

**EWYAS HAROLD GROUP PARISH PLAN**  
**with Llancillo, Dulas and Rowlestone**  
**Draft: Tuesday, June 07, 2005**

**CONTENTS**

**Summary**

**Introduction** What is a Parish Plan?  
 Who will use the Parish Plan?  
 Who has prepared it and how?  
 Public events involving the community.

**Sections**

1. History
2. Built Environment - Planning
3. Unitary Development Plan
4. Business
5. Transport
6. Highways
7. Environment
8. Flooding
9. Sustainability

**Society**

10. Lifelong learning
11. Childcare
12. Youth Provision
13. Memorial Hall
14. Recreation Ground
15. Law and Order

**Dulas Parish Plan**

**Rowlestone Parish Plan**

**Acknowledgements**

**Appendices**

This Parish Plan is accessible on the Parish Website  
[www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk](http://www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk)

## SUMMARY

Based on careful enquiry over two years, the Parish Plan Group has produced a challenging list of recommendations the aim of which is to improve the quality of village life over the next ten years. Most are calls to action of a minor nature and can be dealt with immediately (some have already been completed). Other suggestions require more thought and commitment. It is the duty of the Parish Plan Group to report our findings fully although we are aware that some issues may cause displeasure.

Improving sport and leisure provision is a major long-term challenge and demands the involvement of the whole village working together towards a common cause. Although there are financial grants available, there is not enough community land in Ewyas Harold to develop extra outdoor sports facilities. Land acquisition is a sensitive subject and the Parish Plan Group simply wishes to highlight the need for more space.

The majority of Questionnaire respondents suggested that the Memorial Hall requires modernization and some respondents put forward detailed suggestions. The Memorial Hall committee is surprised and just a little annoyed by this critical interest, responding (with some justice) that it is hard enough to get people to run the Hall let alone do all the work required to instigate a major modernization programme.

Again, there are grants available but – more important than money – the village needs people with fresh commitment. We need energetic groups to carry the ideas in the Parish Plan forwards to make the dream a reality. There's an opportunity here, but it will founder if the usual hardworking organizers don't get immediate help.

Our Council Taxes pay for all sorts of urban amenities - theatres, libraries, swimming pools, IT centers – which we cannot access for lack of public transport. Hardest hit by this injustice are the young, the elderly and the disabled. This Parish Plan shows that lack of public transport affects every aspect of life from job opportunities to health and welfare. Improving transport facilities is vital and it is important that we continue to demand the reopening of Pontrilas Railway Station.

As far as possible we have identified who should carry out the action recommended. It is a long list and it will not be completed overnight (or even soon) without the help of the community. Please help us put this Parish Plan into action so that we can make a real difference to life in South Herefordshire.

## INTRODUCTION

Ewyas Harold is a historic village lying close to the Welsh border in rural South Herefordshire. It is linked to the adjacent parishes of Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone. All four parishes are governed at local level by Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council (GPC). The Parish Plan is part of the council's strategy to deliver better service to the local community and to achieve Quality Parish Council status. This will enable Ewyas Harold GPC to bid for more local control and enhanced financial support for the parishes.

The Parish Plan grew out of studies made while completing the Ewyas Harold Design Statement (2002) however it is a very different document. The Design Statement was primarily concerned with planning considerations and limited to considering the built environment of Ewyas Harold village. The Parish Plan has a wider task, to thoroughly investigate local opinion and to plan for the future of all four parishes on a wide variety of topics.

### **Four parishes – all a bit different!**

We have prepared separate Parish Plans for Dulas and Rowlestone because the Parishes are physically quite distinctive. Whilst Ewyas Harold is a thriving village, the population of the parishes of Rowlestone, Llancillo and Dulas are rural in character. Residents of the rural parishes generally use the facilities of Ewyas Harold which acts as a convenient “village centre” however they have specific requirements of their own.

## WHAT IS A PARISH PLAN?

The Parish Plan is a blueprint for the future of the local community. It is based on a detailed survey of the needs of the parishes and the opinions of the residents. It draws up a list of objectives with an action plan and timetable to enable them to be achieved.

When it is formally adopted, the Parish Plan acts as a policy guideline for the Group Parish Council and Herefordshire Council. It can be used as a reference document for other agencies that may be concerned with developing services or providing support to local groups.

The Parish Plan supports community initiatives at local level. By providing impartial assessment of need, it will assist groups to tap into funding for community projects. Grant aid is normally only given to groups who can demonstrate the viability of their scheme and involvement in a Parish Plan is often a requirement for grant application.

## WHO WILL USE THE PARISH PLAN?

The Parish Plan will provide a framework for action at local level and will inform decision-makers at county level by providing well-researched information and opinion. It will be updated regularly and will be accessible on our website [www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk](http://www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk)

### It will be used by:

- **The Parish Council – as a blueprint for action.**
- **Statutory bodies and public authorities – for information.**
- **Planners and developers – for guidance.**
- **Local community groups – as evidence to obtain the grants they need.**

## WHO HAS PREPARED THIS PARISH PLAN AND HOW?

At the suggestion of the Group Parish Council, a working party of Parish Councillors and local residents formed the Ewyas Harold Parish Plan Group in 2003. A grant was provided by the Countryside Agency to cover the cost of meetings and publications. The Parish Plan group is grateful to Herefordshire Council and West Mercia Constabulary who have provided invaluable support.

The Parish Plan Group included: Liz Overstall, Isabelle Devereaux, Lloyd Rickards, Jane and Ian Matheson, Graham Sprackling, Mary Williams, Helen Waites, Paul Sheen, Jean Addis, Ann Bradley, Pam Haywood, Stella Phillips. We are grateful to all the residents who attended our meetings and supported us throughout the two-year development of this Parish Plan.

## PUBLIC EVENTS HAVE BEEN HELD TO INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY AND TO OBTAIN OPINION

**A465 Road Meeting** (27<sup>th</sup> February 2004) with Paul Keetch MP, the Police, the Highways Agency, and Herefordshire Council to discuss road safety issues on the A465.  
**A series of 16 meetings** at the Baptist Chapel, Ewyas Harold and The Barn, Dulas between 2003 and April 2005..

**A stall at the Summer Fair** July 2004

Cheese and Wine information gathering party in **Rowlestone** (21<sup>st</sup> April 2004)

Cheese and Wine information gathering party in **Dulas** (20<sup>th</sup> May 2004)

**Happy Hour for business people** at the Temple Bar Ewyas Harold (19<sup>th</sup> January 2005)

**Questionnaire presentation** (9<sup>th</sup> March 2005) in Ewyas Harold

**A detailed questionnaire** was sent to every household in the four parishes to obtain opinion on key issues. A response of 41% confirmed support for the Parish Plan and provided a framework for the final draft. The results of the Questionnaire were presented at a public meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005 at the Memorial Hall. This meeting was attended by representatives from the Police (to discuss Law and Order) and the Memorial Hall Committee (to discuss suggestions and complaints).

**IF YOU HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE RESULTS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY CLICKING THE BLUE BUTTON ON THE LEFT [www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk](http://www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk)**

## **EWYAS HAROLD PARISH PLAN**

### **with Rowlestone, Dulas and Llancillo**

#### 1. **HISTORY**

**It's hard to believe the quiet village of Ewyas Harold was once strategically important and the size of a small town. Thanks to the interest of a group of keen local people and the present owners of Ewyas Harold castle, the ruins are going to be the focus of exciting archaeological activities.**

As far back as the fifth century Ewyas Harold village was part of an ancient Welsh kingdom called Ewias. A border area, it was prone to warfare. The Saxons built a defensive burh on the end of a high promontory overlooking the present settlement. The Normans arrived sometime before 1066 to construct a wooden castle on the same site. It was one of the first motte and bailey castles constructed in England. Rebuilt in stone by William FitzOsborne, it became a powerful garrison of strategic importance against the Welsh. A local lord, Harold of Ewias gave the castle and the village his name.

At the time of Alfred de Merleberge Ewias Harold was one of only five boroughs in Domesday Herefordshire. Assuming a garrison of 200 soldiers with their women and families, their armourers, their smiths and provision merchants, it is likely that Ewyas Harold was a thriving community during this period, with a population of many hundreds. Robert, son of Harold, moved the Benedictine Priory from Dulas to a site near the castle. The 13<sup>th</sup> century was the heyday of Ewias Harold's importance. The priory was dissolved in the mid fourteenth century. Although briefly re-fortified against the attacks of Owain Glyndwr in 1402 the castle lost its strategic importance. Pillaged by generations of locals for building stone, it gradually disappeared and by the seventeenth century it was described as "ruined and gone".

Overlooking the village, the remains of the castle is an Ancient Monument, enjoying the highest level of protection. The lower bailey lies in the field below, and traces of ancient fishponds and the Priory can be found.

**ACTION:** The Parish Plan and the GPC should support the Ewyas Harold Castle Archaeology Group in its bid for funding which may act to revitalize the village economically as well as create a deeper knowledge of our heritage.

**ACTION:** GPC and HC should ensure the protection of the Castle as an Ancient Monument together with surrounding areas of archaeological interest.

## 2. **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

### **Planning recommendations for Ewyas Harold Village.**

*Copies of the Design Statement are available at Ewyas Harold Post Office and on the parish website [www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk](http://www.ewyasharoldgpc.org.uk)*

- 2.1 Residents have strongly expressed the view that there should be no more bungalows constructed in the village, explaining that they wished to live in a thriving community of all age-groups and that in villages where bungalows dominate, younger people are priced out of the housing market. *(The majority of respondents were over 60 years of age themselves.)*
- 2.2 Targeting existing open spaces for infill by new housing is not desirable.
- 2.3 It is important to retain a suitable village boundary.
- 2.4 Archaeological remains in the village should be protected.
- 2.5 Residents would like to see more attention paid to interesting and appropriate design that reflects the character of the village.
- 2.6 Affordable housing should be encouraged so that young people are no longer forced to move away for economic reasons.
- 2.7 Developers should be responsible for installing appropriate lighting on new developments.
- 2.8 Road and street signs should be restrained and duplication should be avoided.
- 2.9 Where new names are required for streets or buildings, these should be chosen to reflect the history of the site, or the village.
- 2.10 Cables should be sited underground and a real effort made to reduce the number of poles carrying telephone and electricity wires.
- 2.11 Ewyas Harold and the parishes have many traditional post-boxes and telephone boxes which should be retained.
- 2.13 The provision of suitable rural bus shelters is required.

### **Architectural recommendations for developers and improvers**

- 2.13 There are opportunities for designing interesting new buildings that will sit comfortably with Herefordshire traditional styles. New buildings do not have to be copies of old ones but they should respect them.
- 2.14 New buildings that incorporate innovative environment-friendly design characteristics should be encouraged on appropriate sites.
- 2.15 As there is not a predominant traditional style in the village, there is scope for a variety of

sympathetic influences e.g. Victorian brick and quoining, carved bargeboards, decorated ridge tiles, porches, and interesting window shapes.

- 2.16 Designers should take into account the relationship of new buildings with existing properties and should seek to use traditional materials such as local stone with the aim of sympathetic harmony.
- 2.17 The size and scale of a new building should reflect that of adjacent properties.
- 2.18 Roof lines in the vicinity should be carefully assessed before altering an existing building radically or building a new one.
- 2.19 Villagers feel that rural character depends on retaining space around houses and preserving rural views. It is recommended that curtilages should be spacious, except in the heart of Ewyas Harold village where higher-density housing is normal.
- 2.20 Any further creation of a “hard edge” to the village by permitting high-density housing on the outskirts should be avoided. Any further housing development on the edge of the village should be suitably landscaped with native trees and hedging to blend with the surrounding countryside.
- 2.21 Stone walls are a feature of the area and should always be preserved. Where new buildings or alterations to existing buildings are planned it should be noted that the impact on older nearby properties can always be softened by using local stone for new walls. Hedges or low fences may also be appropriate.

### 3. **HEREFORDSHIRE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) provides the land use framework for the future development and protection of the environment for the whole of Herefordshire up until 2011. It details the policies that control development proposals by setting out the criteria by which planning applications are assessed.

#### **It guides developers and landowners on:**

- where new homes should be built
- where new jobs should be located
- which land will be kept open and free from development

The Plan consists of two parts together with detailed maps known as the Proposal Map. Part I explains the Council's long term objectives and strategy. It deals with land use and development, the protection and improvement of the environment and strategic transport proposals. Part II translates the broad strategy into detailed policies and proposals. It is expected that the UDP will be adopted in 2005

#### 3.1 **How does the UDP affect Ewyas Harold, Rowlestone, Llancillo and Dulas?**

3.1.a **Landscape Character Assessment:** Most of the countryside is designated "Area Less Resilient to Change" which acknowledges the fragile nature of rural South West Herefordshire and the need to protect landscape features such as hills and skylines, woodlands, established hedgerow and tree patterns and water features, especially river valleys and flood plains.

3.1.b Ewyas Harold has been defined as a 'main village', therefore a settlement boundary has been defined for the village.

3.1.c It is proposed that Long Meadow should be reserved for social use and protected from housing development. Island Field is also protected as important "open space".

3.1.d A small amount of land is regarded as suitable for housing development.

3.1.e A substantial area of land on either side of the Dulas Brook is designated flood plain.

3.2 **Ewyas Harold Group Parish council and individual residents appealed to the Unitary Development Plan Public Enquiry against the inaccurate designation of such a large part of the village as flood plain. This designation has serious implications for villagers because it will affect house valuation and insurance premiums. At the end of 2004 revised documents showed that many of the initial mapping errors had been corrected and the flood plain narrowed. Some further alterations are likely to be made to the UDP in the final hearings in May/June 2005.**

#### 4. BUSINESS

Ewyas Harold is not a dormitory village or a retirement village. This is a working area comprising all age groups. We have a substantial number of retired people but they have said (Design Statement 2003) that they want to live in a lively community of mixed age groups and that local policies should support this aim.

##### 4.1 Suggestions from the Business Community

- 4.1.a Members of the local business community were invited to a “Happy Hour” meeting at the Temple Bar on 19th January 2005. Thirty people attended including a number of businesses new to the area. A questionnaire was distributed and suggestions were proposed.
- 4.1.b A local Business Directory would be useful. **ACTION: GPC to seek working party.**
- 4.1.c Better signage on the A465 would bring business to Ewyas Harold. **ACTION: GPC**
- 4.1.d Local map for centre of village, **ACTION: request GPC.**
- 4.1.e Local Village map and Parishes map with footpaths should be produced for sale in shop - should show B and Bs as well as footpaths. **ACTION: Request GPC to use new P3 funding.**
- 4.1.f **Website:** Who’s Who business section with map for B&Bs and prominent businesses. **ACTION: GPC to seek funding for extension of website.**
- 4.1.g **Website:** Parishes map showing footpaths, **ACTION: GPC webmaster to investigate.**
- 4.1.h Liaise with Business Link and Herefordshire Council Partnership Officer to provide business training locally. **ACTION: Educational Working Group (See Lifelong Learning section).**
- 4.1.i Investigate ways in which suitable small-scale businesses can be encouraged to come into the area and rent the business units which lie empty. **ACTION: Web pages describing business accommodation needed. Funding to expand website required.**
- 4.1.j The Questionnaire (March 2005) suggested that poor transport facilities are currently restricting business and employment opportunities. Walkers staying in local B&Bs need better public transport **ACTION: Herefordshire Council to be alerted to provide better rural services in Transport Plan.**
- 4.1.k Business people want a rail link. **ACTION: Herefordshire Council to be alerted by Parish Plan.**
- 4.1.l Low-cost housing is essential for local workforce. **ACTION: GPC and Herefordshire Council to facilitate.**

#### 4.2. **Comments and suggestions from residents (not businessmen/women)**

- 4.2.a Potential business opportunities were listed in the Village Design Statement 2003. This list could be placed on the village website. **ACTION: Webmaster.**
- 4.2.b It is considered essential that any economic growth should leave a small footprint on the rural environment and should be sustainable. IT businesses are considered suitable. Tourism without traffic should be encouraged by promoting bus services for walkers and supporting the reopening of Pontrilas railway station. Furniture-making and other timber based businesses which add value to local timber production are to be encouraged. Quality food production and organic food sales could support local farming. Farm diversification businesses are important to the parishes.
- 4.2.c Ewyas Harold is a historic village which is about to benefit from an archaeological investigation on the Castle. Could Ewyas Harold be developed as a “history village” attracting businesses linked to this theme? A history film archive business has already been set up and there may be potential for other history-linked enterprises. **ACTION: GPC consult Business Link.**

### 5. **TRANSPORT**

**Public transport in the rural parishes is limited and most people feel obliged to run a car. People who cannot drive have particular problems. Many elderly people are less confident car drivers and need better public transport. Teenagers cannot access leisure activities in nearby towns, and there is little provision for this age group locally. Workers who cannot afford a car have limited employment prospects.**

Almost 30% of respondents travel to work by car (Questionnaire 2005). The majority of other residents (60% from Census) run a car to access basic facilities. This contributes towards pollution and traffic congestion in local towns as well as congestion in Ewyas Harold where car parking is now frequently a problem

8% of Questionnaire respondents felt that their employment options were limited by transport difficulties, particularly problems with the bus service. The timetable is limited with no late buses; many bus users find the routes unsatisfactory. Others simply don't use public transport. There is only one bus a week passing through Dulas and no bus service at all to Rowlestone.

84% of respondents thought that reopening the train station at Pontrilas would be sensible and said they would use the station. Most thought an adjacent car park and a good shuttle-bus service would be desirable.

## 5.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1.a Residents would prefer a direct bus service. The elderly and disabled have difficulties getting on and off buses and fear missing connections and getting stranded. The possibility of a direct mini-bus service to Hereford or Abergavenny should be investigated. **ACTION: GPC to liaise with Herefordshire Council with a view to including an enhanced local service in the Herefordshire Council Transport Plan.**
- 5.1.b Ensure all Stagecoach buses are met by a shuttle. **ACTION: GPC to liaise with HC**
- 5.1.c Young people in particular need a better transport service for leisure activities in local towns. Early buses and late buses should be investigated. **ACTION: GPC to liaise with HC and/or youth providers.**
- 5.1.d The GPC should support the campaign to reopen the Railway Station at Pontrilas with a suitable car park. **ACTION: Liaise with Paul Keetch MP who spoke positively on this issue at the Parish Plan public meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2004 at the Memorial Hall. Keep local people informed through the Newsletter.**
- 5.1.e Better transport publicity is required. (Timetables essential, particularly for the shuttle bus to Pontrilas. Also Dore Community Transport Group information) **ACTION: Ensure up to date bus timetables available and put shuttle timetable in the Newsletter.**
- 5.1.f Bus stops should be marked and bus shelters provided at key sites. **ACTION: GPC to liaise with HC and to reconsider possible sites for shelters.**
- 5.1.g The idea of establishing a cycle track to Hereford and/or Abergavenny was supported. Suitable safe routes would need to be identified. **ACTION: GPC Contact Sustrans**
- 5.1.h Taxi services and community transport services should be better advertised. **ACTION: Newsletter and website to provide information.**
- 5.1.i Reduce rural road use (Transport Act 1999) **ACTION: Newsletter and GPC to encourage car sharing and use of public transport by demanding improved services and providing information.**
- 5.1.j Suitable bus shelters should be provided. **ACTION: GPC**

## 6. HIGHWAYS

### 6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.a Increasing traffic along country lanes poses problems. Larger delivery vehicles, farm diversification, barn conversions and increased residential development generate significant additional traffic in the rural parishes. **ACTION: Planning Authorities to be aware when granting Planning Permission.**
- 6.1.b Fast traffic remains a cause for concern in Ewyas Harold village and throughout the parishes. People are concerned about speed limits in the village asking that the Pontrilas Road should be 30mph and the centre of the village 25mph. **ACTION: GPC to continue to press Herefordshire Council on this issue.**
- 6.1.c Larger lorries and increased traffic are breaking up verges along rural routes. **ACTION: more passing places.**
- 6.1.d There is a lack of continuous footways in Ewyas Harold Village. This is a particular problem for disabled people. **ACTION: GPC to take this matter up with HC.**
- 6.1.e There are no car parks in Ewyas Harold village and there is congestion at certain times. Changes to car parking at the Temple Bar public house have resulted in customers parking on the road. **ACTION: GPC to investigate alternatives. HC to restrict development in the village centre to buildings with integral car parking space.**
- 6.1.f The importance of traditional footpaths in Ewyas Harold village cannot be overemphasized. Our poll has demonstrated that the majority of villagers use them frequently. The existence of a network of footpaths through fields and gardens acts to counter the divisive effect of traffic in the village community. **ACTION: GPC to press for improvements in the local footpath network.**
- 6.1.g In the rural parishes, narrow roads make cycling (and walking) dangerous. Ideally children should be able to walk or to cycle safely to school but there are no cycle ways in the Parishes. **ACTION: GPC to investigate ways of providing traffic-free cycle paths in the village, as well as in the parishes. Access to long-distance cycle networks to be investigated.**
- 6.1.h Road Markings: It has been suggested that road markings should be standardized ie. “keep left” at the roundabout by EH doctors’ surgery. **ACTION: GPC has considered this matter in the past and should keep the issue on file. It is difficult to make changes that accommodate heavy vehicles.**
- 6.1.i **Hill Lane:** This defunct road should be downgraded to provide a safe footpath. (Questionnaire 2005). **PARISH PLAN IN ACTION: The GPC has already investigated. A budget of £30,000 is needed to drain the road and surface a footpath. Herefordshire Council is the agency responsible for maintaining this road, but does not have this funding to hand. The GPC should seek alternative funding or assistance for this project.**

### 6.1.j **A465 Problems**

All junctions need a box for traffic waiting to cross.

The right turn to Rowlestone is unsafe and needs to be improved.

Safe pedestrian access between Pontrilas and Ewyas Harold needs to be provided.

**ACTION:** GPC joint working party (with Grosmont Community Council and Kentchurch PC. to ask Highways Agency and Herefordshire Council reconsider the above issues.

- 6.1.k It is believed the traffic disregards the advisory 40mph signs. People are calling for a proper speed limit and asking that the police monitor this section of road. **PARISH PLAN IN ACTION:** The GPC has investigated this matter. As the A465 is a trunk road, it is controlled by the Highways Agency which states that a legal 40mph limit is not permitted on a Trunk Road. If the road were “de-trunked” it would be managed by Herefordshire Council and the 40mph limit would be possible. However as the A465 is an important route linking North and South Wales, the status of this route is unlikely to be changed in the near future.
- 6.1.l **Passing places:** There is no demand for more passing places but there is a demand from the public to keep the verges in good condition and keep the roads clear of mud which is a hazard to traffic. **ACTION:** Designated passing places are the only way to resolve this difficulty. Refer to GPC.
- 6.1.m The road west of Dulas Court below the wood is narrow. The verge is seriously eroded and needs major costly repairs to make it safe. Vehicles pulling over to avoid oncoming traffic are in danger of rolling down the bank. Warning posts have been installed but have fallen over. **ACTION:** Refer to GPC for urgent action by HC.
- 6.1.n **Access to the Common:** Signs to Ewyas Harold Common at Springetts Lane have been illegally removed. Residents complain that lorries and delivery vehicles seeking houses at the Springetts Lane end of the common) are driving up Cwm Dulas Pitch to the NW end of the Common in error. Clear directions as to access should be provided because Cwm Pitch is a narrow, dangerously twisty road. Drivers must be dissuaded from driving across the Common to reach destinations which are already properly served with a road (Springetts Lane). **ACTION:** Refer to GPC to consult with residents replacing signage.
- 6.1.o Residents claim they are prevented by intimidation from parking near the gate at the top of Springetts Lane when they want to walk on the Common. It is legal to park within 15 metres of the entrance but rocks have been placed on the Common as a barrier to parking and their immediate removal is demanded. Many people are demanding a properly designated car park. The car parking difficulty is hard on the elderly as they cannot walk up the hill to the Common and are particularly vulnerable to unpleasant verbal abuse. **ACTION:** GPC to continue to consult with the Police, the Lord of the Manor, the Graziers, the Commoners’ Association and Springetts Lane house owners concerning public access.
- 6.1.p Clear signposting of footpaths on and off the Common is requested. Numerous incidents of walkers getting lost as they try to identify rights of way. **ACTION:** GPC to organize signage to be positioned just outside the Common boundary.

## 7 ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1.a. **Landscape Character Assessment:** Most of the countryside in the four parishes is designated “Area Less Resilient to Change” in the draft Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2002 and this must be taken into account by decision-makers in the planning process. This designation acknowledges the fragile nature of rural South West Herefordshire. Measures to protect the landscape include safeguarding significant landscape features that make up the essential character of the area including (amongst others) skylines and hill features, woodlands, established hedgerow and tree patterns and water features, especially river valleys and flood plains.
- 7.1.b. **Wildlife protection:** There are several Special Wildlife Sites in the area, but no areas of SSSI status so there is little legal protection for these areas. The four parishes are actually very rich in wildlife. Buzzards and ravens are seen daily in the rural parishes and goshawks are frequent visitors. Merlins and Peregrines are occasionally seen. Large village gardens support a wide range of birds and the community has been enthusiastic about environmental matters at every Parish Plan meeting.
- 7.1.c. **The Dulas Brook** is one of the few streams left in England supporting native White Clawed Crayfish and it is an important breeding stream for trout. A survey of invertebrates has shown it to be one of the most interesting streams in the area. Otters use the Dulas Brook as a corridor through the village of Ewyas Harold.
- 7.1.d. **The rarest habitat in the parishes is unimproved grassland.** Little survives but a number of farmers have entered the DEFRA Countryside Stewardship Scheme and improvements in the environmental management of farmland have resulted in beautifully laid hedges (a characteristic of Herefordshire) which provide nesting places for birds. Changes in the management of pasture encourage a richer flora and more attention is being paid to environmental matters. Recent changes in DEFRA farm payments will increase the number of farmers taking positive action for wildlife.
- 7.1.d. **The Common**  
 The Design Statement Questionnaire showed that two thirds of respondents regularly visit Ewyas Harold Common for recreation. It is a magnificent wild space of 125 acres overlooking the village and was part of the Lord’s Wood of the old manorial system. It is now an important local amenity containing numerous relics of past use including quarries, lime kilns, orchards and a cider mill, abandoned house sites and enclosures. The approach from the village is via a deeply sunk lane with wide steep banks. The Green Lane which crosses the Common is part of an ancient ridgeway road system used for centuries to reach Abbey Dore and the Cefn Road.
- Ewyas Harold Common is a registered Common and may be legally enjoyed by the local community subject to certain restrictions, e.g., Unauthorized vehicles may not drive across the common but are permitted to park within 15 metres of the entrance. Dogs must be kept on a short lead when animals are grazing on the common.
- The land is owned by the Lord of the Manor but some residents enjoy Commoners’ Rights to graze animals there. These ancient rights probably date from early agricultural settlements in the area somewhere between one and two thousand years ago.

A wildlife oasis, Ewyas Harold Common is rich in rare butterflies and flowers. It is a good spot for birdwatching and raptors are commonly seen. Meadow saffron can be found in September, a remnant of medieval cultivation undertaken to produce dyes by monks at Dore Abbey.

Over the last ten years the Common has become a vital axis for several adjacent farms in the Dulas valley which have joined the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Linked together, the combination of an extensive tract of common land and a substantial acreage of sympathetically managed farmland provides a unique range of habitats for wildlife in Southwest Herefordshire. The Common is not protected as an SSSI but has been mapped by the Countryside Agency in accordance with the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW).

## 7.2. ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.2.a We should **promote understanding of the wildlife of our area** (Design Statement). **ACTION:** Include wildlife information on Footpaths and Village maps and request articles for Newsletter and Website on wildlife subjects from knowledgeable contributors.
- 7.2.b **Ewyas Harold Common** is a priceless wildlife and recreational asset. (Design Statement). **ACTION:** The GPC's long-term responsibility is to defend public rights and to deny illegal encroachment. GPC to support the development by the Graziers and the Ewyas Harold Common Society of a sensitive management plan for the Common to include access arrangement for the public. .
- 7.2.c **Strategic trees** should be planted using native species (Design Statement). **ACTION:** GPC to be aware. Include information in Newsletter.
- 7.2.d **Promote Herefordshire's rare orchard trees.** Suitable for small gardens, they are a local feature and there is often grant aid available (Design Statement). **ACTION:** Newsletter

## 8. FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

*(Design Statement)*

Flooding occurs when water from the Dulas Brook backs up at the bridge near the Post Office and overflows on to the road. The Village Store and Post office, Brook Cottage, The Dog Bar, the Malt House and The Old Stables are occasionally affected. During times of flood the stream seeks to follow its old course down the main street through to the finger post where it rejoins the brook. A further flood location exists between Caemain and the end of Morgan's Garage, believed to be due to run-off from the hill S.W. of Pontrilas. At times of flooding the water level in the sewage system overflows into the road. In some places brook water rises through the storm drains into the road.

Responsibility for flood prevention is a confused area. The overall policy for the Wye Catchment Area is determined by the Environment Agency however the implementation of certain aspects of flood control is the responsibility of Hereford Council and Welsh Water.

Available maps of sewage and storm drain facilities appear to be inaccurate. The sewage system appears to be overloaded by the addition of new housing estates and the Training Camp to the system.

## 8.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1.a Flood control responsibilities for the village should be clearly understood and monitored by the Group Parish Council. **ACTION: GPC**
- 8.1.b No planning permission for any development should be given until the sewage system is proved to be adequate. **ACTION: GPC**
- 8.1.c Drainage records should be regularly updated and made available for public inspection. **ACTION: GPC to investigate.**

## 9. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is all about people making the minimum impact on the environment. All local government departments - from Planning to Highways – must try to limit the negative effect of urbanization, In an era of climate change and uncertain weather patterns, we need to care for resources that previously we may have taken for granted.

- 9.1 **Water:** Most Ewyas Harold residents use mains supply but over 70 farms, properties and fields rely on water piped from St. Martins Well. The right to extract water from the springs on the Common was granted by Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> to the Lords of Abergavenny in the sixteenth century and the supply is now owned by the Lord of the Manor. In times of drought the water in the six reservoirs that supply the area may drop rapidly during the day, causing cracks to develop in the reservoir clay. When the water rises at night, large amounts may be lost from the reservoir causing water shortages locally. Rural residents without access to mains water supply have private wells which vary in efficiency. **ACTION: information to about water shortages to be made available via posters, Newsletter and website when appropriate.**
- 9.2 **Recycling:** There is a limited Blue Box scheme operating in part of Ewyas Harold village, but numerous respondents have asked for a proper recycling centre. In the past, the Memorial Hall committee has rejected suggestions for a centre be based at the Hall because previous experience has shown that it causes litter. **ACTION: GPC to approach the Memorial Hall Committee to discuss the possibility of a properly managed and tidy facility.**
- 9.3 People need ready information about the **Freighter Service** (mobile public skip). **ACTION: Publish dates in Newsletter and on Website**
- 9.4 **Keen to be Green:** A number of respondents have shown considerable interest in recycling and green issues. Ideally, these enthusiasts should get together. Are there enough keenies to form an eco-building club? Or maybe a gourmet-gardening club? **ACTION: If this is you – please contact the Newsletter to find green soulmates!**

- 9.5 **Planning:** The Design Statement (200) encourages innovative building – but it needs to alert people to the need to “think green” when designing buildings in the countryside. **ACTION:** GPC and HC to encourage developers to incorporate “green” design characteristics in plans for housing and to encourage innovative environment-friendly design.
- 9.6 **Road use:** **ACTION:** Reduce unnecessary journeys by road by supporting local shops and businesses. Develop and use transport-sharing schemes. Encourage the safe use of bicycles.
- 9.7 **Education:** People want to know how they can make a positive difference to the environment. **ACTION:** Newsletter and website to include regular items on environmental issues with contact names and addresses.

## 10. LIFELONG LEARNING

### 10.1 Adult Learning

There is considerable interest in an extension of local adult learning opportunities. (Questionnaire 2005). The questionnaire offered people various options for courses, based on subjects which had emerged from previous consultations as the most popular and almost half the respondents expressed an interest in classes as follows: Exercise (100 people), Computing (80), Arts and Crafts (67), Language (59), Creative Writing (23). Additional suggestions included yoga, tai chi, DIY, music, dancing, household management and a financial investment club (25). 38% of respondents preferred daytime classes, 43% evening classes and 17% would attend weekend courses. Childcare needs should be considered and actively investigated.

Ewyas Harold has a number of venues which are potentially suitable for adult learning - the Memorial Hall offers a large space suitable for exercise and fitness and a smaller room appropriate for other classes; also available are the new Baptist Hall and St Michael’s Hall. The Primary School can be used out of school hours. In Rowlestone parish there is a community-owned village hall. In Dulas parish there is a private hall the Dulas Court Barn is available for public use. It is owned and managed by Dulas Court. Keep Fit and Art classes are held for residents and open to the wider community.

There are some locally organized classes and EH has a strong and well-supported branch of the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA). However many people requiring adult learning and training have to travel to Hereford, Abergavenny or Ross-on-Wye. This involves a journey of at least 30 minutes by car and longer by public transport.

Data from the 2001 Census indicates that post school qualification levels are similar to figures for the county with almost 45% of residents having few educational qualifications. This indicates there is scope for the development of short accessible courses in IT, adult literacy and numeracy. Business people have asked for short courses related to skills needed for local businesses.

## 10.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.2.a Form an education working group. **ACTION: volunteers to consider group's remit and report back to the GPC**
- 10.2.b It is suggested that the working group liaises with Herefordshire Partnership Lifelong Learning Development Officer (and local providers) to distribute the education-related data that the Parish Plan has gathered and to gain information on current opportunities and funding for development of adult learning. **ACTION: to liase and report to GPC**
- 10.2.c GPC-nominated governor to enquire from the school about the current position on the Extended Schools Initiative which attracts financial aid to extend the facilities for both the community and pupils at the school. **ACTION: GPC Governor**
- 10.2.d Set up on Parish website a directory of venues suitable for adult learning, indicating the facilities availability, costs and contact names. Ask providers to list their courses on the website and in the Newsletter. **ACTION: The working group to provide website administrator and Newsletter Editor with data.**

## 11. CHILDCARE

The nature of this community means that the numbers requiring childcare provision in percentage terms remains small (just 4% of Questionnaire respondents). Although for those who have young children this is an important issue. There is demand for childcare particularly for school age children, 4% saying they would use a breakfast club, 9% an after school club and 10% a holiday club. In the past the Church Summer Holiday Club has been well supported. (Questionnaire 2005)

The community is well served by an excellent preschool for children of 2 ½ years and above. There is also the private nursery at Wormbridge which provides good quality care for children all week. The main need appears to be for more flexible childcare at different times. The Preschool share the village hall with other users which restricts their flexibility. If they had their own facility they would be able to extend their childcare provision.

### 11.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.2.a Ensure people know how to access Childcare Services by including contact numbers in newsletter and website. **ACTION: Newsletter and Website administrators**
- 11.2.b Improve communication between GPC, school, pre-school and playgroup to ensure local needs are met. Obtain regular reports from the school on it's numbers etc and the "after school" clubs it runs. **ACTION: GPC to improve liaison and request regular reports.**
- 11.2.c Liaise with school concerning the Extended Schools initiative which provides extra finance for providing community facilities at the school. **ACTION: GPC to ask nominated governor to report.**

## 12. YOUTH and RECREATION

The lack of leisure provision for young people was deplored at every Parish Plan meeting. Older people are better catered for with over 40 clubs in the area. Providing facilities is one thing – the challenge is to find volunteers willing to work alongside young people. There is increasing help available from youth services but it still needs regular local support. The activities that already exist need better publicity.

Through focus groups, the Midsummer Event and the Questionnaire, young people expressed a strong desire for better youth facilities. Their priorities are: a place to meet; better outdoor facilities such as a skateboard park and tennis courts.

### 12.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1.a We have thriving football clubs and cricket clubs for adults but there is a complete lack of provision for women's sport and as well as a need for youth sports clubs. **ACTION: encourage women to form sports groups and to apply to the GPC for support.**

**ACTION: GPC to liaise with football and cricket teams with a view to developing youth teams of both sexes.**

- 12.1.b Clearly these projects would have significant financial implications and whilst over half of residents felt that a small increase in the parish precept would be acceptable, a great deal of additional funding will be required.

- 12.1.c In the short term simple, cost-effective improvements such as basketball nets should be discussed with the Memorial Hall Committee and the Recreation Ground working group. **ACTION: GPC**

- 12.1.d In the long term a working party needs to develop more extensive projects which will bring together existing and new groups across the community. The young people themselves have offered to help with fundraising by holding a "fun-day" and it has been suggested that a Youth Council should be formed to enable youngsters to actively participate in improving their own facilities. **ACTION: GPC to look for volunteers to form a Leisure Development working party and a Youth Council to investigate funding opportunities, liaise with the Recreation Ground and the Memorial Hall. The group will need to work with bodies such as the HC Youth Service and set a realistic time table for action.**

- 12.1.e There are already some good things happening in the community and we need to ensure that people know about them. **ACTION: Newsletter editor and Hereford Times correspondent to include reports and publicity. Website to include information.**

### 12.2 GROUPS and ACTIVITIES

Currently there are both Brownies and Guides in the village operating out of St. Michael's

Hall. Although there are no Cubs and Scouts groups for boys, there is a thriving Air Cadets group meeting in St. Michael's Hall for those aged 13+. There is a gap of provision for young boys.

- 12.2.a The Young People's Fellowship (a youth group for 10-13 year olds) meets in the Baptist Hall. **PARISH PLAN IN ACTION:** In response to young people who presented their views at the Parish Plan focus groups in 2004 a Tuesday "Drop-in" group for those aged 13+ now meets at the Baptist Hall.
- 12.2.b Recently the Herefordshire Youth Services have begun running courses from the Baptist Hall which will hopefully develop in the future. In addition to the above there are often day workshops through the year and during the summer the churches together run a successful holiday club. **ACTION:** encourage similar activities and engage parents in Working Party.
- 12.2.c The village has a strong Young Farmers group who are actively involved in a wide range of activities and are keen to contribute to the wider community by supporting events like the annual bonfire and the recent Memorial Hall celebrations. The young farmers meet at a variety of venues. **ACTION:** Involve Young Farmers in Youth Council and fundraising activities.

### 13. THE MEMORIAL HALL

The Memorial Hall is central to village life, built as a memorial to servicemen who died in both World Wars. After ten years of fundraising, it was opened on Easter Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> 1955 to serve the parishes of Dulas, Ewyas Harold, Kentchurch and Kenderchurch. It actually serves a much wider area, including Rowlestone, Llancillo and Abbey Dore. A large building, the Memorial Hall is particularly useful for functions that require extra space for dancing or display areas.

The Memorial Hall Committee is committed to implementing improvements with the support of the Trustees (the GPC) and the wider community. Lighting is about to be improved and disability issues are currently being discussed.

The 2005 "Fiftieth Anniversary Celebrations" were successful in focussing people's attention on their village hall and it is hoped that significant improvements will be possible if more offers of help are received from the village and the parishes.

#### 13.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1.a The majority of respondents (Questionnaire 2005) say the Memorial Hall needs modernisation. If the Memorial Hall is not modernised, users will undoubtedly go to other halls in neighbouring communities. If this happens the Memorial Hall will lose vital revenue and may struggle to cover its costs.  
**ACTION:** Trustees (GPC) should support the Memorial Hall Committee so that the hall is used for the maximum benefit of the local community.

- 13.1.b Ewyas Harold and the adjacent parishes have a higher than average percentage of elderly people in the population (Census). The public asks the Memorial Hall management committee to comply with the spirit as well as the law of the Disability Act 2001 to provide:
- Designated disabled parking near the front entrance.  
Disabled access ramps at the front of the Hall.  
Improved lighting in the parking area around the hall.  
Improved easily accessible disabled toilet provision for men and women.  
Hearing loop system
- ACTION: Hall Management Committee**
- 13.1.c **Clearly printed directions** – well displayed - so people know how lighting and heating systems work. **ACTION: Hall Management Committee**
- 13.1.d **Modern toilet facilities** with additional toilets and washbasins suitable for small children. **ACTION: Hall Management Committee**
- 13.1.e **Encourage local people to form film club** in connection with the Memorial Hall. Contact Flicks in the Sticks with a view to hosting a film club. Black-out roller blinds would be required. **ACTION: Article in the Newsletter to stimulate local interest.**
- 13.1.f **Investigate the proposal for an all-weather/hard surface multipurpose recreation area** near the hall for activities such as skateboarding, basket ball, tennis etc. This could double as car parking. **ACTION: GPC and the Hall Management Committee**
- 13.1.g **Separate fenced outdoor play area** for young children **ACTION: GPC and the Hall Management Committee**

#### 14. THE RECREATION GROUND

Situated in a beautiful setting, surrounded by trees and bordered by the Dulas Brook, the “Recreation Ground” is the only property actually owned by the GPC and it is a priceless asset. Its value lies not in terms of land value but in its worth as a centre for open-air recreational and social activities for the whole community.

This history of this field goes back to medieval times. The deeds (lodged in Hereford County Record Office) show in a conveyance of 1928 that Church Meadow was purchased by EHPC from Mary Wegg-Prosser for £450.00. The field was slightly enlarged in 1953 when the hedge near the present Priorsfield Estate was moved by agreement with Mr C. H. Smith. of Down House.

- 14.1 A Right of Way (footpath) runs from the entrance gate across the lower corner of the field. This has certain implications regarding public access. A number of suggestions concerning further facilities came out of the Questionnaire 2005. Many people called for a tennis court and there was a request from young people for a multi-sport hard court and a skateboard park.

- 14.2 In considering these, we are restricted by the small size and irregular shape of the field. We can't get a quart into a pint pot! There is no doubt that much as we value it, we cannot fit all the recreational requirements of the parish on to this plot of land. Some extra recreational facilities might be located at the Memorial Hall but its isolation from the village centre would make it unsuitable for some children's activities. More land is required for activities such as tennis and bowls etc. **ACTION: GPC Working Party and Youth Council (if formed by the village) to consider the acquisition of land and related fund-raising issues.**
- 14.3 Vandalism is a problem on the Recreation Ground but the GPC is encouraging people who see vandalism to report it at once to the Police. **ACTION: Policy of "no tolerance" of vandalism with publicity and provision of phone numbers to report incidents.**

## 15. LAW AND ORDER

39% of respondents (Questionnaire 2005) thought that local policing was either effective or very effective. 36% thought it was not effective. Many complaints were based on the difficulty of accessing and communicating effectively with the Police. The West Mercia Constabulary have responded by attending a public meeting. The Police advise that it is not cost-effective to have a local policeman based in Ewyas Harold as the crime rate is low and part of the area is regularly patrolled by MOD.

### 15.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

How to increase the effectiveness of local policing.

- 15.1.a Beat officer or other to attend GPC meetings on a regular basis. **ACTION: GPC to invite Beat Officer.**
- 15.1.b Less bureaucratic procedures when a crime is reported by telephone. The public dislikes having to repeat the same information many times to different people on the telephone. It puts people off contacting the police. **ACTION: Parish Plan to advise West Mercia Constabulary.**
- 15.1.c Evening visits to Ewyas Harold Recreation Ground and village centre by police required to deter vandalism and petty crime. **ACTION: GPC to request West Mercia Constabulary to comply.**
- 15.1.d Public display of local contact numbers and Crime Stopper telephone number. The Police have requested that we encourage individuals to report incidents as soon as possible. **ACTION: Ensure Police Newsletter is available in the Post Office and put contact numbers in the GPC Newsletter. Contact numbers also to be placed on the Recreation Ground to deter vandalism.**
- 15.1.e Many people think Neighbourhood Watch is just a cosmetic exercise. Better publicity is required. **ACTION: Article for the GPC Newsletter.**

## THE RURAL PARISHES

### Dulas Parish Plan November 2004

Dulas is a rural parish centred around Dulas Court and Dulas Church. There is no village centre; dwellings are mostly farmhouses and scattered cottages. There are 65 adults living in the community with nearly twice as many women as men on the electoral roll. Many are frail elderly people living at Dulas Court Residential Home.



#### **FACILITIES**

There is no shop or pub or school in Dulas. There are two post boxes in the parish, but no public telephone. There is no public building other than the church. Most residents go to Ewyas Harold for their needs, or further afield to Hereford or Abergavenny. There are no facilities for children or young people. Dulas Court (a private residential home) offers day care once a week to local elderly people on a fee basis. Philip Keane also offers a recently renovated building "The Barn" for small public meetings and events.

#### **Transport**

Apart from the daily school bus (running from Craswall to Pontrilas via Dulas) there is only one public bus service which goes to Abergavenny at 9.45am on a Tuesday. There are no designated bus stops or bus shelters in the Parish. Car ownership is high, as you would expect in a Parish with virtually no public transport. Measures introduced by government and local councils aimed at curbing car ownership (high car parking fees, reduced parking provision in town) hit the residents of parishes like Dulas very hard. The Dore Valley Transport Group service and Dial-a-Ride are vital lifelines for those without access to a car.

#### **Church**

The church of St. Michael is the only public building in the parish. It is surrounded by an outstanding churchyard of great natural history interest which is full of orchids in the spring. It was built in the nineteenth century to replace a much older church that formerly lay in the grounds of Dulas Court. Although it is an attractive church, it is not considered to be of great architectural importance. Services are still held at Dulas Church but congregations are very small. During the winter months services are sometimes held in the comfort of Dulas Court by kind permission of the proprietor. The maintenance and repair of the church has been difficult. Funds were raised to repair the roof but this has not been carried out. The diocese has suggested the church should be closed and allowed to become a ruin. Churchgoers in the parish have not, so far, agreed.

## ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Dulas was formerly economically dependent on agriculture, however the decline in farm earnings has meant that there have been considerable changes in the parish. Surviving farms have either specialized in intensive agriculture such as egg production or they have diversified, using the premises to support a range of small businesses. Although it is a tiny parish, there is an astonishing diversity of economic activity. Agricultural contracting and forestry are traditional occupations, but there is also a builder's yard, a computer program design initiative, a journalist, a medical internet sales company, a forestry consultancy and a horse livery business. The major employer in the area is Dulas Court Residential Nursing Home. Some agricultural smallholdings have become "hobby farms" supported by wages earned outside the parish or by retirement income.

In common with many rural areas, Dulas is home to a number of commuters. Employment patterns have changed. Some people commute daily to nearby employment in Herefordshire and Monmouthshire. However some are travelling considerably longer distances in the course of their work, going daily to Newport and Bristol. Others are making regular (but not daily) journeys to London or Birmingham and other distant areas. Travel by train is popular and local residents go to Abergavenny or Hereford to access the rail network. Commuters say they would welcome the reopening of the Pontrilas Railway Halt and would use it.

## ENVIRONMENT

Dulas Churchyard is the most outstanding natural feature in the Parish. Thanks to careful management the churchyard is wonderfully rich in wild flowers, particularly orchids in the Spring. Visitors come from far and wide to admire the remnants of Herefordshire's natural flora which has mostly disappeared out as a result of modern farming practises.



### **Dulas Brook**

Rising in Newton St. Margarets and fed by springs, the Brook runs down the Dulas Valley and through the centre of Ewyas Harold before it joins the Monnow. This stream enjoys excellent water quality and it is rich in wildlife. The endangered White-clawed crayfish and otter use the brook as a corridor. Kingfisher, pied flycatcher and dipper are regularly seen here. It is an important trout-breeding stream which has economic value for the whole region.

There are Ancient Woodland sites and some large old trees at the northern end of the Parish. The lime trees are remnants of an old lime forest that once flourished in this area.



**Ewyas Harold Common** dominates the eastern part of the parish and some of the residents enjoy Graziers Rights. In addition many people living in the parish visit the Common to walk and enjoy its fine views. This recreation facility is regarded as an extremely important. Although an interesting wildlife area, Ewyas Harold Common is not an SSSI. Management policy is decided by the Graziers' Association.

### **Opportunity**

Several farmers have joined the DEFRA Countryside Stewardship Scheme and have been able to profit from grants aimed at improving local habitat. This has resulted in raised awareness of environmental issues.

## **HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY**




### **Dulas Court.**

Although it appears to be simply a large Victorian house now used as a residential home, Dulas Court is a historic site. The old Dulas Court was once owned by the Parrys of Newcourt in Bacton. Blanche Parry was nurse to Queen Elizabeth 1st and became Gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber. She served the Queen all her life and the Parry family profited from the connection. Dulas Court was later bought from the Hopton family by the Rev. Robert Mosley Fielden (1858) and passed on to his son who pulled down the Court as well as the old church (which spoils the view!) in spite of the fact that it lay on the site of a former Benedictine priory.

Only a trace of the early establishment remains. Some of the profusely carved oak panels in the main hall of the modern Dulas Court are said to have come from the old church. The base and stem of the old preaching cross and two gravestones lie in the garden. An early 12th century archway, taken from the old church, has been erected as an entrance to the

walled garden that lies on the other side of the Dulas Brook, north of Dulas Court. Where the Dulas Brook enters the Court grounds there is a raised mound surrounded by hollows. This may be the site of a former mill as the field opposite was known as Millpond Orchard.

**There are several items of historic interest in the parish which need protection:**

1.	<p>Three ancient stone stiles (either inside or bordering the parish).</p> <p>This example is on the Dulas/Longtown parish boundary.</p>	
2.	<p>A Norman arch circa 1000AD situated at Dulas Court.</p> 	 <p>The arch is "Dymmock School" typical of group of Masons who worked in Dymmock, Gloucestershire before the Norman Conquest.</p>
3.	<p>An historic preaching cross.</p>	
4..	<p>Parish boundary stones on the Common.</p>	

**LAW AND ORDER**

Few incidents are reported from this area. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme in operation.

## **ACTION PLAN**

*What residents would like to see done in the Parish.*

- Dulas is not designated by any village signs on the highways which leads to confusion. Residents feel that local signs should be erected, but there is some difficulty on the Cefn Road in deciding where they should be placed. **ACTION: GPC to consider.**
- There should be GPC liaison with the Vicar and the parishioners of the church while they determine the future of Dulas Church. **ACTION: GPC**
- There should be more signs for walkers, so they don't get lost when entering or leaving the Common. **ACTION: GPC**
- It was suggested that Dulas Churchyard should be an SSSI or Special Wildlife Site. **ACTION: GPC to enquire.**
- The road along the side of the Lawns meadow (west of Dulas Court) is undercut and eroded. Eastbound traffic is forced to pull over to avoid oncoming vehicles but the verge is deceptive and cars run the risk of rolling off the road and into the meadow. White lines have been painted down the side of the road, but drivers are unsure what they mean. An increase in heavy traffic has been reported along this road. Road improvements should be sought. **ACTION: GPC**
- Many residents complain of road drainage problems and poor road surfaces which require regular monitoring by the GPC. **ACTION: GPC**
- Local residents would like to see improved sports facilities (tennis courts and a swimming pool) in Ewyas Harold to serve south Herefordshire.
- There is a demand for improved recycling provision, either in Ewyas Harold or Pontrilas.
- Residents agree that they would like to see the Railway Halt at Pontrilas re-opened. Many say they would use the train in preference to driving if they could.
- Residents use the facilities in Ewyas Harold and would like to see the Memorial Hall updated and made more "user friendly". Suggest that it should host film shows.

**This Parish Plan was written by Liz Overstall and is based on results and suggestions from the Questionnaire completed by residents of Dulas Parish at the Parish Plan Cheese and Wine Party 19th May 2004.**

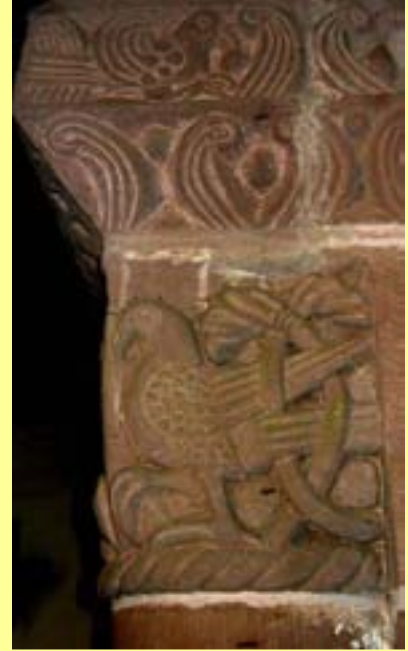
## ROWLESTONE PARISH PLAN

Rowlestone is an isolated rural parish in South Herefordshire. There is a small settlement around the church, but the majority of dwellings are farmhouses or cottages lying scattered over the countryside. There are 87 residents: 37 men and 44 women.





The chancel arch is of particular note where two beautifully carved figures dressed in long garments represent St. Peter and his guardian angel. On the opposite side of the arch they are depicted again upside down serving to remind us of how St. Peter was crucified.



**The Castle Mound** at Rowlestone Court Farm is a site of antiquity, probably dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is thought to have been built during the anarchy of 1136 - 1154 A.D. It may have been one of the 1,114 illegal “anarchy castles” believed to have been demolished by Henry II (1154-1189 AD). There is no public right of way to the Castle Mound.

### TRANSPORT

Car ownership is a necessity in Rowlestone because there is no public bus service at all. Residents have to travel to EH or Pontrilas to catch the bus. Any improvement to Bus service is a plus. Residents say they would use the train station at Pontrilas if it were reopened.

### HIGHWAYS

Residents complain of inadequate drainage and narrow roads with few passing places. Mud is problem on all roads and in the village centre. **ACTION: GPC**

### ENVIRONMENT

Poor field drainage creates flooding on roads. This mud washes into the Cwm Brook and is a cause of pollution. Residents also complain that pollution from agricultural chemicals is running into the Cwm Brook. **ACTION: GPC to ask Environment Agency to monitor water quality.**

Residents have asked for two dog-friendly stiles. **ACTION: Footpath Officer**

It is considered that Hill Lane should be downgraded from a highway (road) to the status

of a footpath or bridleway. **ACTION: GPC AND HC**

Better road signage is required as it is easy to get lost down the small lanes in the parish.  
**ACTION: GPC**

A Rowlestone Village sign is required on the road from Walterstone. A brown heritage sign directing visitors to the Church is required. **ACTION: GPC**

### **CRIME AND ORDER**

Residents don't feel they are getting any kind of service, but crime levels are very low indeed. They are in favour of local crime watch and farm watch scheme. **ACTION: Volunteers required. Newsletter to advertise the schemes.**

### **HOUSING**

Some residents felt there was insufficient housing, particularly for first time buyers. This problem contributes towards creating an elderly population in the parish.  
**ACTION: GPC to support affordable housing schemes.**

### **EMPLOYMENT**

Most of the population is elderly and retired. Farmers and self-employed people make up the bulk of the occupations of younger people. Holiday lets are an important farm diversification.

### **ACTION PLAN**

*Rowlestone's Parish Plan has resulted in action already!*

Better road cleaning in the centre of the village. **(The GPC has arranged for regular sweeping on all roads radiating out from the church for a distance of 100 yards from December 2004.)**

Better signage. **(On order from HC)**

Improvements to road verges. **(The Lengthsman will tidy verges in Dec. 2004)**

Improvements to road drainage. **(The GPC is monitoring the situation.)**

Broadband communication **(introduced Dec 2004).**

Recycling centre either at Rowlestone Village Hall or Ewyas Harold Village Hall.  
**ACTION: GPC and Memorial Hall committee to consider.**

Parish Council should support the reopening of Pontrilas rail halt. **ACTION: GPC**

Hill Lane should be down graded to a useable footpath. **ACTION: The GPC and HC have assessed the lane and costs in the region of £30,000 have been suggested. In the meantime the GPC is improving the drainage at the top of Hill Lane so that walkers can**

more easily access the footpath leading off Hill Lane which is part of the Marcher's Way. This work should be completed in December 2004.

This draft Parish Plan was written by Mary Williams and Paul Sheen. It is based on results and suggestions from the Questionnaire completed by residents of Rowstone Parish at the Parish Plan Cheese and Wine Party 21<sup>st</sup> April 2004.

### *Acknowledgements*

We should like to thank Herefordshire Council for support in the preparation of this Parish Plan. Also Rosemary Davidson, West Midland Constabulary,

## **APPENDICES AVAILABLE FROM THE PARISH PLAN GROUP**

*Design Statement*

*Valued buildings list*

*Listed buildings*

*History of the area*

*Field names*

*Wildlife checklist*

*Population data*

*Census*

*Report from the Youth Project 2004*

*Report from the Summer Fayre*

*Report from the Business Meeting 2005*

*Report from the Questionnaire 2005*