

# Kimbolton Neighbourhood Plan

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Summary of April 2016 Open Day Comments

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## Introduction

Kimbolton Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish area. As part of this process a launch event was held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016 and this Report summarises the comments and main issues raised.

The launch event was publicised in the local newspaper and through the Parish magazine, website and notices across the Parish for several weeks in advance.

The launch took the form of an Open Day in the Village Hall in Kimbolton and ran from 10.30 in the morning until 4 in the afternoon.

The aim of the Launch Event was to understand the main issues facing the Parish over the lifetime of the Plan to 2031, and to form the basis of a more detailed community survey to be issued to all households later in the Summer.

80 people attended the Open Day and the geographical distribution of attendees is shown on the attached map. This shows that broadly all areas of the Parish were represented with a clear concentration of people living in Kimbolton village in reflection of it being by far the largest settlement in the area.

The views of the community were captured in two ways. Firstly, through a series of posters on the walls of the Village Hall corresponding to the key themes identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to date. These key themes were:

- The Vision for the area
- Community facilities
- Transport and road safety
- Employment and business
- The natural and built environment
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Other issues

The community were asked to note down the main issues that they thought the Plan should address under each of these themes and to stick these comments to the poster.

The second approach made use of a large map of the Parish in the centre of the Village Hall and the community were asked to attach a number of pre-written suggestions to locations in the area where they felt that a particular issue was relevant. For example in relation to road safety improvements, enhanced community facilities or new housing development.

The remainder of this Report records the comments made on the day grouped by the key themes set out above. The views recorded through the mapping exercise are also shown as a series of maps – again to correspond to the key themes.

## The Vision

Views on the Vision for the area were captured by asking people to respond to the question 'In 2031, I would like Kimbolton to be.....'. 36 individual comments were made, ranging from specific issues to more general aspirations. These general aspirations sought to build on the strong sense of community in the area, and emphasised the need for the Plan to protect the most important assets of the area, while at the same time promoting some growth to meet local needs.

The comments are set out below:

1. 'A community which takes ownership and responsibility of creating and sustaining Kimbolton as a 'Great Village' where everyone feels secure, safe and happy'.
2. 'A village that has a 'community' at its' heart – a physical and emotional environment which supports all stages of life – from newborn to elderly. A place to live in; to come home to, and to be proud of'.
3. 'given that people want to stay here because they like it, come here because they like it, Kimbolton will be a community with a shared sense of responsibility for keeping it as we like it. Even though this means giving time putting in the effort supporting neighbours, local businesses, looking after the historic buildings we value even if this may not be convenient ie a great community spirit'.
4. 'Vibrant rural based community. Public transport – bus service to Leominster. Young family friendly and appropriate facilities, roads and footpaths maintained. Keep a village way of life'.
5. 'a place where people are kind to each other respect each other and take care of others'
6. 'welcoming to younger people, newly married etc. affordable housing and opportunities to get involved in the community'
7. 'known as a viable option for new people to move to. With a fresh outlook and moving forward and as a stronger community feel as a whole'.
8. 'a place for young and old, sustainable and a thriving friendly community'
9. 'more self-sustaining. Shop, park etc.'
10. 'a thriving village strong community spirit and welcoming to all visitors (as it is now)'
11. 'to have a heart and community that enjoys Kimbolton and its surroundings'
12. 'more younger people living in the village'
13. 'a place where young families can live in a friendly community that still has its village school'

14. 'a village with a thriving pub and school and shop and opportunities for young people to live and work here'.
15. 'a sustainable community'
16. 'a warm friendly place where people feel cared for and we know each other'.
17. 'Much the same as it is now'.
18. 'to keep views unchanged in Parish'
19. 'much the same, with areas of growth and more sustainable'
20. 'we have a great starting point now'
21. 'maintained as a rural village surrounded by farmland managed for landscape, conservation and profit'.
22. 'a thriving agricultural community that maintains its village'
23. 'to see the village have moved on with the times we are in'
24. 'Infrastructure and development that supports local business and sustains younger people in the village'.
25. 'more mixed housing provision with children's play spaces'
26. 'with the increase in traffic more bridleways for the horse riders to go out safely'.
27. 'better footpaths around the village'
28. 'traffic calmed please'
29. 'lots of social events'.
30. '...still a village and not turned into a dormitory cum suburb'.
31. '...more traffic calming.....vibrant village'
32. 'remove all advertising signs and fly posters'
33. 'picnic area next to school car park'
34. 'litter cleaned up'.
35. 'a place where there is no litter on the grass verges'.

36. 'advertising signs are ugly and should be removed. A poor entrance into Kimbolton – litter badly needs addressing'.

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## Community facilities

The key issues raised in relation to community facilities were:

- The need for a village green and playground
- The need to retain the pub
- The need to promote activities for a range of different interests
- The need for better broadband
- The importance of the retention of the school

The individual comments made in relation to these key messages are set out below:

### 1. A Village green and playground

- Picnic area next to school car park
- A village green and pond
- A village green and a focal point for all to use
- Village green and play area and proper village shop (and post office)
- An open playground for all children to use either at the village hall field at rear or at the school
- Would like to see provision of a playground in village, e.g. field behind village hall
- Tennis court
- School hall

### 2. Activities for a range of interests

- Our facilities need to be used more and made available to those outside the parish to allow the village to showcase what we have here. In doing this we can support local businesses.
- Committee to organise more community events like the curry and quiz night
- The curry night and quiz was great fun
- Would like to see more activities laid on for the retired – quiz nights, scrabble club. Chess and other games to encourage the older residents to meet.
- Kimbolton Church congregation is small. Is it a building the community wants to keep? If so how can it be used / supported / revitalised – by those people who want it to be there for marriages, funerals, family burials. As a historic, ancient building for the community.
- Maintain and develop facilities, i.e. shop, pub, clubs etc. plus leisure seating for all people, all ages to enjoy.
- What is the age profile? Activities for different ages

### 3. Better broadband

- Better broadband connections. Community facilities for internet in the village
- Broadband
- Better broadband service needed
- Better broadband

### 4. Keep the school

- Do not let the school go

- Do not let the school be absorbed into an academy chain that does not value village rural schools

**5. Other**

- Why are there no assets of community value
- What is U3A

The mapping exercise also shows the importance of the retention of the school and pub. In terms of new facilities there are two main clusters of suggestions, both in Kimbolton village. The first cluster is on land around and to the rear of the Parish Hall with a number of suggestions for improved recreational space. The second cluster is on open land to the south of Stockton Court with a number of proposals for a village green.

## Transport and road safety

The key issues raised in relation to transport were:

- The need for traffic calming and speed enforcement
- a number of road safety issued on A4112
- The need to restrict HGVs
- The need for more and safer footpaths
- The importance of better public transport
- Roads should be better maintained

The individual comments made in relation to these key messages are set out below:

### 1. Traffic calming and speed enforcement

- Humps on road to curtail speed
- Traffic calming speed restrictions
- Tollgate for larger vehicles
- Slower speed of traffic (speed enforcement)
- Speed enforcement is needed despite new 30mph limit. Possible speed camera.
- Enforcement needs to be tougher on 30mph speed limit
- Smiley face for good speed
- Too many speeding through village
- Traffic speeds on A4112 despite speed limits. Traffic calming required
- Need speed controls like they have in Pembridge
- Never light the main road – that encourages faster traffic. Enforcement please (30mph)
- Road safety mirror opposite village hall as it is almost blind when you exit
- More enforcement on 30mph limit is needed
- Speed limit 30mph by the school
- Traffic calming needed all along A4112. Coordinate with other Parishes – Leysters, St Michaels, Tenbury Wells. Even though they may be in different authorities more voices count.
- Better traffic control the speed is too fast

### 2. Road safety issues on A4112

- The A4112 is a dangerous road. Not wide enough for the increasing size and weight of traffic that uses it – farming and commercial vehicles in particular – now much wider and longer. Cannot always keep to their side of the road.
- A4112 – road safety. Volume of traffic has increased with a greater number of heavy goods vehicles large enough to shake houses as they pass. Speed limit of 30mph is not adhered to by many vehicles. Is there any way of limiting heavier, longer vehicles?

### 3. Restrict HGVs

- Weight restriction on A4112 to discourage HGV through traffic
- Less HGVs through village
- Weight restrictions on vehicles – unnecessarily using main road through village



- Keep HGVs off narrow lanes

#### **4. More and safer footpaths**

- Footpath and cycle path to link up with existing ones
- Footpath between school and hall too narrow
- Better footpaths through village to A49.
- Footpath between village hall and school needed
- Widen footpath between school and village hall
- Pavement needs widening at places in village hall and school to make it safe
- Footpath continuous from school to A49 (difficult at Stockton Cross Pub).
- Footpath and bridleways to be developed, linked up and path surface and hedges maintained on a regular basis. Traffic calming measures required through village.
- More bridleways perhaps open up some of the footpaths for horses

#### **5. Improve public transport**

- Public transport is needed before development can take place
- Good bus service Leominster to Tenbury.
- Better public transport. Possibly coordinate school transport allowing adults to use the same.
- Public transport needed
- Transport needed for older people – public or community

#### **6. Better maintained roads**

- Fewer signs would be far more effective than endless clutter
- Pothole repairs
- Clean out the ditches and drains annually to prevent flooding
- Fix the road surfaces which are very dangerous for bicycles and motorcycles
- Culverts to be regularly maintained along lanes as problems with surface water flooding problem area between Stockton Cross and Ferndale.
- Drains need to be maintained.
- Regular maintenance of drains to prevent damage to roads

The mapping exercise shows a clear concentration of comments suggesting transport improvements in three areas – around the school (and the link between the school and the village), at the junction near to the Stockton Cross Pub, and most significantly of all, along the A4112 between the western end of the village and A49.

## Employment and business

The key issues raised in relation to employment and business were:

- The need to support farming businesses
- The need for better broadband
- The need to encourage small scale business development and local employment

The individual comments made in relation to these key messages are set out below:

### 1. Support farming businesses

- Encouragement for farmers
- Support for farmers as times get tougher
- No intensive farming units
- Support for the farmers and other local businesses
- Protect the village from large scale agricultural units such as pig units and battery chicken units. Both unpleasant in the environment and would result in large lorry traffic on roads
- It is important to support agriculture – sometimes large scale buildings are necessary.

### 2. Better broadband

- Higher speed broadband
- Broadband
- Faster broadband speed essential for modern business
- Fibre optics
- Higher speed broadband connection is essential for businesses to operate effectively in the area
- Fibre broadband is essential for businesses to thrive.
- Infrastructure to support businesses needed, e.g. fibre optic broadband and more / better coverage by mobile phones

### 3. Encourage small scale business development

- Keep all industry in proportion to a rural area
- Encourage smaller businesses
- No large scale industrial units
- Encourage smaller rural start- up businesses that would support the community spirit of Kimbolton
- Hopefully large scale buildings – agricultural or otherwise will be avoided
- Small scale employment more suited to village
- Don't damage the village like Marden has been with big industry
- Small scale, sustainable business where possible using existing buildings agricultural or domestic.
- Allow, support and develop rural small business in keeping with village life
- Ensure that any new businesses do not increase the volume of heavy vehicles / traffic

### 4. Employment growth is needed

- Large scale units would provide employment for young people and encourage them to stay in the area!
- Growth in employment is needed.

#### **5. Local business and local jobs**

- Local businesses supported
- Support local businesses help them to promote their work / product use local craftspeople
- Local business needs to be supported by the community. We should be working to provide employment and infrastructure to support growth and attract new people into the area
- Business development can often bring workers from outside. No guarantee of local jobs unfortunately. More traffic!
- How many people commute from village and how far
- What are the businesses in the area providing employment?

Very few comments were made on employment issues through the mapping exercise – limited to suggestions for small scale tourism, offices and live work units within or on the edge of Kimbolton village.

## The Natural and Built Environment

The key issues raised in relation to the natural and built environment were:

- The need to restrict new lighting
- The need protect the rural character of the area
- The need to encourage tree planting and encourage wildflowers
- The need to carefully consider renewable energy generation proposals
- The need to consider the impact of development on streams and rivers
- To carefully consider the impact of new housing
- To restrict the development of large livestock units

The individual comments made in relation to these key messages are set out below:

### 1. Restrict new lighting

- Keep the truly rural environment. Natural lighting only. Fewer signs and clutter.
- A single misdirected light totally changes the dark rural landscape. Light inside not outside buildings.

### 2. Protect the rural character of the area

- Protect the rural feel of Kimbolton so many villages have lost their soul.
- The rural nature of the parish is special
- Protect Kimbolton parish rural environment.
- Protect the natural environment of the area
- Consider the best ways of preserving and enhancing the natural environment and preserve the best of the built environment
- Natural environment – there is evidence of two fishponds on two sites, plus older orchards, strip fields etc. these need preserving and protecting.
- Keep the attractive backdrop to the village and add to it by really suitable development – housing and trees.
- Maintain the lovely rural feel to the village.
- Emphasise the rural nature – natural light and natural noise.

### 3. Encourage tree planting

- Planting a line of trees in the village from Stockton Cross eastwards A4112
- Planting small areas of woodland with native species
- Hedge preservation and planting
- If a blanket tree preservation order for Kimbolton is not possible then advise the landowner who fells any tree should replace it with at least one planting of a new tree.

### 4. Protect and enhance areas of wildflowers

- Anyone interested in a wildflower survey? Enhancing identification skills – what species do we have and map them? Liaise with Council over verge cutting
- Protection of flowering verges particularly between the village hall and the school
- In there an environmental audit of the area?

**5. Renewable energy generation**

- Any new build housing should have integral power generation – solar / small wind
- No biomass around the parish.
- Please no windfarms
- No wind farms or solar farms. No intensive farming.
- No solar farming in the village.
- No solar panels on Prince Farm land

**6. Rivers and sewage**

- Protect rivers against sewage plants

**7. New housing**

- Small infill housing developments and opportunities for first time buyers.
- New housing should respect local vernacular architecture with use of local materials (stone & slate) wherever possible.
- Small scale housing developments in styles that are in keeping with the area.
- The character of any new houses is in keeping with the ambience of a rural village

**8. No large Intensive farming units**

- No industrial chicken sheds
- No intensive pig, chicken or cattle units in this area

The mapping exercise revealed a similar broad range of issues with comments distributed across the Plan area.

## Infrastructure

The key issues raised in relation to infrastructure were:

- The need for better broadband
- The need for improved sewage and water supply
- The need for generally better utility services
- The need for better mobile phone coverage
- The need for better road maintenance
- The need to consider the impact of renewable energy generation proposals

The individual comments made in relation to these key messages are set out below:

### 1. Better broadband

- Broadband and services
- High speed broadband (x15)

### 2. Improved sewage and water supply

- Improved sewage system
- Mains sewage (x2)
- Sewage system as a priority
- Prevention of sewage problems
- Improved flooding defences
- Lack of mains water in parts of the Parish

### 3. Provide all services

- All modern services up to date
- Mains gas / sewage needed within the Parish desperately

### 4. Mobile phone coverage

- Mobile provider network signal needs improvement

### 5. Better road maintenance

- Road resurface and maintenance
- Mend the road surfaces
- Drains and ditches regularly cleared
- Footpath improvement Church Hill A4112
- Better footpaths around village
- Better road drainage
- Clean out the drains and ditches annually
- Footpath and cycle path down to A49
- Water run-off from fields

### 6. Renewable energy

- Community run / funded renewable energy projects

- More flexibility over household / solar wind generation from planners. No large wind farms.

The mapping exercise reveals two key clusters of suggestions. The first is the need for better infrastructure around Chestnut Avenue and the proposed development site to the north. The second cluster is at the point where the Cogwell Brook passes beneath the A4112 where a number of issues relating to flood mitigation were identified.

## Housing

The key issues raised in relation to housing were:

- The need for improved infrastructure
- The need to encourage local needs affordable housing
- The need to provide for the housing needs of the elderly
- A preference for small scale infill housing

The individual comments made in relation to these key messages are set out below:

### 1. Improve infrastructure

- Housing needs to be curtailed until sewage disposal has been sorted
- The present building structure needs to be completed before any further planning is allowed
- Development should be limited by the availability of utilities

### 2. Encourage local needs affordable housing

- Encourage affordable housing for your families which supports local facilities – school and parish hall – starter homes
- Support developments that include affordable housing
- Affordable housing for young families. As in 1-2 bedroom houses.
- Affordable housing but in small scale developments.
- Housing for local residents should be prioritised
- Affordable housing for young families
- Affordable housing please
- Any housing further to that already given planning permission should be affordable for local young people / families and protected from being made larger and therefore unaffordable to the next generation.
- Housing needed for existing small businesses

### 3. Housing for the elderly

- Need for bungalows for elderly people who want to downsize from existing homes within the parish.

### 4. Small scale infill housing is preferred

- To build on the available spaces in Leominster first before building on the lovely countryside. If development is required then small scale only.
- No big housing. Infill housing only
- Reduce the expansion of the village with infill developments
- Organic housing growth
- Limit new housing in the countryside to retain the rural picture
- Protect the growth of a dormitory town development
- No requirement to exceed 30 new housing units. No drainage within the village.
- Demand should be driven by employment opportunities
- Be satisfied with what is already granted which covers what we have to provide.



#### **5. Other issues**

- Restore permitted development rights to building revisions to allow comfortable living
- Developments should include household renewable, e.g. solar panels
- Good all round housing design throughout the village using traditional materials

The great majority of the mapped comments were made in relation to the type of new housing to be built to the north of Chestnut Avenue. Two other much smaller clusters of comments were made around potential housing development on land to the south of Stockton Court, and on the former poultry units and the Forbury, to the south of the Primary School.

## Other issues

A number of other issues and comments were raised, some of which duplicate suggestions made in relation to the key themes as summarised above. These other issues are listed below:

### 1. Better footpaths

- Footpaths to be developed around the village, or pavements to protect pedestrians.
- A complete footpath from Chestnut Avenue to the School so no children or adults need to use the road.
- Footpath from A49 to the pub
- Dog-friendly stiles
- Better footpaths near school to KVH – current one is too narrow and off-putting to use of you have children.

### 2. Other issues

- Unsightly pub signs – too many spoil the village.
- Too many tables outside the pub – its ugly
  
- The turning off the A49 often has cars for sale needs addressing
- Rubbish / litter collections on the approach road / verges from A49. Can look very tatty.
  
- Village green (x2)
- Children's play area (x2)
  
- Dog bins and collections needed
- Dog bins needed in village and collections
  
- Encourage best practise in lighting to prevent pollution – including repositioning some existing signs
  
- Creation of small hamlet for welcoming new people supporting the vulnerable and involving people in community issues.
  
- More substantial salt bins on the roads. Several have completely collapsed over the winter.
- Clean ditches regularly
  
- Don't turn Kimbolton into Marden - a lost village

- How can the village cope if cut-off for any reason?
  
- History and archaeology – Kimbolton has a strong historical background with remains of medieval field system and housing platforms, lynchets, ridge and furrows. All need protecting and recording.