

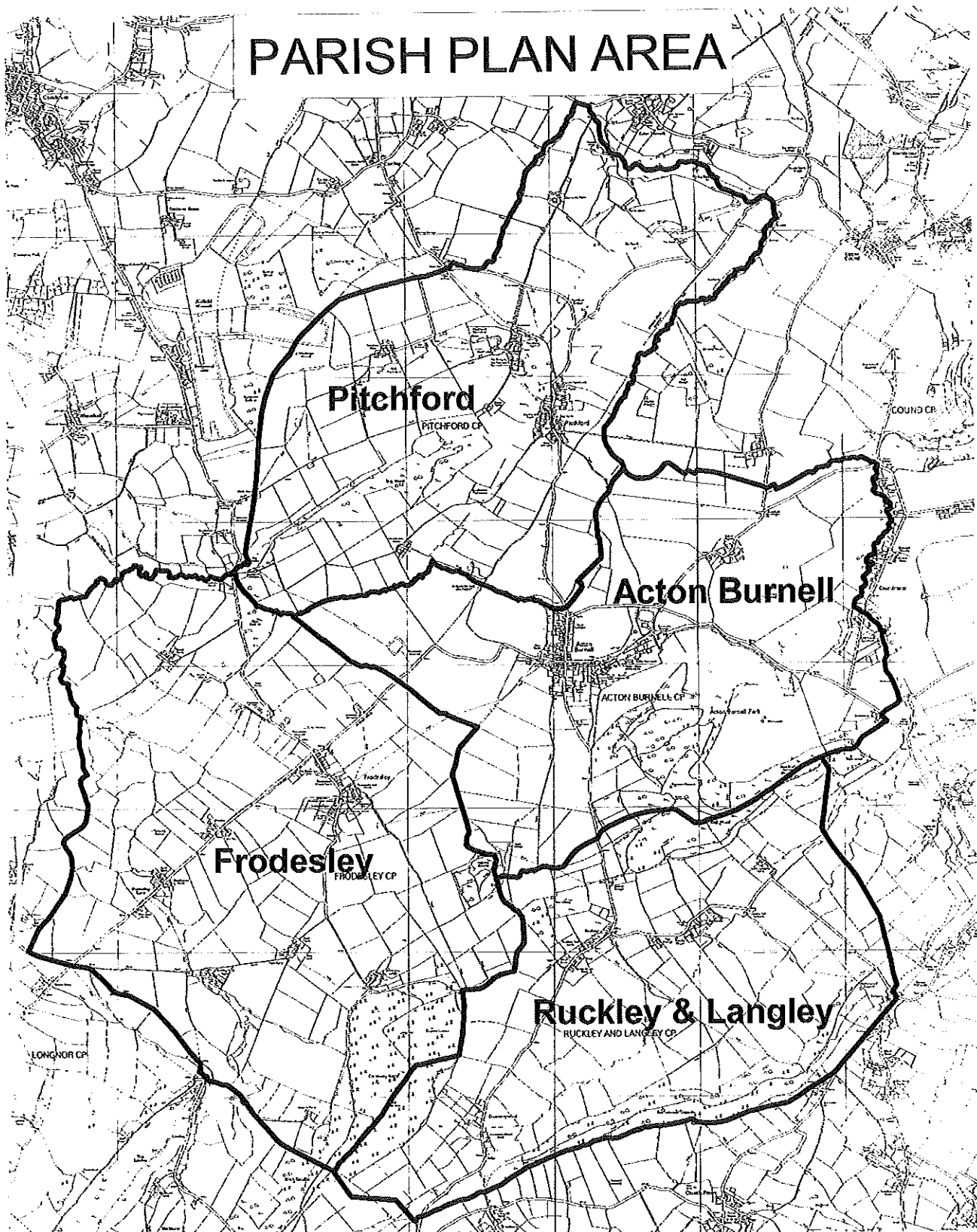


**Acton Burnell, Frodesley,  
Pitchford,  
Ruckley and Langley**

**Parish Plan**

**2004**

# PARISH PLAN AREA



**Shropshire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL



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## Contents

1. What is the Parish Plan?
2. How has it been produced?
3. Message from Chair of the Parish Council
4. The Parishes
  - Location*
  - Population*
  - Facilities*
  - Schools, shop, bus services*
  - Public services; library, refuse collection, bus service*
  - Communication*
  - Village economy, employment and tourism*
  - Access*
5. Housing
6. Community Services
  - Newsletter*
  - Help for Those in Need*
7. Leisure and Learning
  - Village Hall*
8. Highways and Transport
  - Transport*
  - Highways*
9. Our Young People
10. Contacts
11. Parish Council
  - Village Views representatives*
  - Godolphin Edwards Relief in Need Charity*
  - Village Hall Bookings*
  - Women's Institute*
12. Reference documents and websites
13. Population statistics
14. Action Steps

## **What is the Parish Plan?**

The Government's 'White Paper' on rural affairs published towards the end of the last century has given the opportunity to create a Parish Plan. Central Government plans to invest in rural areas, and we need to make sure that we are clear about what we need and would like in the parishes.

The plan sets out to provide

- a voice for the community showing that the issues are a genuine concern for a good proportion of the residents
- an achievable and long term vision for the future which establishes priorities through our action plan
- a mechanism to inform and influence the decisions of councils, health, police, other government departments etc
- powerful evidence when any application for grant aid is made in the future.

## **How has it been produced?**

This Plan is the result of the parish-wide consultation that we did during the autumn of 2002. This consultation wanted to encourage all parish residents to express their concerns about their community and their aspirations for the future.

We held meetings during 2002 and carried these on into 2003. We sent out a

questionnaire to all households. We also did a special survey of our young people to find out what they wanted and needed. Further meetings have been held to find out in more detail how we as a community can make a difference. The questionnaire was analysed and with information provided through the Parish Council this plan was written.

We have been fortunate to secure the services of a number of people (mainly volunteers) to do the leg work required. A number of them will continue to serve by helping with the projects set up as a result of the Plan. If you would like to help, please contact Mrs Beth Davies at Pitchford.

This plan is a living document, and it will be reviewed by the Parish Council to ensure that the plan continues to reflect residents' needs.

## **What is the Parish Council?**

A group Parish Council was formed in 1969 to represent the Parishes of Acton Burnell, Pitchford, Frodesley, Ruckley and Langley within the borough of Shrewsbury and Atcham. The first Chairman to be elected was the Reverend D W Gould.

The Council represents a large geographical area with a total electorate of 412, living in 195 houses. (Register of electors 2004). The Council meets on the second Tuesday of alternate months (i.e. January, March etc.). The Council's prime function and responsibility is to present the views of the electorate to Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council and Shropshire County Council. The present



Council's term of office will cease in May 2006 when a new Council will be elected.

All expenses concerned with the production of the Plan have been met by the Countryside Agency which has been able to make a grant to the Parish Council.

### **The Parishes of Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Langley, Pitchford and Ruckley**

The Parishes are situated in Shropshire, some eight miles south of the county town of Shrewsbury within the Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council area. Recent changes to the ward areas are creating challenges in extracting current data. The parishes are defined as rural although Shrewsbury, Telford and the West Midlands conurbation are commutable for those people with personal transport. The rich diversity of landscape and environment make these parishes extremely attractive to all who live here and visit it.

The five hamlets of Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Ruckley, Langley Ruckley and Pitchford and are very rural, with Acton Burnell having the only Post Office and village shop. There is a church in Acton Burnell, Frodesley and Pitchford, with services during the month, but not on a weekly basis.

The lack of a range of facilities in the parishes means that many residents have to travel to nearby towns for shops and services as well as for employment. Shrewsbury is 8 miles distant with the biggest shopping centre and the main hospital; Much Wenlock 11 miles, Cressage (for doctors surgery) 8 miles, and Church Stretton 9 miles.

On the closure of Acton Burnell School in the 1980s, it was unanimously decided by parents that the designated school for all three parishes would be Church Preen. Following the growth in the younger population over the years, it was inevitable that other schools would be used, and there are now children from Frodesley attending Longnor School and similarly Pitchford children attending Condover School.

Secondary age children in the three parishes have the choice of the comprehensive school in Church Stretton if they live in Frodesley or William Brookes School in Much Wenlock. There is a sixth form college and college of further education in Shrewsbury, a campus for Wolverhampton University in Telford, and an

agricultural college, otherwise young people need to leave home to undertake post 18 education. There is some adult education provision, but this is limited.

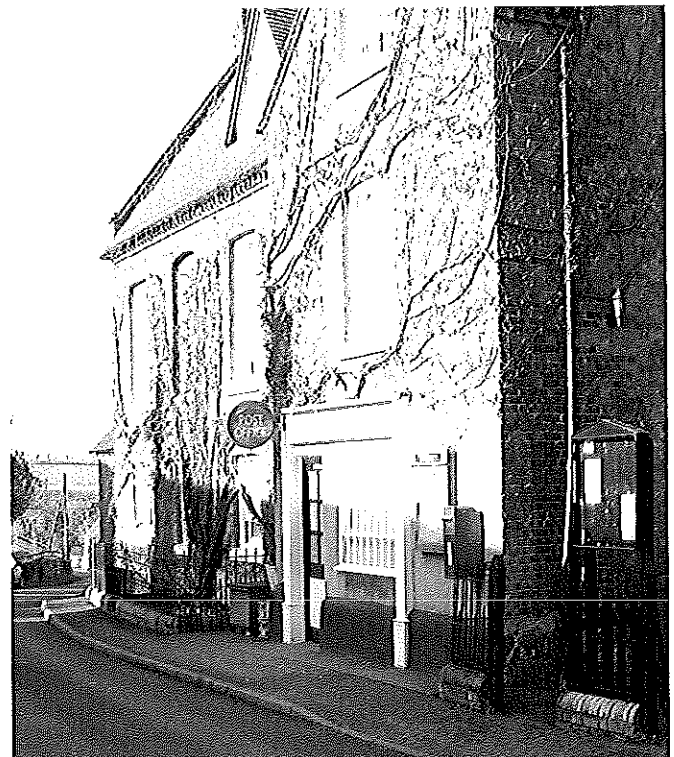
### **Population**

The census figures show a broad mix of age groups. The population is fairly stable with 38% of people having lived in the villages for more than 20 years. The existence of Concord College does increase the numbers of young people aged 16-19 years of age. Although the college is relatively self supporting the students do need some services, particularly transport. For informal socialising outside the college, the students generally need to rely on taxi transport.

### **Facilities**

#### **Acton Burnell**

- Post Office and shop
- Telephone kiosk
- Church
- Concord College – private international education provision
- Bus stop
- Telephone Exchange
- Notice Board



## Frodesley

- Telephone kiosk
- Bus shelter
- Church
- Restaurant/pub
- Notice Board

## Langley

- Chapel – service held annually in the Summer

## Pitchford

- Church
- Bus shelter
- Village hall for the five parishes, with recycling bins
- Telephone kiosk
- Notice Board

## Ruckley

- Notice Board

## Communication

There is a monthly parish magazine which is taken by annual subscription. This covers the parish areas and Condover. Its focus is on Church news although it contains forthcoming events. From the survey, not everyone takes the magazine and there is a view that it is only church information.

## Public Services

There is a weekly refuse collection service for general household rubbish, but no roadside collection of recyclates. Freddie the Freighter visits the parishes twice a year with



a skip to dispose of large objects, but does not call at Ruckley.

There is no specialist collection for recyclates e.g. paper, bottles etc. A two weekly garden waste collection was piloted in 2002 and was extended into 2003.

A mobile library visits on a two weekly basis and stops in Acton Burnell on alternate Thursdays between 11.45 a.m. and 12.00 noon. The other nearest libraries are Bayston Hill 8 miles, Church Stretton 9 miles and Much Wenlock 11 miles. (All mileages from Acton Burnell crossroads)

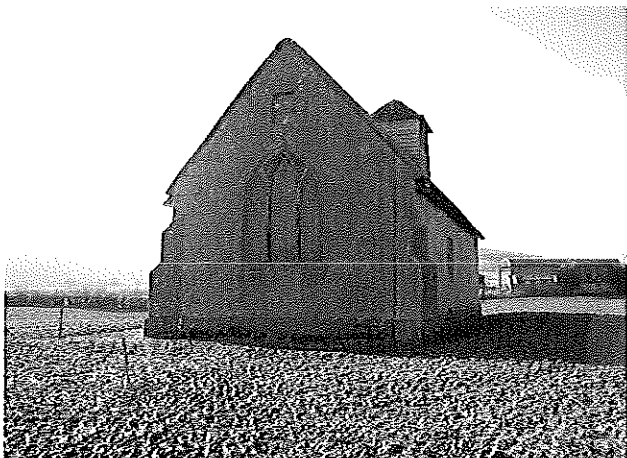
There is a bus service from Church Stretton to Shrewsbury passing through Frodesley, Acton Burnell and Pitchford each morning at approximately 8.15 and 10.15 and two services in the evening at about 4.30 and 6.00. This later bus goes to Cardington.

From the survey few people used the bus service or were aware of it. Transport was a big issue for young people that they raised in their own questionnaire and a further consultation meeting.

## Village Economy, Employment and Tourism

According to the Parish survey, 37% of people work in the parishes, with 35% owning their own business. We asked if people worked from home and 26% of people do with a further 18% of business in some way connected with tourism.

The survey showed that people were unhappy with the lack of telecommunications infrastructure which would help them work



from home using IT. Pressure should be put on telephone companies to supply broadband.

The villages are predominantly agricultural with long established farms, many of which have been family owned for some generations. There is also a group of small holdings owned by the County Council. As agriculture is changing there have been a number of diversification initiatives, with the creation of holiday cottage accommodation and bed and breakfast.

Income generated from people staying overnight whilst on holiday or on weekend trips is becoming increasingly important to the villages. However, there are few places for tourists to spend money and so contribute to the wider economy other than on accommodation. There is scope to increase tourist led businesses in the area e.g. tea shop, craft studios etc.

People have expressed an interest in local produce and this is perhaps something that can be developed without detriment to the atmosphere of the area.

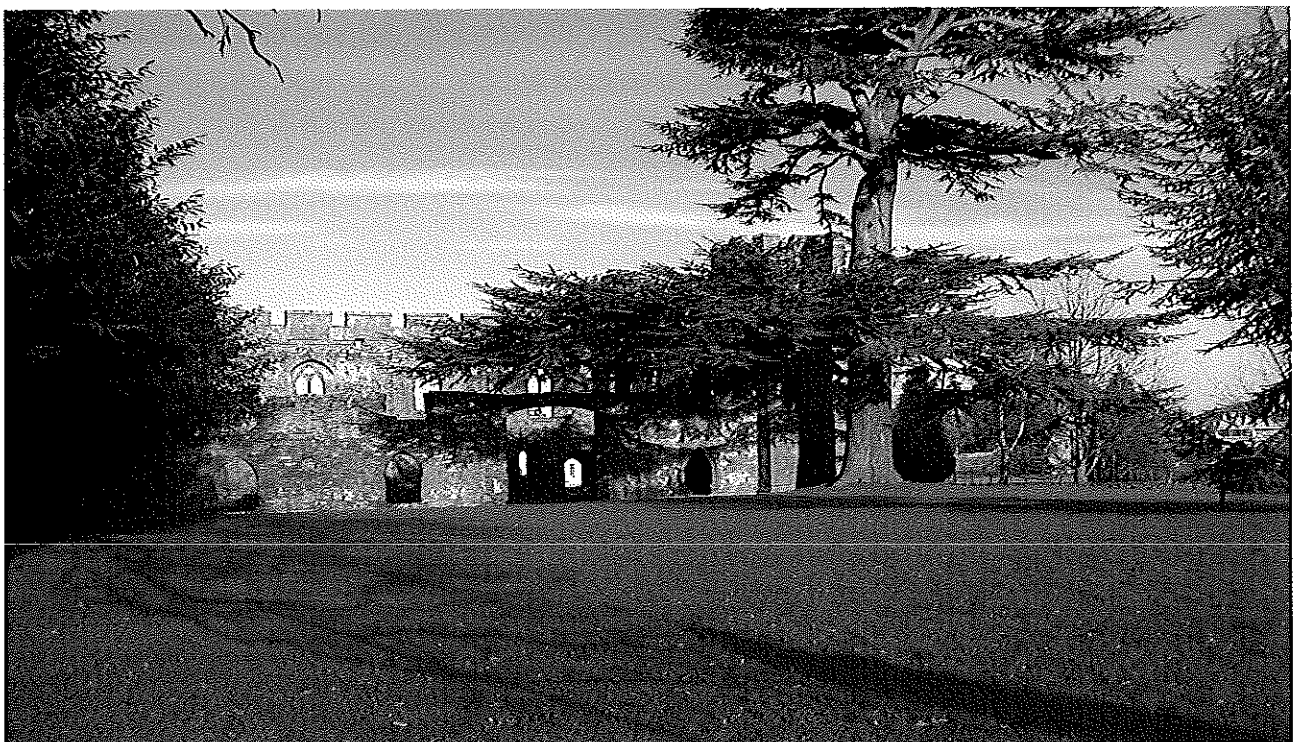
People feel the decline in agriculture and fewer people being employed locally increases the traffic on the lanes as people have to travel to work. There is a concern that the villages are becoming commuter villages with fewer people around during the day.

## Tourism

There are few formal tourist attractions in the parishes: Acton Burnell Castle and Langley Chapel owned by English Heritage, and the Gatehouse at Langley. The old Parliament barn in Acton Burnell is on private land. However the lack of formal tourist attractions is not necessarily a disincentive to visitors. Many tourists choose to stay in this area precisely because it does not have a highly developed tourist industry and because it provides them with a sense of staying somewhere 'undiscovered.' As with any area which is trying to develop tourism, the local economy and opportunities for local employment, it is extremely difficult to find and develop amenities which will satisfy both aims without damaging the peace and tranquillity which makes the area so attractive.

Many of the visitors using accommodation are keen on the type of activities which do not require formal facilities. Many are interested in casual or short walks (as opposed to serious hiking) or they are keen to use a peaceful base to visit the well known sights of Ironbridge and Shrewsbury etc.

One of the issues that does concern visitors is where to walk. Many express concerns about the safety of the roads and the difficulties of cycling or walking with young families on roads which are increasingly busy.



The surrounding area has footpaths and bridleways listed on the definitive map, and there are entries in the published tourist guide to footpaths relating to walks in the area. There are few places for people to park their car if they have travelled to the area, and extra car parking would be an added encouragement. Concern has been expressed about the parking of vehicles on the road outside the village shop in Acton Burnell.

### **Access**

The villages can be accessed from a number of different directions, according to people's destinations. The lanes provide access for large vehicles including Forestry Commission lorries and for the haulage company in Acton Burnell, as well as for farm vehicles including milk tankers and private cars and bikes. The lanes in some places are narrow, with single track and passing places. There are concerns highlighted in the survey about the traffic on the narrow lanes that give access to the villages and the speed at which they travel. The problem of the narrow lanes has been addressed by the Parish Council and the Local Authority are committed to take action although this may take time.

### **Housing**

Over the past few years there has been considerable building in the villages compared with previous years. This has been mainly in-fill building and barn conversions. The Local Plan dictates that any further development at the present time is not sustainable.

In these times of exorbitant house prices there is concern about the lack of low cost affordable housing for local people to rent or buy. Recent in-fill building has tended to be geared towards larger and more expensive homes. For the communities to be vibrant, it is important to retain a mix of age groups. A considerable number of properties are rented in Pitchford.

Throughout the villages there is a total population of 745. The majority of the population, over 80% have lived in the villages for more than 10 years, suggesting

some stability in the population.

Around 12 %, of the population is aged 60+; however the profile of the population aged 45-59 is nearer 15% suggesting the need to start to consider facilities for an older population. This is consistent with Shropshire's demography which indicates an aging population with the number of people over 80 years set to increase by one third. Housing and support to residents in their own homes may become increasingly important.

### **Community Services**

#### **A newsletter**

The survey showed that people were interested in what was happening in the villages but didn't know how to find out about events. The existing Parish magazine has a limited circulation and there are views that it only contains information about the church.

From the survey there were requests for more information about local trades' people and businesses so that people could contact a member of the community if they needed work doing.

The meeting on transport which was held to help produce this plan referred to the possibility of including transport information in a new redesigned magazine.

A new newsletter has been launched called **Village Views** which is planned to be circulated every 2 months containing information about events in the villages, a who's who and lots more topical information.

Helen Little is the editor – [helenlittle@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:helenlittle@ukonline.co.uk)

#### **Help for those in need**

The Godolphin Edwards Relief in Need Charity was established in 1984 for the benefit of people living in the area comprising the Parishes of Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford and Langley and Ruckley.

The Charity offers help and assistance to

organisations or individual persons resident in the area who are in condition of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for services.

In recent years much of the money has not been claimed and the trustees would like to hear from anyone who lives in the area and think they may be eligible to apply.

The Trustees meet twice each year in May and November to consider requests.

To apply, or for more information write to the Secretary, Lt Col Roy Preston at Honeysuckle Cottage, 10 Frodesley, Dorrington SY5 7HA or phone 01694 731 300

### **Leisure and Learning**

The survey showed that there are few opportunities for adult classes. Some reference was made to computer classes and 'Flicks in the Sticks'

The mobile library visits Acton Burnell every alternate Thursday between 11.45 a.m. and 12.00 noon. It is recognised that this is not necessarily convenient for many people but people need to be encouraged to use it, so that the Parish Council can lobby to have the timing changed so that more people can use it.

### **Village Hall**

The survey reflects a high use of the village hall. Out of 199 respondents to the question regarding village hall use, some 61% had used the hall for public or private functions. The comments from the survey do suggest there is scope for increasing use by improving facilities.

The current kitchen is dated and is limited for the point of view of preparing food. It is generally used for serving food prepared elsewhere. It needs some refurbishment to cupboards and for preparation and serving areas as well as to cooking and refrigeration facilities.

The survey also showed that people were unaware of the possibility of borrowing village hall crockery, table cloths and tables. Some of this equipment does need replacing,

particularly some of the tables and chairs.

Access for people with disabilities is limited and this was commented on in the survey.

### **Highways and Transport**

#### **Transport**

From the survey, the majority of people (93.9%) owned a car. However 11.3% of people have a problem with transport. Most common problem is the infrequent and inflexible bus service. Several people feel they need to run more cars than they would wish, or could ideally afford.

The survey did show 19 regular bus users in the area.

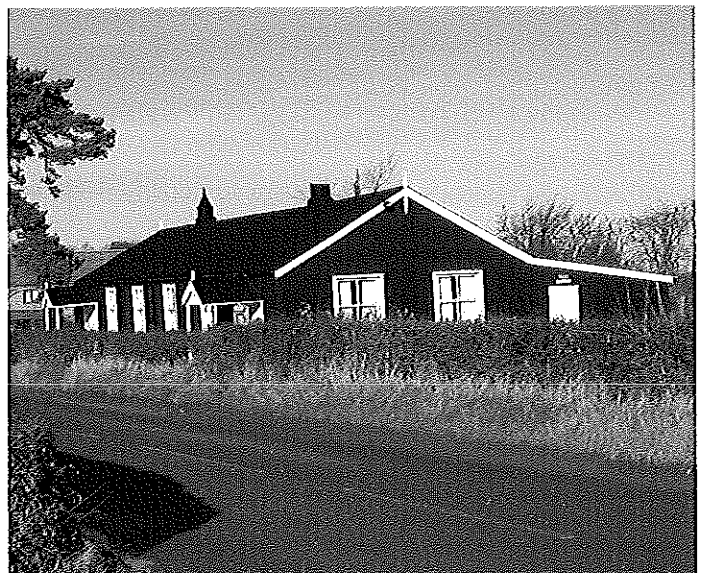
The survey asked about the voluntary car scheme and 62 people said they would consider becoming involved.

#### **Highways**

Traffic speed is a concern for people in the villages with 67% of respondents feeling that traffic calming is important or very important.

Drainage on the lanes is poor resulting in localised flooding, and the overall general maintenance is inadequate. The Frodesley to Condover lane was cited as an example when repairs are poorly managed when they are done.

Access to the villages along the lanes is narrow, with a number of lengths being single carriageway with passing places.



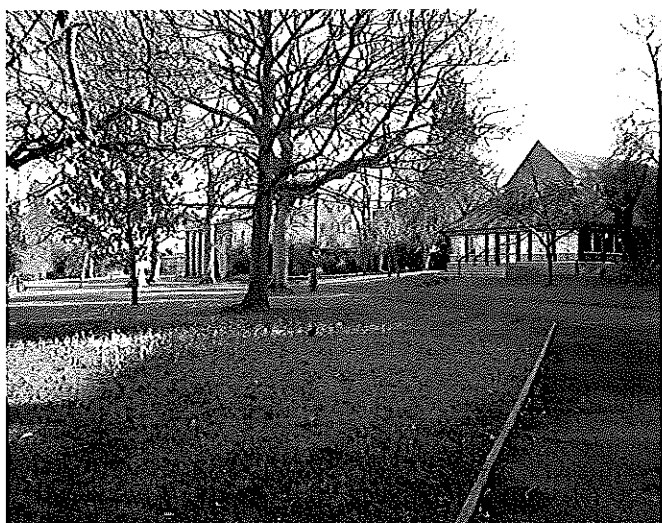
## Our Young People

There are 307 young people aged 10-19 the villages. 222 of these are young people aged 16-19 living in Acton Burnell. As these figures will include students at Concord College, they are not necessarily representative of the permanent village population; however it doesn't mean that these young people have all their needs met by the college.

22 young people responded to the questionnaire which was aimed specifically for them.

At present the most popular activities are watching TV, using computers, meeting with friends, or shopping or visiting the cinema in Shrewsbury.

From the survey the key things that younger people wanted are; somewhere to meet friends, things to do and better transport to town, particularly on Friday or Saturday evening.



Concord College is able to provide some limited facilities for swimming, use of the college games hall and gym and dancing classes. These may need to be limited to use in the winter when there were fewer students in the college.

Transport is a key issue for younger people and somewhere to meet friends.

## Contacts

### Parish Council

### Acton Burnell

Mr E Plant – Stoneleigh, Acton Burnell  
01694 731 294 (Chairman)  
Mr J White – The Croft, Acton Burnell 01694  
731 654 (Vice Chairman)  
Mr R Morgan, Home Farm, Acton Burnell  
01694 731229  
Mrs W Smith, The Orchard, Acton Burnell,  
01694 731 311

### Frodesley

Mr J H Davies, Frodesley Grange Farm,  
Frodesley 01694 731220  
Mrs C Culliss, Jasmine Cottage, Frodesley,  
01694 731679

### Pitchford

Mrs E Davies, New Top Farm, Pitchford  
01694 731657  
Mr A Argyropulo, Coachman's Cottage  
Pitchford 01694 731319

### Ruckley and Langley

Mr K Faulkner, Langley Hall Farm Acton  
Burnell 01694 731363

Eric T Jones – Clerk to the Parish Council  
01743 247 985

### Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council representative

Mrs G Chaplin, The Old Wilstone,  
Cardington 01694 771797

### Shropshire County Council representative

Mr P Nutting, 5 Westhope Avenue,  
Copthorne, Shrewsbury 01743 355709

Beth Davies Parish Co-ordinator

### Village Views newsletter village representatives:-

Helen Little – Village Views editor –  
[helenlittle@ukoline.co.uk](mailto:helenlittle@ukoline.co.uk)

Wendy Smith - Acton Burnell  
Beth Davies- Pitchford  
Ron Repath - Frodesley  
Helen Little- Ruckley and  
Langley Causeway

**Godolphin Edwards Relief in Need Charity**

Secretary Roy Preston, Honeysuckle Cottage, 10 Frodesley, SY5 7HA

Village Hall Bookings – Jim White 01694 731654

Women's Institute – Beth Davies 01694 731657

**Reference documents**

**Local Transport Plan**

**Library Plan**

**Community Plan**

**Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council and Shropshire County Council Corporate Plan**

**Useful websites**

[www.shrewsbury.gov.uk](http://www.shrewsbury.gov.uk)

[www.shropshireonline.gov.uk](http://www.shropshireonline.gov.uk)

**Population statistics**

	Population	Households
Acton Burnell	450	77
Frodesley, Ruckley and Langleigh	183	69
Pitchford	112	44
Total	745	190

Population by age	Acton Burnell	Frodesley, Ruckley and Langleigh	Pitchford
0-4	14	7	6
5-9	11	11	14
10-19	264	28	15
20-29	31	7	12
30-44	55	44	30
45-64	53	63	19
+65	22	23	16

Census 2001 data

## Action Steps

### Issues

### Action

### Who/When

#### Community Services

#### Improved information to the community

Encourage use of Mobile Library, and campaign for more convenient timings

Parish Council

Redesign and relaunch the parish magazine to include more information about events.

**Village Views** new newsletter started November 2003

Create a local business directory

Village Views Editor

#### Leisure and Learning

#### Village Hall

Refurbishing the kitchen estimate sought

Village Hall Management Committee

Purchase of 80 new chairs and 20 tables being pursued

Village Hall Management Committee and Community Council

Quote for disabled access and ramp to be sought.

Village Hall Management Committee

Quote gained for replacement windows

Village Hall Management Committee

#### Housing

Support affordable homes

Parish Council

#### Provision for older residents

Further work on investigating the needs of the parishes' older residents

Parish Council

Ways of facilitating prescription collection to be explored

#### Young People

Provision for leisure opportunities to be explored

Parish Council, Young People's committee and Concord College

#### Transport

#### Help for people who need transport

Set up voluntary car scheme, with volunteers using own cars. This can be part of Shropshire's network of voluntary car schemes

Parish Council with Community Council – need a co-ordinator to recruit drivers and take bookings

Join the taxi voucher scheme with vouchers used for full or part payment of taxi services.

Parish Council – youth committee

Provide information on Wheels to Work in Village Views

Community Council scheme

#### Highways

#### Traffic speeding through the villages

Press for traffic calming measures

Parish Council with County Council District Surveyor.

#### Narrow lanes

Press for improvements from King Street junction to Acton Burnell.

Parish Council with County Council

#### Car Parking

Press for additional car parking in Acton Burnell near the castle

Parish Council