

BRIDEKIRK PARISH PLAN

2003 - 2007



Bridekirk



Dovenby



Tallentire

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The Parish of Bridekirk

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Plan Preparation

In July 2002, Bridekirk Parish Council agreed to apply for grant funding towards the cost of producing a Parish Plan. Parish Plans identify key facilities and services required in villages, set out the problems which need to be tackled and demonstrate how local distinctive features can be protected and preserved.

In agreeing to produce a plan for Bridekirk Parish, the Council were mindful that many residents were concerned about over-development in Tallentire and a threat of similar problems in Bridekirk and Dovenby and the need to set out Planning Guidelines for Dovenby in order that future developments do not prevent residents from enjoying their homes. The Village Hall Committee were also anxious to determine whether there was sufficient interest within the Parish for the erection of a Village Hall to be considered.

Funding for Parish Plans is made by the Countryside Agency as part of the "Vital Villages" scheme. This is a Government initiative to encourage local communities to take action in respect of issues affecting their areas. There are also other grants available from the Countryside Agency which might be available to Parishes once a plan is completed.

Parish Plans are a new initiative and whilst at present they have no formal status it is hoped that in due course they will influence a wide range of organisations who provide services to rural communities and provide local guidelines at the planning stage of new developments.

Bridekirk Parish is unusual as the Parish has three villages each with its own character and needs and the Plan has been produced taking into account the individual needs of each village but within the framework of a united Community

How the Plan was produced

In order to fully represent each village therefore, the Parish Council formed three Village Groups to work with the Plan Coordinator. The Parish Council monitored progress at each of their monthly Meetings. As Village Groups were chaired by Parish Councillors.

A key issue in the production of a village plan is the consultation of parish residents about the content of the plan and the issues to be raised. Accordingly, a questionnaire was circulated to each home in the Parish to give residents the opportunity to express their views about the major issues in the Parish and to raise any concerns they had about the community. In all 264 questionnaires were circulated of which 171 were returned (65%) and, perhaps of even more importance many residents took the opportunity of giving their views about the Parish.

The plan was prepared using information from questionnaire returns, meetings with parish groups, discussions by the Parish Council and local knowledge from long standing citizens. In addition all residents have been invited to give their views through the medium of Parish Newsletters which were circulated with the delivery of the questionnaires and following the analysis of results. The feedback from the community has been extremely good and the Parish Council are grateful for this support. Once a draft plan had been prepared, each group considered its findings and reported back to the Parish Council who considered a final draft in detail at a Meeting of the Parish Council.

The questionnaire also invited comments about whether there was a need for a Parish Hall and following the results of the questionnaire being considered an open Meeting of the Parish was called to determine whether there was sufficient interest to form a new Committee to take the project forward and at this meeting a Community Facility committee was formed to explore this issue further.

Parish Plans offer a vision for the community for the future

Objectives of Plan



Parish Plans can cover a wide range of issues involving aspects of rural life; social, environmental and economic issues which affect the community.

In this Plan, the Parish Council have attempted to identify which issues affect Bridekirk Parish and what is needed to tackle the problems raised.

The following list sets out the main objectives which the Parish Council believes are the main focus of the Plan

- To set out an achievable and long-term vision for the future and to establish priorities for action within the community.
- To provide mechanisms to inform and influence the decisions of statutory bodies, agencies, individuals and organisations, with due regard to community priorities and local needs.
- To set out the Parish Council's views in support of their parishioners in respect of future residential development in the Parish and prepare Planning Guidance in respect of the measures identified by the community to improve and enhance the quality of the built environment.
- To identify or otherwise the need for a community hall in Bridekirk.
- To improve liaison with Cumbria Police and improve village safety
- To improve communications within the Parish
- To develop community spirit in the parish



Aims and Objectives

The objective of the Council has been to produce a comprehensive and relevant set of Parish Design Guidelines that reflect the consensus of opinion of Bridekirk Parish residents and that could possibly be adopted by Allerdale Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance after due discussion.

The purpose of a set of guidelines is to influence the planning process so that any further development or change within the Parish and the surrounding countryside will be managed in a way which protects and enhances the qualities which give Bridekirk Parish its character.

Such a document would identify those qualities that are valued by residents so that planners, developers, landowners, architects, builders and local home owners contemplating alterations can make informed decisions at the design and planning stages.

Allerdale Local Plan

In the current Local Plan, the three villages of Bridekirk, Dovenby and Tallentire have housing development boundaries identified and the remainder of the Parish is subject to policies set out for the rural parts of the Borough.

It is hoped these guidelines where appropriate will be incorporated into the next review of the Allerdale Local plan due in 2003/4

In this document any reference to village/s unless specifically stated is taken to mean the three villages and the development limits set out in the current Allerdale Local Plan





The Parish of Bridekirk is characterised by the attractive rural landscape of its three villages each in its own setting providing attractive places to live.

The Parish is close to the town of Cockermouth where the majority of residents commute for their shopping and main services. There is a local bus service to Cockermouth.

Most local children attend Bridekirk Primary School and older children go to Cockermouth School. Cockermouth is also the main venue for leisure and sporting opportunities for young people in the Parish.

Each of the villages is small enough for neighbours to know each other and this is a valued aspect of community life. The network of paths, places to sit and talk and take a pride in the villages all add to village character.

It is important therefore, to all residents that any future developments in the villages do not overwhelm this rural character of the Parish.

Each village in the Parish has its own individual character with Bridekirk clustered under Tallentire Hill; Dovenby, although passed by a major road still a quiet attractive village, and Tallentire, which has grown quite considerably in recent years, still much sought after as a place to live but now needing the opportunity to assimilate its extra dwellings and provide for its new families.

The Parish also retains its rural nature, with each village being surrounded by attractive countryside and extensive views, allowing residents to enjoy the hedgerows, mature trees, leafy lanes, verges and open spaces.

Although each village has had some new development there is still much of its original style to be admired and protected in this Parish and within this Plan suggestions are made to protect and preserve that which is best by its residents of the Parish Character.

Recommended Guidelines—Village Character

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| 1. The natural and historic built environment should be respected in all developments in order to retain the rural character of all three villages. | 4. The natural and historic built environment should be respected in all developments in order to retain links to the past. |
| 2. Developments and household extensions should be designed to conserve and where possible enhance local rural character by attention to local detail and in character with neighbouring properties. | 5. The rate of any new development should be slow enough to enable newcomers to integrate into the community without damage to the character. |
| 3. Developments should be sensitive to the natural and built environment and where appropriate reflect the historic environment by the use of local vernacular design | 6. The density of new built development in any village should take account of the immediate area around the development. |

Bridekirk Parish is situated in rolling countryside shaped by its agricultural past. The former Dovenby Hall Estate with its parkland and farms laid out to provide shooting facilities provide the setting at Dovenby, and Tallentire Hill with its attractive woodland and fine views dominate the landscape above Bridekirk.

The landscape is typically rural with fields and boundary hedges dotted with pockets of woodlands. There are still many working farms in the Parish which reaches from Dearham Village in the west to Papcastle in the south and Gilcrux to the north.

The Development limits have been defined in each village by enclosing the original village street, separating field from residential areas quite distinctly. However, the rural character of the roads and lanes lined with hedges and soft verges gives the impression that the countryside penetrates the villages. The presence of older farm buildings contributes to this feeling of being in the countryside, particularly where these farmsteads are at the edge of villages providing a gradual change from countryside to residential but the farmsteads are also within and at the heart of the villages and this is one reason why the Parish is such an attractive place to live and any future development must allow for this atmosphere.

The networks of Public Footpaths throughout the parish also provide a variety of views both within the Parish and towards the Lake District Fells to the south and the Solway coast to the north. This network should be protected with a rolling programme of footpath enhancement with way markers, gates and styles checked regularly. The Parish is also fortunate in having a rich diversity of wild life.

In the surveys carried out, most residents were concerned about the possibility of over-development. They felt that no further development should be allowed beyond the existing village development limits in all three villages. Concern was expressed at views from the village being lost as plots, especially in farm yards were filled with new housing.



Recommended Guidelines—Landscape and setting

- Development on the fields surrounding the villages is unnecessary as there has been excessive growth in the past 10 years and all local need is satisfied.
- Unsightly buildings, masts and other constructions should not intrude on the skyline.
- Appropriate existing field boundaries should be retained and all appropriate remaining ridge and furrow and historic agricultural landscape should be conserved.

Each of the three villages in the Parish has its own individual character and diversity. Each village is an attractive place to live and through the plan consultations, residents have made it clear they wish to have their say about the future of their village.

The questionnaire circulated to all households in the Parish also contained a specific opportunity for residents to comment about their village as well as Parish matters and the results are important to this section of the design statement.

Bridekirk

It is clear from the questionnaires that the residents of Bridekirk are in the main proud of the village and enjoy living there. There is a feeling of belonging and a good community spirit and the open aspect of the village surrounded by attractive woodlands and footpaths to enjoy add to the enjoyment of the quality of life enjoyed by residents.

Residents feel that the current size and layout of Bridekirk should remain as it is and over 80% of residents expressed this view in the village questionnaire. Any development within the triangle formed by the roads within the village was opposed, as was the recent proposal for a caravan site near the village.

There were concerns about traffic speeding through the village and damage to verges. A number of residents also complained about unsightly overhead cables but generally residents felt no major changes were necessary to the present size and shape of the village.

Features to protect

Open nature of Village : Green corridors for wildlife

Verges and open areas. Woodlands around village, in particular Town End Wood.



Dovenby

The residents of Dovenby value the village in its present form and feel care must be taken that any new development within the existing village envelope should be carefully designed to fit in with the existing village architecture. Residents feel the development boundaries should remain as they are and that roads in the village could not cope with an increase in traffic use.

A major concern for residents was the long-standing problem of the former entrance to the Dovenby Hall Estate. Overall, residents took a balanced view about the activities undertaken on the Estate but most of the residents were concerned that this entrance should be secured as agreed and required by the Borough Council when previous planning applications were considered.

The residents of Dovenby take particular pride in the stream and open spaces alongside the road through the village. A number expressed the view that the stream should be cleaned out more regularly and the troughs and cattle-incline watering hole should be restored and preserved. There was also some concern that the stream had been invaded by Japanese Knotweed which was growing into the structures retaining the stream and could cause long term damage.

The visual quality of the wall at the entrance of the village was criticised by several residents who felt it had not been properly repaired and a proper scheme using more suitable stone should be carried out.

These features are an important part of the character of Dovenby Village Heritage and need to be properly protected for the future. This could possibly be achieved by the formation of a village heritage society who could record the history and value of these features and perhaps attract grant funding for their repair and restoration.



Tallentire

80% of the residents of Tallentire stated that the existing Development Boundary should not be extended. Indeed, many respondents went further and complained that the village had been overdeveloped and that too many houses had been built in too short a space of time. This did not give time for the village to retain its community spirit. Residents also felt the infill housing was spoiling the open views originally enjoyed in the village and the over development had caused traffic problems, destroyed verges and hedgerows and all the roads in the village now required repair and resurfacing due to being constantly dug up and re-instated. Many residents fear Tallentire could lose its character with further estate-developments as the number of dwellings in Tallentire has increased by 50% in the last 10 years. It is also interesting to note that the comparatively large increase in size of the village and the reduction of open space has created new worries for residents with road safety and somewhere for children to play now a major concern for the families.

The residents are anxious that the stone wall boundaries in the village should be preserved together with original plots. Further demolition of stone barns should be refused.



The natural environment of the Parish provides a setting for the built environment. All three villages are surrounded by trees and hedges and there are many wild areas throughout the parish. The woodlands dotted throughout the Parish contain a rich diversity of wild life and the pattern of agriculture over the centuries has created habitat for several endangered species including the Barn Owl which is often seen in the Parish.

The several streams and ponds in the Parish also provide a variety of habitats and wildlife ponds. Wild flowers bloom on verges and meadows and in the churchyard there are interesting lichens and mosses to be found. The woodlands around the village of Bridekirk and the Church are particularly regarded by residents who feel they should be retained in their wild state and not developed in any way.

In the older buildings there are bats, small mammals and in summer these are used by summer visiting birds for nesting.

There are many interesting and very old hedgerows in the Parish and the layout of the grounds of Dovenby Hall and Tallentire Hall provide a historical setting and plantings which ought to be preserved as much as possible.

The residents are anxious to preserve all healthy older indigenous trees and hedges which provide a wildlife habitat and enhance the natural character of the Parish.



Recommended Guidelines—The Natural Environment

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildlife habitats should be protected and enhanced. This includes existing hedges, mature trees, wild areas and water features. Woodlands needing to be felled must be replaced with an appropriate planting programme.• The stream through Dovenby is of particular importance adding to the natural features of this village.• New planting should be of broad-leaved indigenous species and owners should be encouraged to make their gardens wildlife friendly | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New developments should seek to incorporate features to encourage wildlife such as bat and bird boxes and ponds.• The overuse of herbicides and pesticides is to be avoided.• Conservation of local ponds and water courses is encouraged.• The historic agricultural landscape needs to be protected |
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In all three villages there are local features or areas which the residents of the Parish feel should be protected and preserved for future generations. The following list gives details of these features and the Parish Council will seek to ensure these features are properly protected against any future Planning applications or developments.

Bridekirk

The Church and its woodland setting together with other broadleaved woodlands in the Parish
Spring well - Although now covered, this important feature which was formerly the village water supply still exists in its original position and form and is remembered by several residents.
The well is located in the field adjacent to Springwell cottage



Dovenby

The stream running through the village together with the troughs, cattle watering incline, walls and open space to the south of the stream.

Tallentire

Natural Stone Walls and boundaries around old and new properties and plots.

The entrance to Tallentire Hall

Remaining mature trees and woodlands

Historic agricultural landscape areas in Allerdale Local Plan



Suggested Guidelines

- The Parish Council will seek to protect local and natural features when considering future applications for new developments in the Parish



Each of the three villages which make up the Parish have a mixture of older properties, some very old and some new properties with many having been constructed fairly recently.

Where these are intermingled and sensitively designed they can sit happily together with the older houses and many of the new developments do this.

However, the fairly large scale of individual developments in Tallentire and Dovenby in the last few years have changed the character of these villages and before any further development takes place a careful look at the spaces available and whether there is an established local need for further building should be taken.

In all three villages, the residents feel that there has been sufficient new building carried out. Because of this, they strongly oppose any suggestion that any changes should be made to any of the existing development limits set out for the three villages when the local plan is reviewed.

The Parish Council are also concerned that the practice of demolishing older buildings such as barns or farmsteads is spoiling the character of these villages and this practice should be stopped and the conversion of such buildings into residential use should be encouraged.

In the next review of the Allerdale Local Plan, farmsteads within the village development limits should be excluded from the development limits in order to encourage conversion and to ensure any new build does not lead to over development of these sites.

In particular, residents are concerned that virtually all the open views through spaces in the village are being lost through every available land being developed with the maximum number of dwellings possible.

All new developments should in general follow the existing architectural styles in the village and the use of unsympathetic designs and materials is to be discouraged.

In the design of new housing regard should be taken of the style of surrounding properties, local materials. New properties should not "close in" existing properties to maximise the number on a site. All three villages have a pleasant open feel and it is vital this feeling is retained even when new developments takes place.

Local building characteristics such as slate roofs, rendered walls, stone mullion windows, stone quoins and built chimney stacks all typify the buildings in the three villages and regard should be taken of this by new developers.



All new dwellings should incorporate parking within the curtilage, if possible out of sight from the front road.

There is also concern that the rate at which new dwellings are being built is not allowing the villages to grow as communities and the extra housing also places a strain on roads, verges, hedges and trees. In particular the roads through Tallentire have nearly all been disturbed frequently in recent years and are now in need of total reconstruction.

1. No extensions to the existing village development boundaries in all three villages is appropriate.
2. Further estates of uniform standard housing are not considered appropriate for Bridekirk Parish.
3. New landscaping should blend in with the surrounding landscape.
4. Existing building lines should not be altered without due consideration of the resulting spatial effect.
5. Old plot shapes should be retained unless there are good reasons for change.
6. New housing should have regard to local vernacular style and local characteristic features with local materials incorporated wherever possible.
7. Appropriate traditional buildings should be restored rather than demolished.
8. When undertaking alterations, owners should seek to preserve local features whenever possible.
9. Garden boundaries should be in local materials and the use of inappropriate hedging is to be discouraged.
10. Garages should be unobtrusive, set back and behind the house if possible.



Employment 1

Many residents have chosen to live in the Parish because it offers an attractive and peaceful place to live within easy commuting distance from West Cumbria, Sellafield, Hensingham, Cockermouth and even Carlisle.

Within the Parish, agriculture provides a mainstay of local employment and the development of the Dovenby Hall Site in recent years has brought a substantial number of new jobs into the Parish.

Within the survey of residents there was support for more local employment to be introduced into the village and some 60% thought small workshops or craft enterprises would be useful provided they were properly sited and did not cause nuisance to nearby residential housing.

With modern technology, including broadband becoming more available, the opportunities for the promotion of at-home working will become more and more important, linked to the provision of education and technological facilities, enabling local people to have the expertise to take advantage of these opportunities. To this end, the provision of a Village Hall as a Community Facility with IT facilities would be extremely useful.

The Council would therefore wish to support the employment of residents within the parish and opportunities to increase tele-working and the necessary IT training, so that people can work from home.

The reasons for supporting such a policy are:

- *Reduction in journeys on local roads.*
- *Narrow parish roads unsuitable for large numbers of vehicles.*
- *Sustainability - less reliance on fossil fuels.*
- *Reduction in vehicles produces roads that are safer for walkers and road users.*

A facility to use a computer and receive some tuition at some point within the Community could also be useful to enable vocational qualifications to be gained particularly if adult education classes could be arranged.



Employment 2

Dovenby Hall Estate

The Dovenby Hall Estate with its present commercial activities and future potential is the major employer in the Parish and this is likely to increase in the future. It was perhaps inevitable that when the former hospital site was sold there would be concerns on the part of Dovenby residents and the Estate owners have sought to try and minimise and noise or disruption through their activities. Of course not everything can be done at once as the main company on the site M-Sport are governed by the World Rally Car season which means the principals are often abroad at these times and delays to completing some works have in recent months cause some anxiety to residents.

However, It has been noticeable the residents survey of the Parish and especially from Dovenby Village that residents have taken a balanced and serious view of the development of the Dovenby Hall Site and wish to work with the company to ensure the best for each other. Some residents of Dovenby have strongly expressed their view that the former entrance within Dovenby Village should not be used as an entrance/exit for in future and that the entrance should be blocked off as originally agreed between the Company and Allerdale Borough Council.

The Parish Council have since received proposals for this entrance which will be considered by the Borough Council and it is now felt this problem will soon be resolved. The Parish Council are grateful to Mr Wilson for his co-operation.

Apart from that issue, there are no major concerns about the activities on the site although residents will naturally wish to be considered about future development in order they can be assured their right to enjoy their current peaceful environment continues. Obviously any new use which cause noise, dust, pollution or nuisance would be opposed but the Parish Council in general welcome a the development of this Estate as a contributor to the economy of the Parish and Borough.

It is suggested that regular Meetings between the Parish Council and representatives of the Company might prevent problems of communication occurring in the future

Recommendations/Actions

- The Parish Council will support local small scale businesses in the Parish
- Home working will be supported where appropriate
- The Parish Council will support an extension of IT facilities within the Parish.
- The Parish Council will support employment opportunities on the Dovenby Hall Estate compatible with the needs of Dovenby residents to retain their quality of life.

Highways and Traffic



Background

In common with the rest of the county Bridekirk Parish is interlaced with many miles of narrow winding roads. Many of these roads are more suited to traffic of a bygone age and with vehicles becoming larger and faster traffic problems are a real concern within the Parish.

The survey revealed that the majority of households rely on the car for transport. However, this very reliance on the car is producing more and more problems. In the survey views about parking, traffic and highways problems were very dominant and it is clear residents have a number of serious concerns which need to be considered.

Perhaps the major concern is that of vehicles speeding along the narrow roads in the Parish and through Bridekirk and Tallentire. This problem is often increased when drivers back on to these roads from their properties.



Within Bridekirk, 68% of respondents felt that traffic speeds were too high in the village and in Tallentire this figure rose to 88% with many residents claiming the one-way system was dangerous. Opinion about traffic calming measures was divided but a significant percentage of those who replied thought some measures should be put in place.

In Bridekirk, concern was expressed about the junctions within the village in respect of signs, road markings and visibility.

The one way system in Tallentire was identified by over 50% of those who replied as being dangerous, badly signed and with traffic travelling too fast and with the increase in young children in the village this poses a real concern to residents.



The increasing number of Heavy Goods Vehicles using the Parish as a cross road was also identified by several people who pointed out the Parish Roads and in particular the verges could not cope with these vehicles passing each other or cutting corners. The Parish Council believe more should be done to divert these vehicles to more suitable routes.

A further concern was that some roads were now prone to flooding due to the lack of attention to roadside ditches and gutters and poor visibility on some bends due to verges and hedges not being kept properly trimmed.

Highways and Traffic

In Tallentire, 40% thought that the roads throughout the village needed repair and re-instatement and repair following building operations which had been undertaken in the village which necessitated the roads being dug up. There was also substantial concern that the verges in Tallentire had been seriously damaged by these operations.

The Trunk Road

In Dovenby, virtually all the residents had concerns about the day to day problems of using the crossroads on the Trunk Road which is the entrance to the village.

Despite the recent road works, residents still feel traffic approaches these crossroads from the Toll Bar direction at too fast a speed which causes problems for residents leaving the village. Speed in general on the Trunk Road is too fast causing dangers for youngsters crossing to catch the school bus to Cockermouth and indiscriminate parking at the entrance to the Village causes difficulties to drivers.

It is clear that it is the view of residents that the crossroads need a radical re-design with a suitable "lay-by" area for a bus stop and shelter and to act as a dropping off/pick up point for children. Such proposal should also include better signing, lighting and parking restrictions at the village entrance. The residents of Dovenby also believe a cycle track to Cockermouth would be beneficial and increase safety for people wish to cycle or walk to Cockermouth

Suggestions for improvement include

- Better signing to slow traffic approaching the crossroads from the Toll Bar direction
- Traffic Bollards or Traffic Islands at each end of the new entrance to Dovenby Hall estate to prevent overtaking on the filter spaces
- Redesign of crossroads including suitable area for bus stop to Cockermouth with room for Bus Shelter.
- Additional Street Light at Rosehill
- Cycle Track to Cockermouth

Residential Parking

The survey also should overwhelming support for the view that all new dwellings should have parking for vehicles within the curtilage of the dwelling to reduce street parking to a minimum.

Recommendations/Actions

- The Parish Council believe a full traffic survey and assessment should be undertaken within the Parish by the highways department to assess the scale of works necessary to improve the problems identified in this plan including:-

Traffic Speeds within each village

The one way system in Tallentire

The use of minor routes in the Parish by HGV's as shortcuts

Measures to improve safety around the entrance to Dovenby Village

Measures to reduce speed on the trunk Road

The improvement of road condition in Tallentire

A better bus stop with shelter at the Dovenby to Cockermouth stop.

Better programme for keeping vital gutters and ditches in working order.

A cycle track to Cockermouth from Dovenby

Community Services 1

The Parish Survey has highlighted many community issues. For many we would look to higher authorities to assist or remedy, but for some the solution is within the parish community.

Bridekirk Primary School



The Parish continues to support the provision of the primary school within the parish and would support further development of the site for community purposes. This reflects views expressed in the Parish Survey. It is clearly impractical in a small rural community to have a building for every purpose, therefore in order to provide as wide a range of facilities as possible the development of multi-purpose facilities is seen as important.

Within the survey there was strong support (66%) for a Community Centre to be built next to the school and if possible available for school use.

The Parish fully supports the retention of the services it already has and feels that the larger Councils are unjustified in discriminating against rural areas by the withdrawal of limited facilities in such areas.



Public House and Post Office.

The Parish Council believe the role of the Bush Inn in providing post office facilities within the village is important and should be supported. The Council would also support this business if it felt able to extend its service to act as a "corner shop".

Play Area (Tallentire)

In Tallentire there was support for a play area with play equipment to be provided in the village. Since the rapid growth of this village there are more children living in the Village but less open space for them to use. A designated parish open space with play equipment would be beneficial to this village

Communal Open Spaces

Both Dovenby and Bridekirk questionnaires contained suggestions that these villages needed some communal open space which could be used by young people in the villages or by all to hold events etc

Bus Shelter—Bridekirk & Tallentire

Within the survey it was suggested that bus shelters would be useful in these villages to enable people to wait for the bus in dry conditions. It was also stressed that any shelter should be of transparent material with an open space at the base.

Community Services 2



Bus Stop - Dovenby Crossroads

A number of respondents were concerned that the Bus Stop to Cockermouth at the Dovenby Crossroads needed improving to provide more safety and preferably this should be coupled with works to provide a dropping off/picking up point for children. The land owner has agreed to consider selling some land behind this bus stop which might enable a safer standing area and a bus shelter to be provided.

Water Supply around Tallentire Hall

2 respondents expressed concern about the water supply pressure around the entrance to Tallentire Hall. This matter will be raised with United Utilities.

Gas Main - Tallentire

Of the 72 replies received in Tallentire, 39 (54%) expressed interest in changing from their present fuel to using mains gas if a supply was brought into the village. Although not directly asked in the questionnaire, a number of residents of Bridekirk also felt a gas supply would be advantageous for their village.

Whether such a number would be sufficient for the cost of installing a supply is not known but the Parish Council take up this matter with the Gas Authorities as part of the action plan contained in this document.

Public seats

The Parish Council consider its public seats as an important part of the parish landscape which enables residents to meet and enjoy the rural atmosphere of the Parish. The Council will continue to maintain these seats.

Recycling

A clear desire to have recycling facilities in the parish was indicated in the survey. In all 60 % of those who responded supported more recycling. The Parish Council will support any actions that increase the amount of waste that is recycled and will hold discussions with the Borough Council in respect of this.

Recommendations/Actions

- The Parish Council will support Bridekirk Primary School and in particular will support any measures to increase community involvement of the school within the Parish
- The Parish Council will continue to support the Bush Inn as a community post office and Public House
- The Parish Council will seek to support the provision of recreational land within each village if suitable sites can be identified.
- The Parish Council will discuss the provision of bus shelters in Tallentire and Bridekirk with the appropriate authorities.
- The Parish Council will seek to obtain land at Dovenby Crossroads to create a better waiting area and/or site for Bus Shelter at Dovenby /Crossroads
- The Parish Council will take up the question of poor water supply in Tallentire with United utilities.
- The Parish Council will seek discussions with British Gas to determine whether the provision of a mains gas supply in Tallentire and Bridekirk is a feasible proposition.
- The Council will seek discussions with Allerdale Borough Council to determine whether recycling opportunities in the Parish can be increased.

The views of residents in respect of the Parish Environment have been mainly set out in the section dealing with Parish Design Guidelines. However, there were a number of environmental issues raised within the survey which the Parish Council believe should be recorded in the Parish Plan.

Mature Trees

The Parish Council believe the abundance of mature trees within the natural environment of the Parish provides the setting for the three settlements. The Council feel all mature trees which are in good health within development boundaries should be protected with no felling or lopping without good reason

Hedgerows.

There are some very old hedgerows in the Parish which act as a reservoir for wildlife and interesting plants. These should be preserved and all future development should take into account the need to preserve these valuable features.

Verges

The verges throughout the Parish are important features giving the Parish its open character. However, more and more these verges are being damaged by heavy goods vehicles who can not pass on many of the Parish roads without mounting the verge. The use of the Parish as a cross route for such vehicles needs more control and those roads which are to be used should be signed and made suitable for the purpose.

Overhead Cables

Residents from all three villages expressed their views that overhead cables were unsightly and should be buried. Whilst accepting it would be difficult to achieve this immediately, the Parish Council will seek to ensure all future new services and existing services requiring will be laid below ground

Dog Fouling

Within the survey, a number of respondents expressed concern about dog fouling within the villages. In particular the main street through Tallentire was considered to be a problem. The enforcement of measures to require owners who fail to clean up after the animals can only take place where there is a speed limit in force or on privately owned land.

However, the Parish Council will seek the advice of the Borough Council environment wardens and promote an education campaign to try and reduce this problem to a minimum

Paved Footpaths

There was some suggestion that a paved footpath to parts of the one way system in Tallentire would improve road safety. Some residents of Bridekirk also suggested a paved footway in the centre of the village might be beneficial.

Recommendations/Actions

- The Council will seek to preserve mature trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the Parish
- The Parish Council will seek measures to regulate Heavy Goods Vehicles using unsuitable roads through the Parish as shortcuts and seek to prevent further damage to verges within the Parish
- The Parish Council will work with the Borough Council Environmental Wardens to educate dog owners about the risk to health posed by indiscriminate dog fouling in publicly used areas of the Parish.
- Within the Traffic Assessment requested elsewhere in this plan, the Parish Council will seek to improve road safety by stretches of paved footways in sensitive areas.

Parish Safety 1

It is the duty of all Parish Councils to review crime prevention and Parish safety issues in their areas under the Crime and Disorder Act. In Bridekirk Parish residents have stated almost unanimously they feel secure in the homes and that there is little anti-social behaviour in the Parish. This is seen as a compliment to the close community spirit in the Parish where neighbours go out of their way to watch out for each others properties and children respect their environment when playing out of doors.

As part of a new initiative, Central Government are keen to ensure local police forces and the communities work more together to try and reduce crime especially in rural areas.

A fear of crime, whether real or perceived is the single largest concern of many people living in isolated properties in rural areas and Police resources in a large County such as Cumbria are often stretched to the limit and whilst the Police do all they can to assist Parishes, at the end of the day residents must take what steps they can to reduce crime and improve safety in the area.

In Bridekirk Parish Villages there are already active neighbourhood watch schemes supported by the Community and the Parish Council have a good relationship with the local police who often attend Meetings or discuss safety issues with the Parish Council.

Nevertheless, rural crime is a major concern and despite the best efforts of everyone, constant vigilance is needed to retain a safe environment and reduce incidents as much as possible.

In this Parish Plan, the Parish Council have considered ways in which the safety of residents in the Parish can be improved and to assist in this the local Police Officers have been consulted as any initiative would need their support in order to succeed.

The consensus of opinion is that if the fear of crime and actual crime problems are to be reduced in the Parish more practical measures in respect of property protection, education, personal safety and working together with the Police are necessary.

Village Safety Group

The thought of yet another group in the Parish may be off putting for some people but it has been proved that if an active Village Safety group can be established and have the benefit of Police Support and advice real progress can be made in respect of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in rural Parishes.

A group can be given statistics of incidents relating to their Parish and from this information identify areas of concern and obtain advice about how to improve a problem. Often, simple measures to improve problem's may be erecting a fence, improving lighting or even taking out bushes where criminals could hide.

For householders, crime prevention officers can undertake surveys and inform individual householders of crime prevention measures available for their properties.

Cumbria Police have indicated they would support any Parish which formed such a group and would provide a liaison officer to work with any Village Safety group.

In reality, crime prevention will have to come from the residents of the Parish with involvement of the Police and the recommendation of the Parish Council is that a Village Safety Group is formed to work with the Police to improve Village safety in the Parish.

Parish Safety 2

This group would be formed from the community but could receive initial financial support from the Parish Council towards administration costs until it became established.

Neighbourhood Watch

The formation of a Village Safety group as outlined above would in not in any way impinge on the work of the present neighbourhood watch scheme operating in the village which has been in operation for several years.

However, the Parish Council believe that whilst the two schemes would complement each other and work closely together, discussions should be held to determine whether one Committee fulfilling both roles might be more advantageous and that a stronger presence increasing awareness and responsibilities of residents in this field could only be to the benefit of everyone living in the Parish.

Road safety

During the consultation process several areas of concern were raised by residents in respect of road safety issues.

- A number of residents felt that hedges and verges were not trimmed soon enough in the summer months which reduced visibility for drivers on some of the narrow lanes in the Parish.
- There was concern about traffic congestion at dropping off and collecting times outside the school. Some parents felt better parking arrangements should be provided for this purpose.
- The Crossroads at the entrance to Dovenby Village were a concern to many and this problem is described in detail in the section relating to Highways and Traffic.
- A number of residents were concerned about HGV's using the Parish as a cross route and felt the roads involved were not suitable for this type of use.



Parish Newsletter

Communication within the Parish is quite important in Bridekirk as the Parish Area is quite large and the three villages are separated by some distance. There is nevertheless a close feeling of community in the Parish and the regular publication of a Parish Newsletter is seen as an important facility which the Parish Council should seek to provide. The excellent response to the Plan Questionnaire proved that the residents of the Parish are interested in their community and given the opportunity many would get involved and a Parish Newspaper is perhaps the way to publicise the work of the Parish Council and other local groups in the future.

Parish Notice boards

Parish Notice boards correctly positioned are an important facility in a Parish such as Bridekirk where the properties are spread over a large area. There are at present one Notice Board in each Parish which are used regularly by all the community to publicise events etc. There was a suggestion that a notice board should be placed outside the Bush Inn but the present board in Tallentire alongside the post box is considered very convenient and is much used.

Parish Web Site

A Parish Web Site was one of the suggestions received during the plan consultation and there is no doubt such a site would be useful in distributing information around the Parish. However, the work involved in initiating a site and then maintaining up to date information is quite considerable and such a project would need careful consideration by the Council before a decision was made.

Village Maps

The increase in size of the three villages and the needs of groups like the 1st responders to be able to find individual properties quickly has prompted some respondents to suggest Village Maps should be produced. Such a map would identify all address within each village and perhaps incorporate the names of lanes and roads used by local people on a day to day basis. It is also considered important to encourage all householders to place the name or number of their home in a conspicuous place so that statutory and emergency services can identify properties quickly and easily if the need arises. This project will be considered by the Parish Council as part of the action plan in this document

All weather Maps

A suggestion to produce all weather maps of the footpath network to be positioned at strategic points on the network is included in the footpaths section and is included here to complete the communications issues raised.

Recommendations/Actions

- The Parish Council will aim to produce a Parish Newsletter regularly for all homes in the Parish
- The Parish Council will maintain a Notice Board in each Village also available to other local groups to publicise their own activities.
- The Parish Council seek funding for the provision of Village Maps identifying all homes and roads in the Parish together with a campaign to encourage owners to clearly identify their properties.
- The Council will also seek to produce all weather footpath maps for use in the footpath network.

Public Rights of Way

The Footpath Network

The natural setting of Bridekirk Parish is both varied and beautiful. A limestone ridge sweeps down from the vantage point of Tallentire Hill, (The public bridleway reaches 220m), encircled by farmland dotted with woods and trees, to the steep valley of the River Derwent which makes part of the Parish boundary as the river flows to Cockermouth.

From every footpath in the Parish there are delectable long views with intriguing glimpses of mountain and sea, while the immediate surroundings offer closer encounters with trees, hedgerow habitat, birds and animals.

Tallentire is centrally placed, with the network of paths radiating out, not only to Bridekirk and Dovenby but beyond the Parish to other settlements. Short walks are plentiful in each of the three villages and there are many ways of combining these into longer walks within and around the Parish.

From the consultation included in the Questionnaires, over 55% indicated they were satisfied with the Public Footpaths in the Parish although there were some comments about some paths being blocked off. Only 28% felt there was a need for additional paths but no specific suggestions were included to where they might be formed. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the condition and access to public rights of way within the Parish and welcome the involvement of the Countryside Agency in respect of new legislation affecting public footpaths.

Footpath leaflet

The network of footpaths in the Parish is beautifully described in a Guide to Rights of Way and Permissive paths produced for the Parish Council by Margaret and John Thorpe of Tallentire. This guide with its accompanying map describes each route in details and is an invaluable aid to walkers particularly for those who are visiting the area.

The Parish Council provide a copy of this leaflet to all residents in the Parish and copies are available to anyone contacting the Parish Clerk. Copies are also available at the Bush Inn and Ship Inn

All weather maps

The Parish Council have recommended that the suggestion to provide all-weather maps at strategic points within the Footpath network to assist visitors and residents who wish to enjoy the various walks be adopted.

The Roman Road

Part of the Roman Road from Papcastle to Maryport runs to the west of the Parish Boundary. For many years, there has been interest in re-opening this route for walkers and the Parish Council will support any initiatives of this nature.

Broughton Parish Council have already indicated they would support this concept and other Parish Councils in the area will be contacted for their views in due course.

Recommendations/Actions

- The Parish Council will regularly monitor the condition and availability of access to all Public Rights of Way within the Parish.
- The leaflet describing the footpath network will be provided to all new properties in the Parish and available to other residents who request it.
- All weather maps as recommended in Media & Communications will be considered.
- The Council will work with other Parish Council's, The Countryside Agency and the County Council in respect of the route of the Roman Roads from Papcastle to Maryport. To determine whether this feature can be re-opened.

Youth Services

As part of the consultations in respect of the Parish Plan, the Parish Council took the opportunity to discuss services for young people in the parish. For many young people living in a rural area, this means that they are dependent on parents or friends for transport to amenities in nearby towns although Bridekirk is closer to Cockermouth than many rural Parishes in Cumbria.

In considering its policy towards young people, therefore, the Parish Council decided to set out its aims so that for the future there are clear guidelines for the Parish Council and the young people themselves.

These aims can be summarised as follows

- To encourage the provision better facilities within the parish for young people - if a suitable opportunity occurs
- To ease access to facilities targeted at young people.
- To seek communal recreational areas for younger children in the three villages

Bridekirk Primary School

It had already been established from the Plan Questionnaires that there was a demand for communal play areas in all three villages. To explore this further and involve the pupils in the plan process, the staff of the School used the process to discuss the parish needs with the children and each young person in the school completed a short questionnaire giving their views about what was needed in the Parish for them

From the results of the questionnaires given by the children from the school who live in the Parish the need for somewhere to play in their own village such as a play area or playing field was the most frequently requested facility.

Virtually every young person wanted a safe place to play with the boys wanting a football pitch and the younger children some play equipment. It was quite significant that most children attend clubs or leisure activities outside the Parish and perhaps some thought could be given to using the school for after hours activities for the children perhaps with parents assisting in the organisation. Obviously the close proximity of Cockermouth helps but some activities in the village would help raise community awareness and bring children from different villages closer together.

The importance of Bridekirk Dovenby School to the Parish can not be stressed too highly, this facility which is the only public building in the Parish other than the Church is already used by groups such as the Parish Council for meetings but could be used more if closer ties with the Community in general could be established and the necessary funding obtained.

Recommendations for action

- The Parish Council believe the decision to establish a Community Facility Committee to look into the role of the school as a possible community facility is to be supported and will receive the support of all residents of the Parish.
- The Parish Council will seek to provide a communal play areas if suitable sites can be identified and purchased.
- The Parish Council will support efforts by groups to increase leisure opportunities in the parish for young people

A Community Hall ?

The concept of building a village hall in the Parish was originally started in 1960 when a number of Parish Councillors and local people formed a village hall committee to raise funding for a hall if a site could be identified. This Committee worked extremely hard holding, sports days, raffles, whist drives etc. but it became obvious after a few years that the costs involved far exceeded the funding they were likely to achieve. This was of course in the days before major funding became available through the National Lottery or major charities such as Children in Need.

When this Committee ceased being active, the funds were placed in a separate account held by the Parish Hall Committee and over the years these have attracted interest and at one time a block of shares when the Building Society where they are held became a Bank.

Approx four years ago, the Parish Hall Committee was revived to explore whether the situation had changed and whether there was a possibility that a hall could be built. It was felt that if a hall was not practical the funds might be better used supporting joint community activities at the School.

Once the Parish Council had agreed to produce a Parish Plan it seemed pertinent to the Village Hall Committee that this was a good opportunity to explore the need for a Community Hall in the Parish by including a section in the questionnaire on this topic. This was done and of those who replied 66% felt a hall was needed in the Parish and the majority of those indicated the School as the most suitable site.

However, mindful of the demands of major funding organisations, the next step by the Committee was to arrange a public Meeting in the School to determine whether there was sufficient support forthcoming to form a new Community Hall Committee to take forward the work of the existing Village Hall Committee in the light of the results of the Parish Questionnaire.

The Public Meeting was attended by approx. 20 people from across the Parish and there was a good discussion about the various options for a community hall in the Parish. The options discussed were to try and raise funding for a new hall adjoining the school, to discuss with the School Governors whether more use could be made of the School Hall perhaps with financial contributions from the Community and a further option suggested was that perhaps some form of annex available for both the school and the wider community could be built to improve facilities in the Parish.

The need for more community involvement in the affairs of the Parish was very evident in the discussion underlining the feeling from the village questionnaires that people had a wish to be involved in the opportunity occurred.

The outcome of the Meeting was to form a new Community Facilities Committee for the Parish who would take forward the ideas of the former Village Hall Committee and discuss with the School the possibility of working with the school for better community facilities. The Committee committed themselves to consulting on these issues with the Parish.

Recommendation/action

The Parish Council believe this course of action to be the most suitable and will support this Committee whenever the opportunity arises.

Summary of the issues raised through the consultation process

During the plan preparation and consultation process a number of issues were considered and the action plan which follows seeks to identify ways of dealing with issues in future years to the benefit of the Community. A summary of the main issues is listed below.

- The consultation process confirmed there is a strong feeling in each of the three villages that the housing development boundaries in the Allerdale Local Plan should remain as they are at present and not be extended in future Allerdale Local Plans
- The one way system in Tallentire is a major concern to the residents of the village who feel it is unsafe, badly signed and in poor condition.
- The residents of Dovenby are concerned about traffic speeding through the crossroads at the entrance to Dovenby from the Toll Bar direction and indiscriminate parking at the village entrance by customers of the Ship Inn.
- Traffic concerns in respect of speeding along the narrow roads in the Parish; HGV's using the roads as short cuts; damage to verges; were major complaints of many who replied to the questionnaire.
- The residents of Dovenby are keen to see steps taken to preserve the condition of the wall and stream through the village together with the troughs and cattle watering incline.
- The Bus Stop to Cockermouth at Dovenby is considered dangerous on the east side of the road and residents are in favour of land at the rear of stop being purchased to improve safety and shelter for users
- There is strong support for the Parish Council's efforts to publicise and maintain Public Rights of Way.
- The residents of Bridekirk would like to see a Bus Shelter appropriately sited in Bridekirk Village.
- The residents of Tallentire would like to see a Bus Shelter appropriately sited in Tallentire Village
- The Parish Council support the Bush Inn Tallentire in providing Post Office Services within Tallentire Village
- The Parish Council will support any initiative to provide better Parking facilities for parents at Bridekirk Primary School.
- There is a desire in the Parish for a Community Hall to be available for use by residents whether this is provided by using the School Hall or by erection of a purpose built multi-purpose Hall in the Parish. A Community Facilities Committee has been formed to investigate these concepts further.

Parish Design Guidelines

Village Character

- The natural and historic built environment should be respected in all developments in order to retain the rural character of all three villages.
- Developments and household extensions should be designed to conserve and where possible enhance local rural character by attention to local detail and in character with neighbouring properties
- Developments should be sensitive to the natural and built environment and where appropriate reflect the historic environment by the use of local vernacular design.
- The natural and historic built environment should be respected in all developments in order to retain links to the past
- The rate of any new development should be slow enough to enable newcomers to integrate into the community without damage to its character.
- The density of new built development in any village should take account of the immediate surrounding area.

Parish Design Guidelines

Landscape and Village Setting

- Development on the fields surrounding the villages is unnecessary as there has been excessive growth in the past 10 years and all local need is satisfied.
- Unsightly buildings, masts and other constructions should not intrude on the skyline.
- Existing field boundaries should be retained and all remaining ridge and furrow and historic agricultural landscape should be conserved.

Parish Design Guidelines

The Natural Environment

- Wildlife habitats should be protected and enhanced. This includes existing hedges, mature trees, wild areas and water features. Woodlands needing to be felled must be replaced with an appropriate planting programme.
- The stream through Dovenby is of particular importance adding to the natural features of this village.
- New planting should be of indigenous broad-leaved species and owners should be encouraged to make their gardens wildlife friendly
- New developments should seek to incorporate features to encourage wildlife such as bat and bird boxes and ponds.
- The overuse of herbicides and pesticides is to be avoided.
- Conservation of local ponds and water courses is encouraged.

Parish Design Guidelines

Conservation and Protection of local Features

- The Parish Council will seek to protect local and natural features when considering future applications for new developments in the Parish

Action Plan

Community Services (Continued)

- The Parish Council will discuss the provision of bus shelters in Tallentire and Bridekirk with the appropriate authorities.
- The Parish Council will seek to obtain land at Dovenby Crossroads to create a better waiting area and/or site for Bus Shelter at Dovenby /Crossroads
- The Parish Council will take up the question of poor water supply in Tallentire with United utilities.
- The Parish Council will seek discussions with British Gas to determine whether the provision of a mains gas supply in Tallentire and Bridekirk is a feasible proposition.
- The Council will seek discussions with Allerdale Borough Council to determine whether recycling opportunities in the Parish can be increased

Environment

- The Council will seek to preserve mature trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the Parish
- The Parish Council will seek measures to regulate Heavy Goods Vehicles using unsuitable roads through the Parish as shortcuts and seek to prevent further damage to verges within the Parish
- The Parish Council will work with the Borough Council Environmental Wardens to educate dog owners about the risk to health posed by indiscriminate dog fouling in publicly used areas of the Parish.
- Within the Traffic Assessment requested elsewhere in this plan, the Parish Council will seek to improve road safety by stretches of paved footways in sensitive areas.

Media & Communications

- The Parish Council will aim to produce a Parish Newsletter on a regularly for all homes in the Parish
- The Parish Council will maintain a Notice Board in each Village also available to other local groups to publicise their own activities.
- The Parish Council seek funding for the provision of Village Maps identifying all homes and roads in the Parish together with a campaign to encourage owners to clearly identify their properties.
- The Council will also seek to produce all weather footpath maps for use in the footpath network.

Public Rights of Way

- The Parish Council will regularly monitor the condition and availability of access to all Public Rights of Way within the Parish.
- The leaflet describing the footpath network will be provided to all new properties in the Parish and available to other residents who request it.
- All weather maps as recommended in Media & Communications will be considered.
- The Council will work with other Parish Council's, The Countryside Agency and the County Council in respect of the route of the Roman Roads from Papcastle to Maryport. To determine whether this feature can be re-opened.

Youth Services/Community Hall

- The Parish Council believe the decision to establish a Community Facility Committee to look into the role of the school or other building as a possible community facility is to be supported and will receive the support of all residents of the Parish.
- The Parish Council will seek to provide a communal play areas if suitable sites can be identified and purchased.
- The Parish Council will support efforts by groups to increase leisure opportunities in the parish for young people

Parish Design Guidelines

Recommendations—The Built Environment

- No extensions to the existing village development boundaries in all three villages is appropriate.
- Further estates of uniform standard housing are not considered appropriate for Bridekirk Parish.
- New Landscaping should blend in with the surrounding landscape.
- Existing building lines should not be altered without due consideration of the resulting spatial effect.
- Old plot shapes should be retained unless there are good reasons to change.
- New housing should have regard to local vernacular style and local characteristic features with local materials incorporated wherever possible.
- Appropriate traditional buildings should be restored rather than demolished.
- When undertaking alterations owners should seek to preserve local features whenever possible.
- Garden boundaries should be in local materials and the use of inappropriate hedging is to be discouraged.
- Garages should be unobtrusive, set back and behind the house if possible.

Employment

- The Parish Council will support local small scale businesses in the Parish.
- Home working will be supported where appropriate.
- The Parish Council will support an extension of IT facilities within the Parish.
- The Parish Council will support employment opportunities on the Dovenby Hall Estate compatible with the needs of Dovenby residents to retain their quality of life.

Highways and Traffic

- The Parish Council believe a full traffic survey and assessment should be undertaken within the Parish by the highways department to assess the scale of works necessary to improve the problems identified in this plan including:-

Traffic Speeds within each village

The one way system in Tallentire

The use of minor routes in the Parish by HGV's as shortcuts

Measures to improve safety around the entrance to Dovenby Village

Measures to reduce speed on the trunk Road

The improvement of road condition in Tallentire

Better programme for keeping vital gutters and ditches in working order.

Community Services

- The Parish Council will support Bridekirk Primary School and in particular will support any measures to increase community involvement of the school within the Parish
- The Parish Council will continue to support the Bush Inn as a community post office and Public House
- The Parish Council will seek to support the provision of recreational land within each village if suitable sites can be identified.

Acknowledgements

The Countryside Agency

Mrs Debbie Keir, Voluntary Action Cumbria

Mrs J Merris, Papcastle

Mr Malcolm Wilson, Dovenby Hall Estate

Mr R Evans, Allerdale Borough Council

Miss H Tinnion, Bridekirk Primary School

Mr John Thorpe



Bridekirk Village





