: 20 mph?*



***South Stoke's only lamp post***

# Communications

The Broadband Speed Up Project Group was set up as a result of the level of interest expressed through the parish plan results. Since then, South Stoke Business Network has identified broadband speed as the number one issue impacting businesses in the area and have added their interests to the project.



At the first meeting of the project team the **problem was stated as "Broadband speeds in the village are poor and getting worse. Speeds have deteriorated and are variable. They will continue to decline as more people use the internet. The growth of smart phones and other mobile devices increases the requirement for broadband, further impacting the service. BT is generally unresponsive."**

Our wish is that everyone in South Stoke who wants broadband should get a minimum of 2Mbps with a stable service.

Work has been done to understand the problems and to get an accurate picture of the capabilities and plans for the Goring telephone exchange and the state of the existing lines through to the village. Various options for improvement have been reviewed. These included:

- Phone lines
- Satellite
- Cable
- Wireless including Mobile (Cellular)

A 4Mbps wireless service is provided by an organisation in Woodcote, but there would need to be several groups in the village clustered around an aerial in line-of-sight of the radio tower at Greenmore Hill.

The best prospect for a future-proofed solution is probably to improve the existing telecoms infrastructure by getting fibre optics installed between Goring exchange and the distribution box in South Stoke. Connection to homes would then be provided over the existing copper cables.

The idea is to adopt a financing model first used by the village of Iwade, which involves part funding from grants with a contribution from users. To this end there have been discussions with BT, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and our MP John Howell.





# Action Plan

Ref:	Subject / Action	Priority	Cost	By Whom
<b>1</b>	<b>Set up a community shop</b>			<b>PG/PC</b>
	Select site and obtain planning permission	●●●●	●	
	Obtain suitable building	●●●●	●●●●	
	Produce a business plan	●●●●	●	
	Fund raise and obtain grants	●●●●	●	
	Set up staffing structure and recruit volunteers	●	●	
<b>2</b>	<b>Undertake improvements to the recreation ground</b>			<b>PG/PC</b>
	Agree design	●●●●	●	
	Obtain grants and funding	●●	●	
	Build and maintain facilities	●●	●●●●	
<b>3</b>	<b>Create a safe cycle route between South Stoke and Little Stoke</b>			<b>PG</b>
	Confirm preferred route	●●●●	●	
	Obtain agreement of landowners	●●	●	
	Construction & signage	●●	●	
	Improve surface towards Goring	●●	●	
<b>4</b>	<b>Assess the feasibility of generating power from renewable sources</b>			<b>PG/PC</b>
	Find suitable site	●●●●	●	
	Determine cost and viability	●●●●	●	
	Obtain planning permission	●●	●	
	Obtain grants and funding	●●	●	
	Build and maintain facility	●●	●●●●	
<b>5</b>	<b>Explore the feasibility of a river crossing between Moultsford and South Stoke</b>			<b>PG/PC</b>
	Review similar projects and grants available	●●	●	
	Discuss with Moultsford Parish Council	●●	●	
<b>6</b>	<b>Improve the local bus service so that it better meets the needs of the village</b>			<b>PC/OCC</b>
	Discuss options with OCC and bus service providers	●●	●	
	Encourage maximum usage of the service	●●	●●	
	Liaise with neighbouring villages	●●	●	
<b>7</b>	<b>Look again at the viability of providing a new village hall to better serve the needs of the village</b>			<b>PC/PG</b>
	Assess condition of the present hall and any improvements needed	●●	●●	
	Seek funding or grants	●●	●	
	Explore longer term options, e. g. build new village hall	●●	●●●●	
<b>8</b>	<b>Set up more community activities</b>			<b>VPSG</b>
	Set up a programme of activities to meet the needs of the village	●●	●	
	Ensure activities are self-funding	●●	●	
<b>9</b>	<b>Arrange a 20 mph speed limit on the village roads</b>			<b>PC/OCC</b>
	Discuss options with OCC and Thames Valley Police	●●	●	
	Obtain and meet costs if necessary	●●	●●	
<b>10</b>	<b>Improve the quality and speed of telecommunications links to the village</b>			<b>PG/PC</b>
	Investigate current situation	●●	●	
	Discuss options with BT and other service providers	●●	●	
<b>LEGEND</b>			●●●●	High
			●●	Medium
			●	Low
		PG = Project Group		
		PC = Parish Council		
		VPSG = Village Plan Steering Group		

# Appendix A

**These suggestions were not in the “top ten” issues raised in the questionnaire responses, but they were common themes and it is hoped that some of them may be addressed later.....**

## Leisure and education facilities

- Provide more sports facilities on the recreation ground
- Re-start village sports teams
- Provide tennis courts
- Set up after-school clubs, Youth Clubs, Brownies
- Build a new pavilion on the recreation ground
- Provide exercise classes
- Provide allotments
- Provide more benches including at the slipway
- Encourage the pub to be family friendly with value for money food.
- Set up a post office
- Improve maintenance of existing village facilities
- Encourage families of village children to go to the village school

## Building

- Support affordable or other housing
- Keep new building to a minimum
- Reduce building disruption

## **Improve SODC's commitment and approach to planning, and prevent inconsistencies**

## Environment

- Minimise effect of proposed railway electrification and reduce railway noise
- Plant more flowers around the village
- Reduce the number of bonfires
- Stop fouling from dog mess/provide more bins
- Reduce smell from sewage works
- Stop groups shooting game in the village
- Reduce noise nuisance

## Communications and community

- Encourage community spirit
- Encourage residents to be caring and neighbourly and respect the community
- Improve communication to reduce rumour and village politics
- Reduce inconsiderate and dangerous parking
- Reduce petty crime and increase police presence
- Understand and deal with resistance to change
- Prevent people feeling isolated
- Ensure that the Parish Council is not seen as a clique.



# Behind the Plan

Steering Group: Roy McMillan (Chairman); Paul Jenkins (Secretary); Nicky Kennedy; Diana Hathaway; Sarah Larkin-Smith and Janet Jones.

## Acknowledgements

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## Contact us

We would welcome feedback, comments and further support: [Plan@south-stoke.co.uk](mailto:Plan@south-stoke.co.uk)

The full questionnaire results and reports from the Project Groups are available on the village website:

[www.southstoke.org.uk](http://www.southstoke.org.uk)

