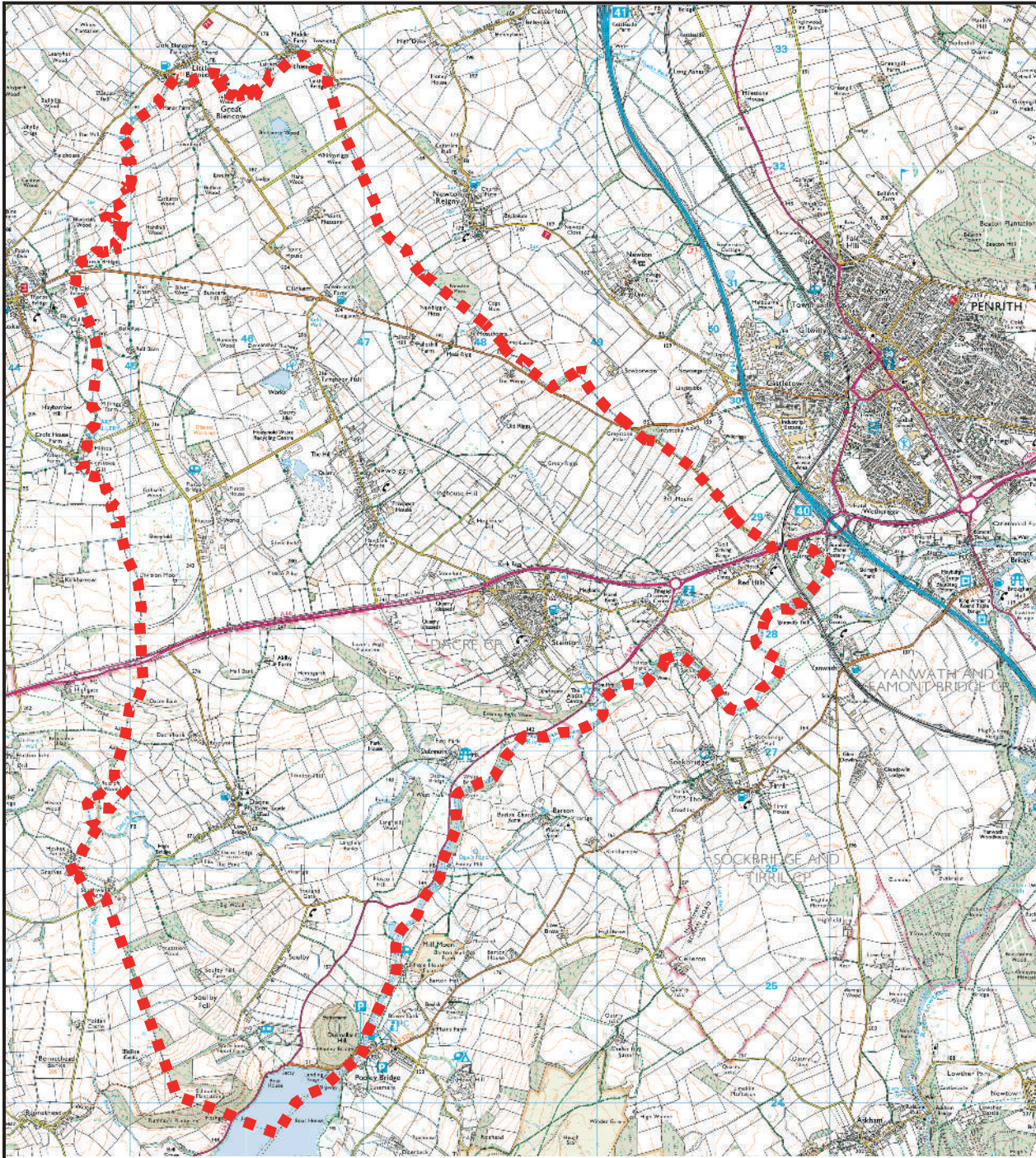




DACRE PARISH PLAN

2014 – 2019



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April 2014

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assistance of ACT (Action with Communities in Cum-
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Front cover: Stainton Village Green

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CONTEXT

Dacre Parish lies due west of Penrith. It is 2967 hectares (7332 acres) in size and has a population density of 0.48/hectare. For comparison, Eden District has 0.24 people/hectare and Cumbria 0.74. 635 households accommodate a population of 1440.

About one-third of the Parish is in the Lake District National Park. The Parish contains part of Ullswater and the Dalemain and Dacre Estates and rises to over 300m (984 feet) near Flusco Pike. It is predominantly rural. Newbiggin and the adjacent countryside is classified as a Landscape of County Importance. The Parish also contains several County Nature Sites.

There are five significant settlements, in order of size, Stainton, Newbiggin, Dacre, Great Blencowe (Little Blencowe, part of the same community, is in Grey-stoke Parish) and Soulby. Outside Stainton, there has been little change in the last 150 years. Most of the houses are 17th and 18th century, and are often listed buildings. In contrast, Stainton has expanded considerably from its original 18th century nucleus.

The only retail services are situated in the south-east corner of the parish, in Stainton and at Rheged Visitor Centre. Stainton also hosts the only Post Office and the Kings Arms public house. Both Newbiggin and Dacre have pubs. All the settlements with the exception of Soulby have active village halls. The Parish Church is in Dacre. Stainton has a Methodist Chapel.

The majority of employment opportunities are in the south-east corner of the

parish. The North Lakes industrial estate is west of Newbiggin, and there is also a significant industrial zone at the north end of the village, including a haulage company. A large landfill site and recycling centre lie west of Newbiggin. At Redhills there is a smaller business park and rural enterprise centre. Elsewhere in the parish employment opportunities are almost entirely in farming businesses.

Visitor accommodation is found mainly in the south-east corner, with some bed and-breakfast businesses elsewhere in the Parish. Several caravan and holiday home parks augment the local population significantly during summer months.

Four classified roads run through the Parish. The A66 Trunk Road, the A592, the B5288 and the B5320. Most other roads are typically narrow and winding, and popular with horse-riders and runners. Except for Dacre, all the settlements are subject, at least in part, to a speed limit. A designated cycle-way between Penrith and Keswick runs through the parish and connects with the C2C route. The West Coast Main Line passes through the Parish, as does the now disused Penrith, Cockermouth and Keswick line. Bus routes serve Stainton, and there are limited services to Newbiggin and Blencowe.

There are a scattering of rights-of-way, ranging from footpaths to byways open to all traffic. These are based on historic rural connections rather than on the needs of recreational users.

Stainton has a Recreation Ground and an active Cricket Club. There is a children's

playground in Dacre and a playing area behind Newbiggin Village Hall.



Newbiggin

PREPARATION

The Parish Council first discussed the Parish Plan in early 2011, and it was agreed that the Parish Clerk and Chairman would design a survey to reflect the range of issues which normally engaged the Parish Council. After guidance from the Cumbria Association for Local Councils (CALC) a questionnaire was drawn up to identify public views on six key areas; the environment, roads and transport, the community, communications, housing, and employment. The survey document began by explaining the nature of and need for a Parish Plan. Then followed eight sections which invited a tick-box response, a write-in response, or a combination of both. Space was also identified for free-text comments on issues which were of concern to the respondent, but were not addressed in the survey. The survey ended with an invitation to list two things that the respondent most liked about the parish, and asked what they valued most about living in their locality.

In Spring, 2012 the survey was circulated with the parish newsletter, and a reply-paid envelope was included for its return. Survey forms were also left in all four village halls, and in local pubs and shops. A down-loadable copy was also posted on Newbiggin Village Hall website. The number of households receiving the survey questionnaire is not known, but 178 responses were returned. The majority (68%) were from residents in Stainton, the largest settlement in the Parish.

A three-month period was allowed for survey forms to be returned. The information was tabulated in an Excel spreadsheet, and the advanced features of this software were used to analyse the data.

The results of the survey were published in the Parish Newsletter in Spring 2013 and public meetings held in the four village halls to discuss the results in a question-and answer session. An analysis of the survey and the results are presented in the next section, 'Background.'

During Summer 2013 the Parish Council met in several sessions to discuss and draft a Parish Plan. The draft plan was included in the parish newsletter and available in local retail premises and on the Newbiggin Village Hall website. The draft Plan was accompanied by a form for readers to write a response, and post it in a sealed box in each of the village halls and on local retail premises. In Autumn 2013 open public meetings were held in each of the four village halls to give local residents a chance to air their views, express concerns, or ask questions. Several lively debates took place.

In February 2014 a final version of the draft Plan was circulated to Cumbria County Council, Eden District Council, the Lake District National Park Authority, and the neighbouring Ullswater Parishes Group. Responses from these organisations have been incorporated appropriately.



BACKGROUND

This section presents the results of the 2012 Parish Survey and provides a profile of the residents and where they live. The Parish has a total population of 1440 in 635 households*. The population is slightly older than the average for Cumbria (see figure 1), although the number of households with children parallels Cumbria almost exactly (31.5%; Cumbria 31.9%).

80% of properties are owner-occupied. This is substantially higher than for Cumbria (72.3%). There is also a higher proportion of private rented accommodation (14.2%; Cumbria 11.7%). Forty-five homes are second or holiday homes. The Parish survey showed that 39% of respondents had lived in the parish for twenty years or more. Respondents were also asked if they had connections (relatives, work, etc) with local population centres. Almost half had a connection with Penrith (48%) with other ties to Carlisle (21%), Keswick (10%) and Appleby (5%). These figures indicate the relatively static nature of the population, and strong local ties.

ENVIRONMENT

Asked "What do you appreciate or want to preserve in your locality?" the responses can be summarised as 'A quiet village environment in rural surroundings with some local services and easy access to major transport routes and towns.'

Figure 2 shows the concerns of respondents about different aspects of their environment.

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Only nine of responding households had no access to a car. The proportion of households with two or more cars is considerably larger than Cumbria as a whole (49.9%; Cumbria 28.9%).

One third of households which responded contained a cycle user. Barriers to cycle use were danger from speeding traffic (the A66 specifically) and lack of dedicat-

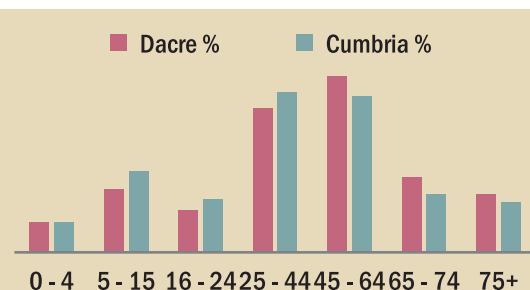
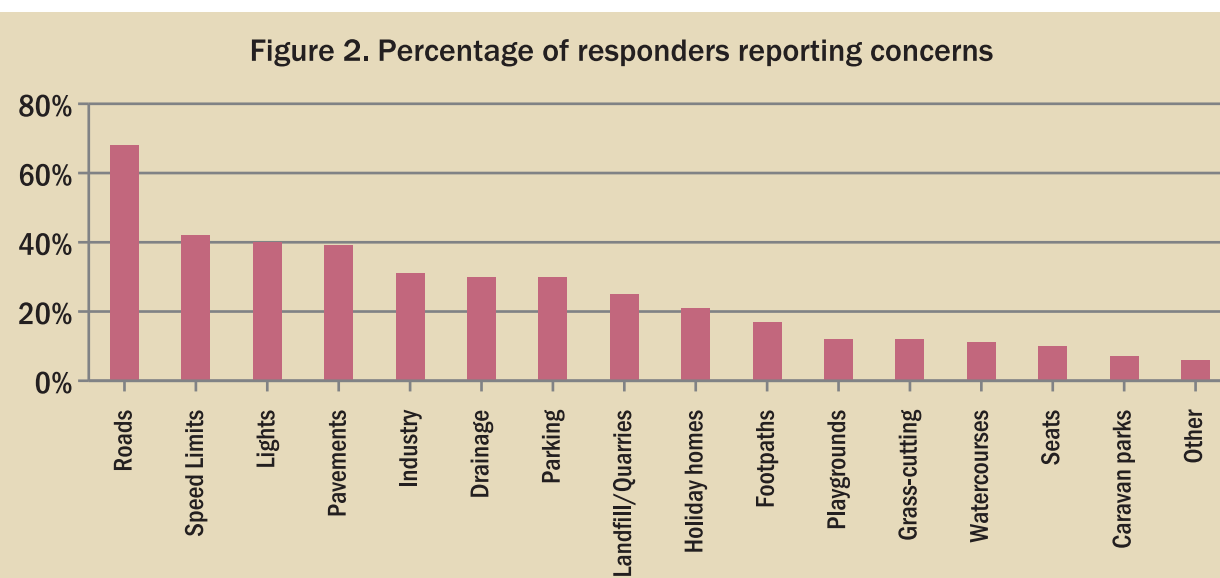


Figure 1. Parish Age Structure



ed cycle routes. The absence of safe cycle and pedestrian routes between Newbiggin and the A66 junction, and between Stainton and Rheged were particularly criticised.

36% of responding households used public transport. Barriers to using public transport were the infrequency of the service, the lack of early morning services, the cost, the lack of a bus shelter, and poor connections with rail services. Respondents from Dacre commented that they lacked any public transport!

A substantial majority of respondents (68%) had concerns about roads and speed limits. The A66 junction with the C3019 between Newbiggin and Stainton was particularly disliked because of the high traffic speeds and the absence of a pedestrian crossing point. Respondents thought that speed limits were too high, or not observed. Newbiggin residents were concerned about excessive heavy good vehicle traffic through the village

and the impact on horse-riders and stock movements. One-third of respondents were concerned about parking, citing obstructions, pavement damage and narrow rural roads as issues.

COMMUNITY

Sixty-seven percent of responders used a village hall. Asked what activities would attract respondents to use the hall more often, the most popular responses were “exercise classes” and “gardening club.” Almost all respondents (91%) used one or more local services. The ten most popular services are shown, in order of popularity, in Table 1.

Asked what was most valued, many respondents mentioned a rural environment, community spirit, family connections, friends, lack of crime, tranquillity and proximity to Penrith and national road and rail links.

COMMUNICATION

99% of respondents felt they were sufficiently informed on local matters. Asked where they found out about local matters, the parish newsletter (94%), the local newspaper (68%), notice boards (52%), and gossip (45%) were the most common sources. Eight percent of respondents used websites.

Seventy-three percent of respondents said they would use a community website set up by the parish council. The commonest reasons for not doing so were ‘no PC,’ ‘no skills,’ or ‘poor Internet.’ Several respondents indicated they were “willing

Local services ranked by popularity

Stainton Post Office	1
Stainton Farm Shop	2
Kings Arms, Stainton	3
Dacre Church	4
Brantwood Hotel	5
Playground	6
Stainton Sports Ground	7
Newbiggin Cafe	8
Stainton Recycling	9
Stainton Chapel	10

Table 1.

to have a go” if there was a class at the Village Hall.

Eighty-eight percent of respondents had Internet access; all but seven had a broadband connection. Reported speeds ranged from 20mbps - 0.17mbps. The median speed for the parish was 1.5mbps.

HOUSING

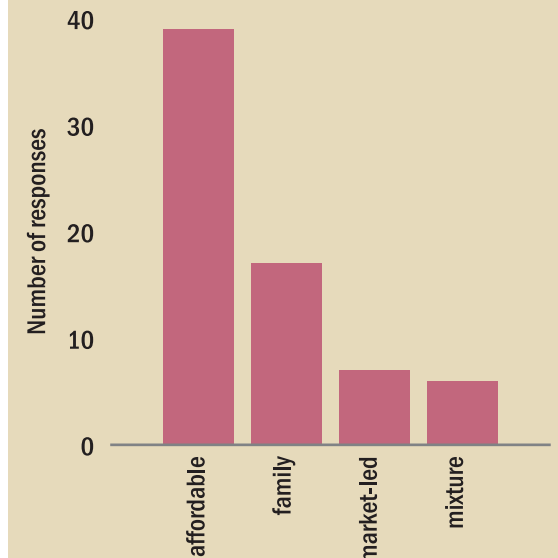
Parishioners were asked their opinion on the provision of housing in the parish. The only settlement with adequate numbers of responders (102) for analysis was Stainton. When asked “Would you like more housing to be provided in the parish?” a majority (54%) said ‘No.’ Respondents who said they would like more housing in the parish were asked to specify the type of housing they preferred. The results for the parish as a whole are shown in Figure 3. When asked if the cost or availability of housing would prevent children settling in the parish, a majority (53% of responders) thought that it would.

EMPLOYMENT

The survey showed an unemployment rate for the Parish of 0.9%. This is in keeping with the 2011 census which gave a rate of 0% Only 17% of employed respondents work in the Parish. The median distance travelled to the place of employment by respondents was 21 miles. The distances travelled ranged from 1 mile to 120 miles. The parish has several large employers, and about 50 smaller businesses, mainly situated in the south-east corner of the Parish. . There are two business parks



Figure 3. Preferred housing



and planning permission exists for a third. Eden District Council planning decisions during the past decade have created the potential for approximately 1500 job opportunities in the parish. Respondents saw the barriers to seeking work or a change of employment as a lack of public transport, low local pay, lack of job opportunities in Cumbria, and poor Broadband.

POLICIES

Following the parish survey and consultation process the Parish Council held several meetings to discuss the findings of the survey and the public meetings. Six policy domains were agreed under the headings of Environment, Roads and Transport, Community, Communications, Housing, and Employment.

The intended outcome of each policy is the production of a positive change in the Parish, as identified as desirable by a majority or a significant minority of parish residents. For each policy a set of actions has been framed. These have been mapped, as far as possible, to District, County and National policies, guidance and recommendations. In the case of the Housing policy domain, the Parish Council have drawn up a set of guidelines (see Appendix) which are intended to assist councillors in making relevant and consistent responses to development proposals in the Parish. These guidelines are again mapped to relevant policies at local or national level.

The action sets, partner organisations, and measures of success are given in the table that accompanies each policy domain. For each action an indication has been given of the organisations that the Parish Council will work with to achieve its policy aims. This list is not exhaustive, as it is acknowledged that future contacts with currently unrecognised organisations may give rise to more or better opportunities.

The Parish Council intend to achieve their policy objectives within the currency of this plan; by 2019. They believe that it is unrealistic to attempt to forecast more specific timescales for each aim, given the modest scale of resources that are available to the Parish.

In the following tables of actions, the figures in brackets refer to Eden District Council Core Policies, as at the date of publication.



Petteril Bridge, Great Blencowe



above Dacre

THE ENVIRONMENT

We enjoy living in a beautiful parish with a traditional farmed landscape and many natural features. We want to keep it this way. We want to ensure that the places where we live are safe, clean and pleasant.

Policy 1.1

To defend the natural environment and encourage actions which help to conserve, improve or enhance the form and features of communities and their surroundings.

Policy 1.2

To support and encourage actions and initiatives which safeguard our residents and their right to a peaceful enjoyment of a clean, pleasant environment.

NUMBER	ACTIONS	JOINT ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
1	Identify and record areas of high environmental and/or amenity value (EDC CS16), including views and treasured landscapes (draft NPPF).	EDC LDNP FLD Cumbria Wildlife Trust	Completed parish record - on PC web site
2	Compile a map of landscape characters and features, including those of County Importance	EDC CCC LDNP Natural England Environmental Agency Tree warden	Completed map - on PC web site
3	Identify and record the special character, built heritage and visual amenity of the parish settlements (EDC CS3)	LDNP Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group	Completed parish record - on PC web site
4	Develop opportunities with local landowners to conserve and enhance features of conservation value identified above	FLD Cumbria Wildlife Trust Local Young Farmers Association	Index of enhanced or conserved features - on PC web site Local award for conservation
5	Carry out a litter survey and work with EDC to provide litter bins	EDC	At least one completed survey - on PC website
6	Institute measures to discourage dog fouling	EDC	Visible measures
7	Draw up a condition survey of footpaths and rights-of way	Footpath warden	Completed survey - on PC website
8	Safeguard and enhance the parish land and the common land that the parish manages	EDC Open Space Society Land Registry	All parish land registered with Land Registry All common land registered or covered by a management agreement with EDC
9	Work with others to identify and agree on sites of inadequate infrastructure (EDC CS6, EDC CS21);	Utility companies Highways Department	Index of sites of inadequate infrastructure - on PC website
10	Promote measures to reduce light pollution	Parish Newsletter EDC planning and Light Pollution Officer	Index of light pollution episodes that have been remedied or avoided - on PC website Local award for "Night Skies"

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

We appreciate the benefits of our parish's proximity to Penrith and to road and rail networks. We want to be able to enjoy these transport links safely, whether as a pedestrian, cyclist, rider, or user of car, bus or rail.

Policy 2.1

To engage with appropriate partners to secure greater highway safety for all users.

Policy 2.2

To promote healthier living for all ages by encouraging cycling and walking, and by championing the establishment of safe footways, cycleways and rights-of-way.

Policy 2.3

To work with partners to improve public transport links and services to the parish.

NUMBER	ACTIONS	JOINT ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
11	Establish a footway/cycleway between the south end of Newbiggin and the A66 (EDC CS5)	Cumbria Highways	Route completed
12	Establish a footway between the east end of Stainton and the A592 (EDC CS5)	Cumbria Highways	Route completed
13	Establish pedestrian refuges on the A66 Stainton / Newbiggin junction (EDC CS5)	Cumbria Highways	Refuges completed
14	Seek a weight limit between the A66 and the junction of the C3019 with the C3088 (Newbiggin) (EDC CS14)	Cumbria Highways	Weight limit in operation
15	Seek to reduce existing speed limits in villages to 20mph (EDC CS14)	Cumbria Highways	Speed limits of 20mph in relevant areas
16	Identify with local policing officers sites of unsafe parking on public roads and work to improve these (EDC CS5)	Community Police Officers Cumbria Highways	Index of sites of unsafe parking - on PC website
17	Work with local businesses to promote walking, cycling and riding as healthy activities (EDC CS5)	Newsletter Local businesses	Local award for best healthy activity
18	Identify opportunities to improve public transport and connecting services to the parish (EDC CS5).	Bus panel CCC	Uptake of "Rural Wheels" Index of improvements - on PC website

COMMUNITY

We strongly support our local village halls and recreational facilities and want them to be attractive venues for all members of the community. We actively support our local retail amenities. Although we would like more facilities in our smaller settlements we recognise that these are unlikely to be viable. Where present, we will strongly support them.

Policy 3.1

To promote and support community-based amenities and the variety of social activities which they undertake.

Policy 3.2

To promote and support local retail amenities as vital components of sustainable rural communities.

NUMBER	ACTIONS	JOINT ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
19	Provide financial support for village halls and recreational facilities (EDC CS21)	Village Hall Committees Recreation Ground Committee Stainton Cricket Club	Evidence of financial support on annual balance sheet
20	Encourage new local events and promote involvement in them	Parish Newsletter Retail Businesses	Evidence of one new event each year
21	Encourage and promote activities to ensure that vulnerable groups have access to the skills and equipment to allow them to use government on-line services	Parish Newsletter Village and Community Halls Connecting Cumbria EDC, CCC	All village halls enabled for broadband and wi-fi
22	To raise awareness of local and national government of the pressures on local retail amenities (EDC CS22)	EDC Local MP	Annual survey of rates of retail premises in the parish Annual footfall survey
23	To draw up and maintain a list of community assets, registered with EDC (EDC CS22)	EDC	Asset list registered with EDC

COMMUNICATIONS

Most of us feel there is a strong community spirit in our localities. Keeping in touch with our neighbours and the rest of the community is important, and we value highly the parish newsletter and notice boards. The poor broadband speeds we receive are not acceptable in a modern community.

Policy 4.1

To support projects and initiatives to improve both local and wider communications.

NUMBER	ACTIONS	JOINT ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
24	Continue to develop the parish council website	Website developer	Well-used PC website (visitor count) Results of on-line annual user survey
25	Provide financial support for the parish newsletter	Parish Newsletter	Continuing printed publication of the newsletter
26	Provide continuing support for existing superfast broadband connections	Local broadband providers Connecting Cumbria	Superfast or fast (>3Mb/s) accessible to all properties in the parish
27	Promote the parish as a key area for new connections to fibre-enabled cabinets and superfast broadband	Connecting Cumbria	Superfast or fast (>3Mb/s) accessible to all properties in the parish
28	Work with local parishes on matters of common concern	Ullswater Whole Valley Planning Group	Attendance record at group meetings

HOUSING

We want more affordable housing for people with local connections, but no further housing development in Stainton. We are concerned that the existing infrastructure is inadequate to accommodate any new demands. We believe that the parish contains sufficient second homes and caravan parks.

Policy 5.1

To resist development which will erode, diminish or exceed the quality or capacity of the existing infrastructure.

Policy 5.2

To support the development of affordable housing for people with local connections, appropriate and proportionate to the local setting and built environment.

Policy 5.3

To resist inappropriate developments which attract temporary or transient residents.

NUMBER	ACTIONS	JOINT ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
29	To respond to planning applications in accordance with the parish council housing and planning guidelines	EDC	Responses on PC website Index of responses made
30	To identify potential sites for affordable housing	EDC Cumbria Rural Housing	At least one site and developer identified
31	To respond to planning applications for commercial developments in accordance with the parish council housing and planning guidelines	EDC	Responses on PC website Index of responses made

EMPLOYMENT

Most of us would like to see more employment opportunities in the parish and see a lack of local transport as being among the barriers to local employment.

Policy 6.1

To support new and existing employment opportunities in established businesses and in the business parks in the parish.

NUMBER	ACTIONS	JOINT ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
32	To respond to planning applications for commercial developments in accordance with the parish council housing and planning guidelines.	EDC	Responses on PC website Index of responses made

APPENDIX: PLANNING GUIDELINES

Guideline 1

The parish survey indicated the importance local residents attach to affordable housing for their children. PC is very aware of the need to enable successor generations to live in the parish; indeed the continuation of the parish settlements as thriving, active communities is dependent on young people living and growing up in them. The PC will give priority to the development of affordable housing for people with a local connection. Such developments will still be subject to the guidelines, below. (EDC CS1, CS7, CS9).*

Guideline 2

The parish contains within its settlements a number of disused buildings, previously developed land, and land previously identified as being suitable for commercial use. The parish will be sympathetic to appropriate redevelopment and changes of use of brown-field sites to permanent residential use, subject to the guidelines, below (EDC CS2).

Guideline 3

The parish is rural with a very low population density, landscape features of county importance and a wide biodiversity. It is a traditional farmed landscape, part of which lies within the LDNP. The survey indicated a strong desire that the parish landscape should remain distinctive and retain its rural character. Any development should not significantly change the rural nature of the parish, nor impact directly or indirectly on local habitats or other features of the natural environment. New development should normally be contiguous with and in proportion to the existing built environment (EDC CS3, CS16, CS24).

Guideline 4

The settlements in the parish are distinctive in character. Three of them lie in the LDNP or in a landscape of county importance. Our survey showed these features are valued, and that the historic built environment of these settlements is an important aspect of their character. Any development should reflect the scale, proportion, materials and character of the adjoining built environment (including the historic). Areas of open space and un-built frontages will be protected. (EDC CS3, CS14, CS15, CS16, CS17, CS18).

Guideline 5

Our survey demonstrated concern that the infrastructure of the parish settlements was inadequate, or close to its capacity. Overflowing sewage is regularly experienced in two communities; water pressure is poor; electricity distribution is old, unreliable and unsightly; broadband, mobile phone services and TV reception is patchy; most of the parish has no public transport; roads are narrow and pavements are few and far between; almost all the retail amenities in the parish are concentrated in the south-east corner. The PC will not support any development which erodes, diminishes or exceeds the quality or capacity of the existing infrastructure. The PC will press strongly for all developers to augment the capacity of the local infrastructure to at least meet the total needs of the new development (EDC CS6).

Guideline 6

Our survey identified concern about parking on the narrow public roads in our settlements. Car ownership in the parish is high. 50% of homes have two or more cars, and it is likely that not all have sufficient parking space. The PC will not support any new residential development which provides off-road parking space for less than three cars. Any commercial development should provide parking spaces for 100% of employees.

Guideline 7

Our residents have indicated that they believe that any increase in the number of second homes, holiday homes or caravan parks will diminish the amenity of the parish. The parish will not support any developments which attract temporary or transient residents (EDC CS3, CS9, CS15).

Guideline 8

The survey showed our residents are concerned about the amenity and environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles on narrow country roads graded C or U. The PC will expect new commercial developments to agree a traffic routing plan with EDC and CCC Highways before the development commences. The PC will monitor routing agreements.

**references in brackets are to Eden District Council Core Strategy policies.*