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# Pembridge Parish Plan

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DECEMBER 2002

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# Pembridge Parish Plan December 2002

The planning process has been funded by



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## Executive Summary

The Parish Plan was the outcome of a parish-wide process designed to help and encourage parish residents express their concerns about their community and their aspirations for its future. The planning process was funded by the Countryside Agency as part of its Vital Villages programme and made possible by countless volunteer hours invested by the Parish Plan Steering Group.

This document describes the features and surroundings of Pembridge and expresses the residents' concerns regarding its appearance, economy and social community. The aim is to ensure that further development and change, based on a considered understanding of the parish's past and present will contribute positively to its future and will protect and enhance the special characteristics that make Pembridge and its environs unique and precious.

In July 2002 survey forms were delivered to 453 households in the Parish in order to assess residents' opinions on a wide range of topics related to the Plan. The large response of 52% can be attributed to the personalised approach adopted during delivery and collection of forms.

The main points revealed by the survey are:

Residents identified traffic pressure as the item of most concern to them (62%), followed by the state of the environment (49%), inadequacy of housing (25%), insufficiency of services (21%), availability of leisure facilities (16%) and limitations in the provision of adequate local transport (12%).

Within these topics the items of main concern were: both speed and volume of traffic through the village (41%); lack of recycling facilities (94%); more off-street parking (63%); more affordable housing (78%); greater access to health care facilities for those without their own transport (especially the elderly); and the desire for more leisure facilities especially for younger children.

The document ends by providing sets of guidelines to be followed in future planning and suggests specific steps to be taken in the process of developing facilities within the Parish.

The methodology adopted and time-frame encompassed in preparation of the report is outlined in Appendix 1, the various survey forms developed for the specific surveys are shown in Appendix 2, and the full results are presented in Appendix 3.

## **A. Scope and Purpose**

### **What is a Parish Plan?**

A Parish Plan is the outcome of a parish-wide consultation process designed to help and encourage parish residents express their concerns about their community and their aspirations for its future. The planning process has been funded by the Countryside Agency as part of its Vital Villages programme and made possible by the countless volunteer hours invested by the Parish Plan Steering Group.

This document describes the features and surroundings of Pembridge and expresses our concerns regarding its appearance, economy and social community. The aim is to ensure that further development and change, based on a considered understanding of the parish's past and present, will contribute positively into its future and will protect and enhance the special characteristics that make Pembridge and its environs unique and precious.

Pembridge has clearly seen many changes since its inception. Originally called Penebruge, the village pre-dates the Domesday Book. A community has existed at this place for over 1000 years. At one point in its history the village exceeded Leominster in size and was an important centre of commerce during the mediaeval period. Following the Industrial Revolution, Pembridge appeared to "fall off the map" and economic activity declined. The village was left alone to continue its rural traditions in relative isolation and, as a consequence, much of its mediaeval character remained unspoiled.

Pembridge is no fossilized relic but a living, vibrant working community that has endured and adapted to changes from both without and within. We expect even more change to occur in the immediate future. New developments and changes to existing buildings should be seen as part of the continuous evolution of Pembridge. In earlier years, for example, many of the houses were thatched and painted in bright colours. The grey slate and black and white character of the village did not always dominate. For more than 1000 years, buildings have been added to, altered, adapted and demolished to create the village and surrounding hamlets that comprise the parish today. While changes will continue in future years, the Parishioners want to ensure that those changes reflect the character of Pembridge and sustain a "quality of life" for its residents. This document reflects just one step in a continuous process of change management and community self-determination.

### **Who Is The Plan For?**

The Parish Plan represents a snap shot in time of how we, as residents, see our community in 2002. It is an expression of the major issues deemed of greatest concern to residents at the time of its creation – traffic and transport, environmental issues, leisure facilities and recreational opportunities, housing, economic development and needs of the business community. It is also a reference offering guidance for anyone planning development in and around the village. The Plan is also designed to help funding agencies assess needs when evaluating applications for support. The Plan also presents an Action Plan identifying key areas where significant improvements to the quality of life of its residents could be achieved.

Thus the plan is addressed to:

- Residents as an expression of their views, concerns and aspirations for the parish.

- The Parish Council to help guide its members in representing the views of parishioners when dealing with other “external” agencies” and when making decisions about services and developments likely to affect the Parish and its residents.
- Developers, their architects and designers to explain what the village expects to see in new and altered buildings.
- Agents and agencies involved in local government (Herefordshire Council) and the provision of community services to guide them in the county planning process, the allocation of funding or development of programmes. The Herefordshire Unitary Development Planning process will accept Parish Plans as legitimate input into the Supplementary Planning Guidelines.

## How Was the Plan Developed?

The impetus for a Plan originated with a vision of the former Chairman of the Parish Council, Richard Brockington, in October 2000 when the initial focus was on the preparation of a Village Design Statement (VDS). Early progress was slow due to the lack of clarity regarding the scope and effectiveness of a VDS, but accelerated with the introduction of the Parish Plan programme and a successful application for funding support from the Countryside Agency in October 2001.

A Parish Plan Steering Group was assembled by Chairman, Alan Bramwell and seven working committees established to identify the key issues associated with the following topics: housing, traffic/transport, services, tourism & business, leisure and facilities, environment, and countryside access & heritage. The methodology adopted is shown in Appendix 1.

<b>Pembridge Parish Plan Participants</b>		
<b>Chairman:</b> Alan Bramwell		
<b>Secretary:</b> Jen Myers <b>Reports:</b> Anna Pollock, Henry & Rose Elwell		
<b>HOUSING</b> Sue Tong Jeff Price Julie Mifflin Rose Elwell	<b>TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT</b> Stan Parrett David Owen Sue Tong Simon Boosey Jeff Price	<b>SERVICES</b> Alan Stokes Tony Norman Rose Elwell Sally Edey Simon Boosey
<b>TOURISM &amp; BUSINESS</b> Anna Pollock Tony Norman Jen Myers Jonathan Hughes-Jones Keith Smith	<b>LEISURE &amp; FACILITIES</b> Henry Elwell Julie Mifflin David Owen Jonathan Hughes-Jones Melanie Hughes-Jones	<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> Patricia Lloyd Stan Parrett Anna Pollock Sue Tong Sally Edey
<b>COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS &amp; HERITAGE</b> Tony Norman Patricia Lloyd Edward Bulmer Henry Elwell Melanie Hughes-Jones		

The first task of the working committees was to assemble known information about each topic, identify major concerns and issues, discuss creative ideas and consider the cross over impacts between one topic and another (e.g., the impact of traffic on leisure or business on traffic etc.) in

order to draw up questions for further consultation with residents. In February 2002, seven team reports were made available to parish residents and work on a questionnaire commenced.

In July, volunteers delivered personal questionnaires to each of the 453 households in the Parish. 380 (representing 52% of the adult population aged over 16) were duly completed, tabulated and analyzed by the working committees for inclusion in the Plan. In addition a supplementary questionnaire was administered to the youth of the village to determine their desired use of the Millennium Meadow. A separate business questionnaire was developed and completed by 38 locally-based enterprises.

This document represents the combined efforts of the seven working teams and the time spent by Parish residents in completing the questionnaire.

In addition to the work undertaken by the Steering Group, significant contributions were made by Robert Anderson (publishing, photography, printing), Rose Elwell (proof reading), Sheila Sousley and Ross Cocks (data entry), Councillor Roger Phillips (background information and advice) and are most gratefully acknowledged.

## **B. The Parish of Pembridge: Background**

This section of the Plan describes in as factual a manner as possible what we know about our Parish whose boundaries are shown on the map presented in Figure 1 on the following page.

### **Location**

The Parish of Pembridge covers an area of some 3,116 hectares and is located seven miles west of Leominster on either side of the A44 – a strategic route into Powys and Central Wales. The Welsh border is just 5 miles west of Pembridge. The village is one of six scenic “Black and White” villages that make up the “Black and White Village Trail” in Northern Herefordshire featuring the unique timber-framed vernacular architecture.

### **Population**

According to the Mid-year Estimates of Population for Parishes for 1999, the Parish of Pembridge was then home to a population of approximately 870 people, living in some 453 households. About 73% of the properties are owner-occupied and 86% of households have at least one car. The population of Pembridge is generally older than that of the county population – 28% are over 60, compared to 25% for the county as a whole. Average household income was £22,260 in 1999. According to the survey, some 54% of the community had lived here for at least ten years and many have lived in the village all their lives; 25% might be described as “newcomers” having moved to the Parish within the past five years. As a significant number of the working population either work from home or within a 10 mile radius, Pembridge is no dormitory village to a neighbouring town but a vibrant community of people who work as well as live in the Parish.

### **Organisational Status**

Pembridge Parish is located in the Ward known as Golden Cross within the County of Herefordshire, England. Its residents are represented locally by Cllr. Roger Phillips, in the British Parliament by Bill Wiggin MP, Member for Leominster and in the European Parliament by the UK MEP’s in the West Midlands. Pembridge is also registered in the West Midlands European Network as a CED ward within Community Regeneration Priority Three.

### **History**

Pembridge has a long, varied and, at times, turbulent history reflecting its location on the borders between England and Wales. The Celtic heritage of Pembridge is evident in the Celtic prefix Penebruge. Very little is known of its history prior to the arrival of the Saxons other than indications of Bronze Age fields seen in aerial photographs on Leen Farm land and the more obvious existence of a huge Bronze Age settlement at Wapley Hill. Similarly, very few artefacts or evidence of buildings have been found for the Roman period.

In 760 AD, Offa, the Saxon King of Mercia built his dyke to protect the Saxons from incursions by the Celtic Welsh tribes located to the west. At about the same time, Row Ditch, which runs from Pitfield Farm to Milton, and Grimsditch in Heathwood south of Luntley were constructed.

By 1040, we know that Pembridge was a Saxon Burgh owned and controlled by the powerful Godwin family whose main military base for the area was located at Old Radnor and operating at a time when the Welsh were raiding Herefordshire on a regular basis. The Godwin family held Pembridge up to 1066 when Harold Godwinson (King Harold II) was killed at Hastings.

In 1067, the Domesday Book records that there were 20 villagers, 3 slaves, 7 small holdings, and one riding man (Kings Messenger) resident in Pembridge.

After the Norman Conquest, Pembridge became part of the Honour of Radnor and the De Braose family. The settlement was granted a Charter of Liberties by Henry 1 in 1080.

Figure 1: Map of Pembridge Parish



*Approximate Parish Boundary*

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In 1247 Roger Mortimer III Baron of Wigmore married Matilda de Braose - an event which was to have significance years later.

In 1240 Henry de Pembridge was granted a Market Charter by Henry III, an event that signified the importance and wealth of Pembridge at this time. Unfortunately Henry de Pembridge fought on the losing side at the battle of Evesham in 1265 and, as a consequence, his Pembridge estates were confiscated.

Roger Mortimer III who had fought on the winning side at Evesham, was the direct beneficiary of Henry's loss and Pembridge was incorporated into the Mortimer Marcher Lands. There is some indication that Mortimer's wife Matilda de Braose came to live in the Manor House at Pembridge at this time.

Pembridge remained in Mortimer hands until 1330 when Roger Mortimer IV, Earl of March and paramour of King Edward II's wife, Queen Isabella, was hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn and his estates confiscated.

All was not lost for the Mortimers as a whole however. The estates were gradually restored and remained under Mortimer control until 1432 when they passed to Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York (via his Mortimer mother). The mediaeval hall buried beneath the brick façade of Swan House may well have been Richard's administrative headquarters for the district.

The House of York continued to hold Pembridge until the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 which ended the "Wars of the Roses" and when power passed from Plantagenet to Tudor.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> Pembridge became part of the great estates owned in Herefordshire by the Seymour family (Dukes of Somerset). While during the earlier mediaeval period, Pembridge flourished in population and wealth due to a vigorous trade in wool, its fortunes declined steadily during the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries precipitated possibly at first by the Black Death and later by the emergence of Kington and Leominster as trading communities. It is likely, in response to Pembridge's economic decline, that wealthy benefactors in the church felt the need to create two sets of almshouses in the village in the late 1600s - Trafford and Duppa. The original school was constructed at the same time.

An interesting glimpse of 19<sup>th</sup> century life in Pembridge can be obtained from *Littlebury's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire (1876-7)* when the population was 1500 living in 318 dwellings with an annual rateable value of £10,939. Its mediaeval legacy is evident in the statement that there are two manors under different lords - Pembridge Borough, whose lord, John Bowles, held his seat at *The Byletts*; and Pembridge Foreign held by Tho de Calthrop, Esq. Another important official at the time, Richard Snead Cox Esq., held his seat at *Broxwood Court*, and served as high sheriff and J.P.

## **Natural and Architectural Landscape and Wildlife**

Most of the Parish of Pembridge can best be described as a diamond-shaped plateau that has been gently tipped from south to north. Varying in altitude from 50-150 meters, it comprises scenically attractive, undulating and fertile farmland with well hedged fields based on rich red Herefordshire clay, punctuated by small woods, apple orchards and intersected by streams and brooks. On its northern edge, the Parish is drained by the River Arrow that joins the River Lugg south of Leominster and the River Wye south of Hereford. The surrounding countryside is farmed intensively yet sensitively and richly expresses the full seasonal range of sights, sounds and smells associated with the English countryside.

The highest point in Pembridge village – the location of the Bell Tower – commands impressive views to the north across the alluvial flats of the River Arrow to the Iron Age fortifications of Wapley Hill in the neighbouring parish of Staunton-upon-Arrow.

The village of Pembridge straddles either side of the A44 and is relatively compact, with deep narrow plots of land fronted by terraced houses of varying age on the roadside. Most post war housing construction is situated out of the immediate view of passing traffic in clusters such as Manley Crescent and Bearwood Lane to the south, and Curl View and Sandiford Plock to the west of Bridge Street.

The most attractive entrance to the village is probably from the western edge, arriving from Kington. The road rises in elevation and turns through a clump of established oak and horse chestnut trees to enter an unusually wide boulevard edged with a mix of traditional “black and white” mediaeval houses and brick Georgian buildings intermixed with post war stucco facia on some structures. The distance between houses on opposites sides of the street is greatest at this western end of the village. This spaciousness stems from the fact that, in mediaeval times, the market spread out along West Street and sufficient room to allow traffic to pass between and behind the stalls was necessary. West Street then abruptly narrows to barely 14 feet distance between the rear of the New Inn and the terraced houses on the north side of the road.

The eastern boundary of the village, while less defined, also suggests that a community of historical value is being approached. Little has changed since the 1500’s when Townsend Cottage was constructed at the eastern most edge of the village. Only three new dwellings subsequently encroached on that boundary - a post war brick house and three new post and beam structures designed by Border Oak to emulate the mediaeval heritage. Just past Townsend Cottage and the entrance to a new farm shop and well concealed caravan site, the road twists to provide views of 15<sup>th</sup> Century almshouses before becoming East Street proper. New construction on the left (three additional “Border Oak Houses”) has recently replaced an old orchard.

Visitors approaching Pembridge from the north and neighbouring Shobdon and Staunton sense they have arrived when crossing the stone bridge over the River Arrow that lies at the foot of Bridge Street. As they do so, their eye is drawn to Bridge Cottage that was once a 15<sup>th</sup> Century Mediaeval Hall and now provides residences for three households. Architectural styles in this street vary. High on a bank to the left, partially concealed by an old yew tree, is an imposing Victorian rectory. As one proceeds further up Bridge Street, one’s eye is drawn up the hill towards the village shop – The Old Steppes, a black and white building that obscures the Bell Tower and Church behind.

The centre and focal point of the village is the Market Square located immediately behind the New Inn on Bearwood Lane, the country road that links the village to the southern part of the Parish and the hamlets of Bearwood and Broxwood.

Compared to some other villages, Pembridge is blessed with a number of open spaces, including a manicured green in front of the church, an area of open space adjacent to the river, and the Millennium Meadow – a field some 2.4 acres in size that is devoted to leisure and recreational activities. In addition to the streets and lanes that criss-cross the community, the village is the crossing point for over 10 miles of maintained footpaths and bridleways providing access to the surrounding countryside.

Pembridge is special not just because of its pastoral and unspoiled setting but because of its rich heritage. The Parish is home to many listed buildings and Pembridge village is located within a Conservation Area – so designated in 1974. The major landmarks and monuments are protected and conserved by the Pembridge Amenity Trust, a charity established in 1996

to oversee the preservation of the Market Hall, the Bell Tower, Millennium Meadow and, more recently, to maintain the public rest room facilities in the visitor's car park.

While a market charter was granted to Henry de Pembridge by King Henry III in 1240, the Pembridge Market Hall has been "Dendro dated" to 1520, making it the oldest market hall in Herefordshire and possibly England. Located on the site of a much older mediaeval market, the triangular site retains its original mark stone on the south west corner and there remain traces of the mediaeval cross base. A market was held every Monday in Pembridge for hundreds of years – a tradition recently resurrected in the form of a monthly farmer's market. The site also acted as focal point for two major fairs – the Cowslip Fair held every 15 May from the 1200's right up to the 1940's and the Woodcock Fair which took place on St. Martin's Day in November.

Located on a slightly higher elevation to the east of the Market Hall is St. Mary's Church and its detached Bell Tower, whose timbers have been "dendro" dated to the late part of the 12th Century. Considered to be one of the glories of Pembridge, the Bell Tower has witnessed much history. The five bells were installed at the time of the restoration of Charles II. The present cruciform church was built in the 1300's when Pembridge was enjoying considerable prosperity thanks to a buoyant wool trade. There is evidence to suggest that the current structure replaced a much older building.

Earthworks, which can be seen south of the Church suggest that a settlement was in place pre-Conquest. This is a Scheduled Monument (27495) and, together with a field to the east of the Moat and Mound, has been the subject of a Geophysical investigation by Herefordshire Archaeology during 2002.

While the oldest remaining dwellings in the village are likely to be Fig Tree Cottage and Grosmont House (1424) in East Street and West End Farm (1425) in West Street, there are many examples of the vernacular "cruck" construction that dominated mediaeval architectural styles.

## **Village Economy**

The landscape and character of Pembridge has always been heavily dependent upon agriculture. While Pembridge owes its former existence and prosperity to wool, cider, cattle and cereals, agriculture still provides significant employment and sustains the rural landscape that appeals to visitors. Tourism, likely the second most important source of external revenue, sustains the two pubs, a visitor centre with tea room, several self-catering cottages, "bed and breakfasts", a touring caravan park and several retail outlets. A growing number of Pembridge residents are self-employed professionals able to work from home and, in recent years, the in-migration from people in this group has likely equalled retirees. Local residents also work in neighbouring towns (Kington, Leominster and Hereford). A small but significant number of people commute either daily or weekly much further afield (Cardiff, London and Birmingham).

### ***Agriculture***

The dominant economic activity in the Parish is agriculture and about 40 farms operate in and around the Parish boundary. Their existence and up-keep are responsible for the current rural landscape. The farm holdings vary in size from small (less than 10 acres) to large "business" farms comprising more than 1000 acres and three types of farming are practised: mixed, intensive and organic.

The majority of farms in and around Pembridge are mixed farms, generating a range of produce – apples, potatoes, grain, some commercial fruit including currants and various berries, cattle feed and rearing sheep and cattle. Pembridge is home to the famous breed of Herefords that were exported to the US in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Several farmers focus on sheep and lambs.

Intensive farming methods are applied to the production of three major products: apples, chickens and potatoes. Apple orchards figure prominently in the landscape around Pembridge with the majority of production being made into cider – either on an industrial scale by Bulmers (headquartered in Hereford) or on a smaller scale by such “boutique” cider makers as Dunkertons from where several thousand gallons of specialty cider and perry are exported per year. Strategically hidden within the valleys and camouflaged by trees are chicken farms that supply the county’s chicken processing companies with thousands of young birds per year. Each farm comprises 3-4 sheds in which 6 “crops” a year are brought to maturity (from chick to mature bird) in 50 days. Potatoes do well on the rich Herefordshire clay and are grown intensively for processing into chips or crisps or for sale to consumers via the major supermarkets. In either case, strict rules for growing and storing are imposed and the process has become highly machine dependent and capital intensive.

In response to growing consumer demand, major threats to farming such as past TB, BSE and “foot and mouth” crises and drastically reduced prices, more and more farmers are turning to organic methods and the production of a greater variety of quality, niche products that are sold locally.

Although the rural landscape around Pembridge has remained unspoiled for thousands of years it should never be taken for granted. The farmer’s way of life and economic survival are under threat and their demise would have a dramatic and negative impact on the character and appeal of the village. More and more farm families in the parish are having to turn to alternative sources of income; some are leaving; many buildings are becoming redundant and skills and activities associated with good land management (hedge pleaching, coppicing, game keeping) are becoming rare.

### ***Tourism***

Income earned from day-visitors and those staying overnight while on holiday or weekend trips is becoming increasingly important to the village and its service businesses. The interdependence with farming is significant – more and more farmers are converting their disused buildings into accommodation and the majority of visitors state that the unspoiled rural landscape is the area’s prime attraction.

In addition to the countryside scenery of fields, orchards, river courses, woodlands, winding lanes and hedgerows with their wealth of signposted byways and walking paths, the visitor to Pembridge can enjoy a number of amenities and attractions. These include:

- The Visitor Centre – King’s House a Grade II listed building
- Old Chapel Gallery
- Pembridge Terracotta
- Dunkerton Cider Co and Restaurant
- The Old Forge Studio
- Townsend Farm Shop and Caravan Park
- The Pembridge Bazaar

Other non-commercial attractions include St. Mary’s Church and its unique Bell Tower and green; the wealth of historic black and white timber framed buildings lining the main streets, the market square, and the River Arrow with its stone bridge.

Within the parish there is a perceived shortage of overnight accommodation – 7 Bed & Breakfast establishments offer rooms; there are 11 self catering establishments and 2 touring caravan parks.

### ***Services and Retail***

Two pubs – the 17<sup>th</sup> Century New Inn and Red Lion – the Tea shop at the Visitor Centre and the Dunkerton's Restaurant located a mile outside the village provide drinking and dining opportunities. The popular village shop and post office – The Steppes – has catered to both residents and visitors since its inception in 1977. A recent addition to the retail sector has been the opening of the Townsend Farm Shop that sells locally produced meats, vegetables, fruit and flowers. A thriving Farmer's Market offering locally produced bread, meats, baked goods, jams, plants, vegetables and crafts now opens monthly in the Market Square and has done much to revitalise a sense of community. In addition to the retail outlets listed above, Pembridge also has a carpet shop and a hairdressing salon.

### ***Other Employment Opportunities***

A number of Parishioners work from home either as self-employed professionals or as employees of companies headquartered elsewhere. There are at least 2 building contractors and 6 self-employed trades-people (electricians, plumbers, painter, decorators); 2 accountants, 2 marketing and PR specialists, a film editor, database/software specialist; industrial psychologist, e-commerce consultant, and dolls house maker.

Immediately north of the village is the Shobdon Industrial estate that is home to a number of major employers in the area, including Forrest Fencing and Kingspan.

## **Infrastructure**

Pembridge is generally well supported by an adequate infrastructure comprising the following:

### ***School***

The village school caters for 5 to 11 year olds. Currently there are 77 pupils with four teachers and one administrative staff member. Its capacity is expected to reach 86 pupils in January 2003. The school is operated by a governing body as a Voluntary Aided School. It was originally built of stone and brick during the Victorian period. Subsequent additions were made during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Secondary school pupils from the village travel to Kington and Weobley.

### ***Surgery***

The village surgery and dispensary are operated by a Kington-based medical practice, opening twice daily, Monday to Friday.

### ***Church***

St Mary's Church provides weekly services for an Anglican congregation. It also conducts weddings and funerals and offers a venue for special events such as flower festivals and concerts. Burial capacity is limited and is unlikely to last for more than 10 years.

### ***Village Hall***

Pembridge's Village Hall, constructed in 1990, is located half a mile from the centre of the village. It has two large meeting rooms and kitchen and bathroom facilities. There is parking capacity for over fifty vehicles. The facility is managed by the Village Hall Management Committee.

The Management Committee organises activities such as bingo, whist, car boot sales and dances. Among those who rent the rooms on a regular basis are the Women's Institute, the British Legion, Echo, the Parish Council, Pembridge Auctions, Age Concern, Pembridge Amenity Trust, playgroups and individuals for private functions. Negotiations are currently in progress with Sure Start to build on a large playroom for children under five years of age, and a smaller room to use as a clinic.

### ***Millennium Meadow***

The Millennium Meadow Development Group (MMDG) has been set up directly under the Pembridge Amenity Trust (PAT) to manage the Millennium Meadow, which was acquired to serve as an outdoor recreation centre for children of all ages and to cater for adults wishing to spend leisure time there.

Several projects have been undertaken to date. The turning circle and car park have been completed, commemorative trees have been planted along with fruit and nut hedges. A play area with equipment suitable for small children has been established, gates and a fence erected and a BMX track excavated. Plans are currently being drawn up to develop the area further and fund-raising activities are being undertaken. The whole meadow is intended to be a dog-free zone.

### ***Other Leisure Facilities***

The New Inn and the Red Lion run quiz teams. They are very popular with 15 to 20 people attending each session. There are also darts teams using the facilities at both these Public Houses.

A Mobile Library visits Pembridge once a week.

Sports facilities are available in nearby major centres and, although convenient for adults with their own transport, they are not so easily accessed by the young. For example, few Pembridge children are able to make use of the bike track and half-pipe in Presteigne, only ten minutes away by car.

The local Primary School has a small gym and playing fields but, at present, they are not available to Parishioners.

### ***Public Transport***

A bus service connects Pembridge with Leominster hourly, while the service to Kington is irregular. There is currently no pull-off or bus shelter for waiting passengers. Services linking the village with other hamlets in the Parish are minimal.

### ***Utilities***

The village water supply comes from a borehole near Kington. The supply is considered to be adequate but many villagers have complained about the quality of the water.

The gas line is supplied and serviced by Transco and is considered to be adequate for the village. However, there is no gas service outside the village boundaries.

Street cleaning is carried out by Herefordshire Council only six times a year. Other cleaning and tidying is undertaken by a local resident and paid for by the Parish Council.

There are currently no recycling facilities and there are a limited number of waste disposal bins.

The electrical supply urgently requires upgrading. Four separate sources serve the Parish and power cuts are frequent. Ugly and dangerous high-voltage electrical cables cross through the Millennium Meadow where children play.

Drainage and sewage are inadequate. Heavier rainfall in recent years and increased runoff from the new housing development have caused the main drain to flood. Sewage is processed at the Long Meadow on the north edge of the village.

## **Social Organisation, Village Information and Communication**

The questionnaire survey revealed that one in three residents participates in a voluntary activity and the parish has a number of social organisations whose members are very active including: The Pembridge Amenity Trust, the Women's Institute, Pembridge Tourism Association, the Friends of Pembridge School, St. Mary's Singers, the Pembridge Golf Association, organisers of the Farmer's Market (held monthly), the Pembridge Show and Trotting Races, the summer Art Show, the Flower and Beer Festivals (held annually).

In 2000, Pembridge was entered and became a winner of the Herefordshire *Village of the Year* competition. The parish has two web sites devoted to parish information of interest to residents and visitors alike: [www.mediaval-pembridge.com](http://www.mediaval-pembridge.com) is run by the Pembridge Tourism Association and [www.pembridgeamenitytrust.co.uk](http://www.pembridgeamenitytrust.co.uk) by Pembridge Amenity Trust. In addition, *Pembridge Online*, a community newsletter, is published six times a year and the Anglican Church publishes *The Messenger* on a bi-monthly basis.

There are five notice boards located in various parts of the village and event notices are posted in the village shop and pubs.

## C. Issues of Concern to Parishioners in 2002

The questionnaire survey revealed that vast majority of Parish residents are satisfied with life in their community (39% satisfied; 49% very satisfied). Of the half of parishioners who thought Pembridge had changed over the last ten years, most thought that change was for the better. Reasons for improvement included better community feeling, the Millennium Meadow, more people. Reasons cited as causing deterioration in conditions mostly centred on traffic and parking.

The last question in the survey asked which issues were of most importance. Respondents could tick none or all topics or select some. The following table presents the responses.

Issue	Responses*	Percent
Traffic	236	62%
Environment	186	49%
Housing	94	25%
Services	81	21%
Leisure	62	16%
Transport	46	12%

*\* number of times this topic was ticked.*

### Traffic

The key issue of greatest concern to parishioners in 2002 is traffic – 236 respondents (62%) identified this as the issue they were most concerned about; 239 (67%) rated the traffic problem as major; 96 (27%) rated it as minor and only 6% didn't perceive traffic to be a problem at all.

The majority of parishioners (41%) perceive the problem to be a combination of volume and speed with 33% identifying specifically volume as a problem and 24% specifying speed.

Causes of the Traffic Problem	Responses*	Percent
Speed	84	24%
Volume	119	33%
Both	148	41%
Other	6	2%
Total Responses	357	100%

*\* number of times this cause was ticked*

This result comes as no surprise to residents of the Parish who have lived in Pembridge for over ten years (the majority) as attempts to mitigate the problems associated with our location on a major trunk road (A44) have attracted attention but few solutions since the 1980's. The A44 is the main trunk road linking the West Midlands, the South and Southeast with central Wales and is used by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) bringing goods into Britain from Europe. While little has changed to the road layout and traffic patterns in that time, both the number and average size of vehicular traffic has increased and, what may have been a disturbing irritant twenty years ago, has now become a significant health and safety problem.

This road currently handles an escalating volume of vehicles a day with traffic comprising:

- a.) Local vehicles serving the parish and residents of Pembridge, Kington, Shobdon, Eardisland and Leominster – whose populations have all grown, whose car ownership has increased and whose frequency of travel has increased in recent years;
- b.) Non-commercial travellers using the A44;
- c.) A high proportion of heavy goods vehicles serving central Wales. The HGV traffic is also exacerbated by nearby industrial activity notably a local, high producing quarry and businesses located at the Shobdon industrial estate and increase in the size of farm tractors and trailers.

The traffic problem has become a major issue to be resolved for three critically important reasons: public safety; noise; and the degradation of the architectural heritage and rural ambience that enables Pembridge to attract visitors.

### ***Pedestrian Safety***

Pembridge is regrettably not pedestrian friendly and perceived by many residents as particularly unsafe for the young and elderly and irritating and negative for visitors endeavouring to enjoy the mediaeval setting.

Lack of safety is caused by:

- Inadequate width – the A44 follows a track developed in the middle ages and, at two key points in the village, the road is less than 14 feet in width – an inadequate space for two passing HGVs – even without a pavement.
- Lack of pavements notably on the north side of the road, opposite to and east of the Doctor's surgery.
- Lack of a controlled pedestrian crossing visible to motorists from both directions that could be used by persons of all ages (especially young and old) crossing to the Millennium Meadow and children's playground or trying to access the shops and post office from the north side of the village.
- Inadequate off-road parking – the need by residents to park on the road further reduces the width of the road and reduces visibility for motorists and pedestrians.
- Inadequate signage warning motorists of the narrow width and dangerous road junctions.
- Speed – a minority of motorists continue to disobey the 30mph speed limit despite traffic calming measures at the eastern entrance and the traffic island at the western entrance.

### ***Noise***

The linear nature of the village with its dense inhabitation – most buildings on either side of the road are adjoined – results in a heavy concentration of traffic noise, especially from HGVs. Traffic noise is affected by:

- Road surface – potholes and inadequate road repairs cause unpleasant vibration and rattling.
- Tilting, loose and rocking manhole covers.
- Size of vehicles – the HGVs – especially the empty lorries, cause most noise.
- Speed and need to brake suddenly – again the HGVs are perceived as the worst offenders.

### **Environmental Degradation**

High volumes of traffic, combined with the size and weight of vehicles, also increase the presence of atmospheric pollutants (fumes and dust) and the vibration shakes the mediaeval structures. Lack of off road parking exacerbates the problem especially when social functions held in the church or local pubs result in more parked cars obstructing rights of way. HGVs and farm vehicles trying to negotiate the bend into Bearwood Lane adjacent to the Market Square have been known to dislodge the ancient roofing tiles and shake the upright structures. Bells and bollards have been placed both around the Market Hall and in Bridge Street to prevent future incidents such as these.

### **Off Road Parking**

Three out of every four households in Pembridge have access to at least one vehicle and when not in use these vehicles occupy scarce road space. Numerous respondents mentioned problems associated with a lack of off road parking. The Visitors Car Park, located to the rear of the Visitors Centre, has ameliorated the problem for visitors during the day but has done nothing to solve the problem for residents lacking parking spaces behind or adjacent to their residences at weekends and overnight.

### **Possible Solutions – Parishioners' Suggestions**

Respondents to the household survey were asked to identify which actions they thought would best address the traffic issue. Over half the respondents (55%) recommended diverting HGVs away from the village and a further 32% suggested re-routing the A44. Adopting traffic calming measures was the next most frequently mentioned solution (30%), 15% of responses involved creating a by pass south of Pembridge and 20% recommended a bypass located north of the village.

<b>Actions needed to mitigate the problem</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Nothing	11	3%
Traffic Calming	106	30%
Re-route the A44	114	32%
By pass south of Pembridge	53	15%
By pass north of Pembridge	70	20%
Divert HGV away from village	196	55%

Of the preferred traffic calming measures, the reduction of the present 30mph speed limit to 20mph was the most popular (42%) followed closely by the introduction of one or two pedestrian crossings (38%) and the installation of speed cameras (36%). Incorporating raised surfaces and deploying a flashing children's crossing sign were also identified by over a fifth of the respondents.

<b>Effective calming measures</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Spot roundabout	8	2%
Raised surfaces	94	26%
One or two pedestrian crossings	135	38%
a 20mph speed limit	150	42%
a flashing children's crossing sign	87	24%
speed cameras	128	36%
more parking bays on A44	46	13%

## Environment, Countryside Access and Heritage

While the second issue of greatest concern to Parishioners after traffic was “environment”, it is clear that that term enjoyed a broad interpretation. Two Parish Plan working committees examined different but inter-linked aspects of environmental quality in the Parish: The Re-Cycling and Environment Committee focused on whether re-cycling facilities should be introduced into the Parish; while the Countryside Access and Heritage group looked at a broader range of issues associated with wildlife conservation, heritage preservation and interpretation. A number of open-ended questions in the questionnaire probed parishioners’ views on measures taken to improve the overall appearance of the village and preserve its landscape features and their support for the provision of heritage and countryside information to the community and visitors.

### **Re-Cycling**

The household survey returned strong approval for the provision of recycling facilities as 75% of households do recycle household waste but, in the absence of recycling facilities within the Parish, are required to do so elsewhere.

<b>Do you recycle household waste?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	91	25%
yes	275	75%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	366	100%
<b>Are there collection facilities in the village?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
no	311	97%
yes	9	3%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	320	100%
<b>Do you use collection facilities outside the parish?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	89	25%
Yes	274	75%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	363	100%
<b>Would you recycle if there were facilities?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
no	20	6%
Yes	336	94%
	356	100%
<b>What materials do you recycle?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
paper and cardboard	267	75%
glass	270	76%
textiles	82	23%
plastic	69	19%
cans	145	41%
green garden waste	139	39%
Persons indicating a willingness to recycle	356	

The overwhelming majority of households confirmed that they would re-cycle household waste in the Parish if facilities were available. This is just as well as residents of Worcestershire and Herefordshire throw away some 373,000 tonnes of rubbish every year and residents of Herefordshire only recycle some 11% of the waste they produce.

The items most likely to be re-cycled by Pembridge Parishioners would be glass (76%), paper and cardboard (75%), followed by cans (41%), green garden waste (39%), textiles (23%) and plastic (19%).

The Parish Plan working committee on this topic has determined that Pembridge would enjoy active support from a number of agencies should a re-cycling programme be established and that facilities (bins and collection services) could be obtained at no charge.

The location of such facilities has been viewed as a difficult issue in such a small village as Pembridge. An ideal location would be accessible by pedestrians (residents unable to use a car) as well as car users; have a macadamed base for easy cleaning, be well lit, located out of sight of social areas yet sufficiently close to residences to be supervised frequently. Parishioners identified two locations: the Visitor Centre Car Park and an area to the rear of the Village Hall. While the first location would be more accessible to pedestrians, there is insufficient turning space for skips to empty the facilities. The major responsibility of residents would be to ensure that the selected sites were properly supervised, kept tidy and vandalism prevented. The success of any maintenance program would depend on there being sufficient volunteers or personnel paid by the Parish Council to supervise their operations.

### ***Countryside Access and Heritage***

As stated earlier Pembridge is located within an area of attractive and well maintained countryside with plenty of footpaths, a village green by the River Arrow, a 3-acre Millennium Meadow and a spacious churchyard. Some 60% of respondents felt that more countryside and heritage information should be made available to the community and visitors and 80% indicated that they would support a Heritage/Landscape Interpretive Centre if funded from outside the village.

<b>Should more countryside/heritage info be given to visitors?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
yes	210	60%
No	33	9%
No opinion	105	30%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	348	100%
<b>Would you support a Heritage Landscape Centre?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	61	20%
Yes	245	80%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	306	100%

Direction on the location of such a centre was not clear – some suggested the Church could be used for more exhibits of an informative nature; others identified the Village Hall as a possible location – although this facility is rapidly reaching capacity for social, recreational functions; and others mentioned the Visitor Centre at King’s House where the current owners have provided substantial information in their Tea Room.

### ***Village Aesthetics and Landscape features***

Providing more off road parking was considered to be the most effective method for improving the appearance of the Parish with 63% of respondents identifying this measure. Next in

popularity was the standardisation of signs identified by one in three respondents (31%), more litter boxes (22%) and street cleaning (21%). The most frequently mentioned measures for improving the overall appearance of the village were, in order of importance:

<b>What Measures Would Most Improve Appearance of Parish?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
More off road parking	203	63%
Reduction and standardisation of signs	98	31%
More Litter Boxes	70	22%
Street Cleaning	66	21%
More Flowerboxes, plants	58	18%
More seating	44	14%
Persons responding to this question	320	

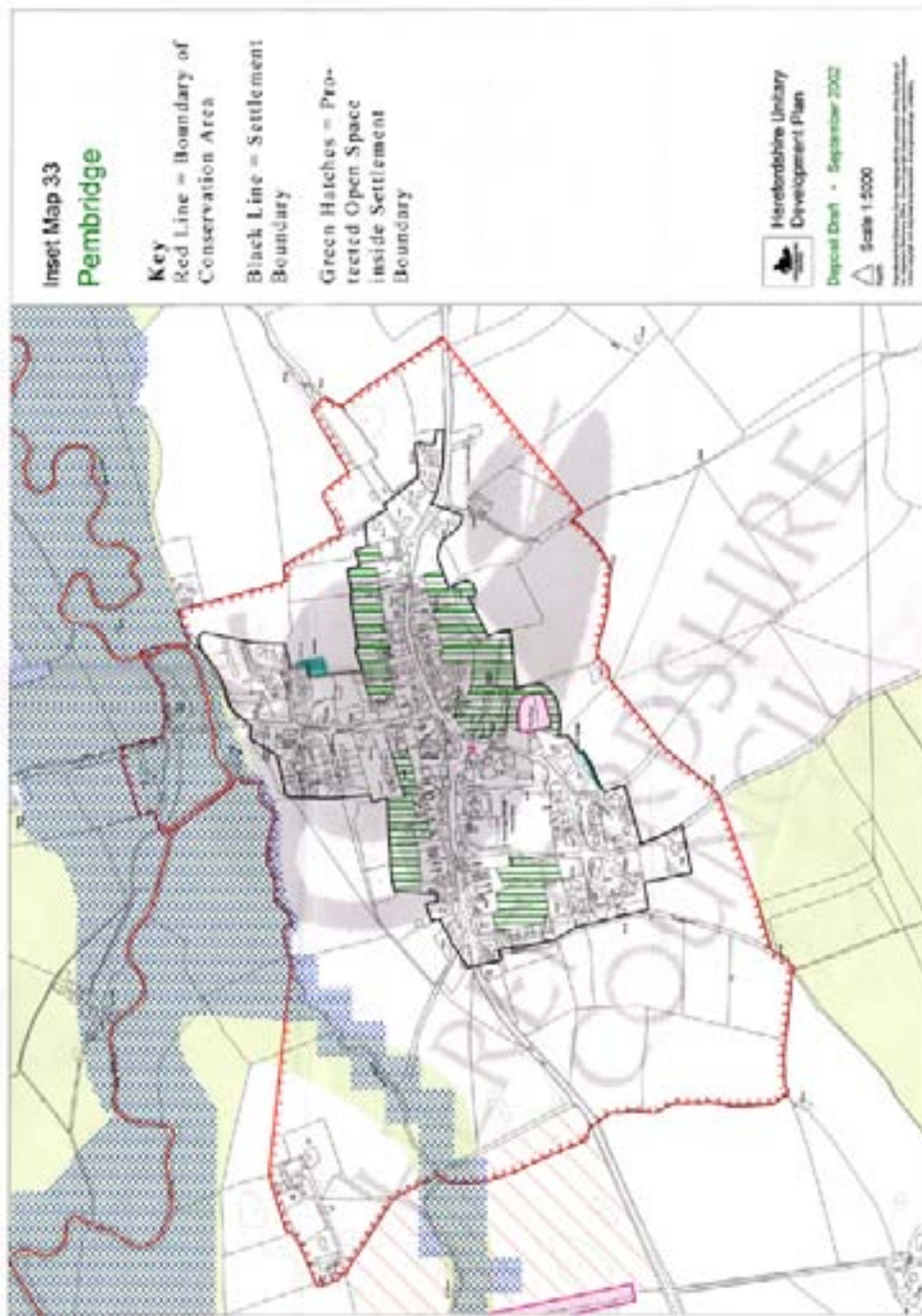
The Parish Plan Steering Group agree with parishioners' views on this subject and believe that a few steps could be taken that would have a dramatic improvement on the ambience and attractiveness of the village for both residents and visitors alike. Both entrances to the village are currently cluttered with a number of commercial signs intermingled with traffic signs that seem to distract rather than inform. Public seating is sparse – especially near the bus stops and there is no shelter at the roadside for waiting passengers. Street lighting is subdued and inadequate in many parts and the concrete lamp posts are out of character with the historical nature and Conservation Area status of the settlement.

## **Housing and Settlement**

According to the Council Tax Register for 2001, Pembridge Parish comprised 453 houses in 2001 and according to the 2000 Census, approximately 73% were owner occupied and the balance rented. While the number of dwellings in Pembridge increased relatively slowly between 1950-1995, considerable building activity occurred between 1995 and the present. Over the past five years, a total of 63 new homes have either been constructed or permission for homes has been granted. In addition, over 15 barn conversions have been completed, resulting in an anticipated increase in dwellings of 16.5%. Of the additional homes constructed, ten are classified as community housing built for rental purposes.

Figure 2 on the following page shows the boundaries of the village Conservation Area, as designated in 1984 (red boundary) and the boundaries of the settlement area outside of which planning for residential use (other than affordable housing) is unlikely to be granted. The green-hatched areas refer to the medieval burghage plots aligned to the street-facing dwelling which are to be kept free of further development as additional road access would be necessary across green fields outside the building envelope. A total of 15 in-fill sites have been identified as currently vacant within the settlement boundary of which over half have approved planning permission for residential dwellings.

Figure 2: The Parish Conservation Area and Settlement Boundary.



*Not to scale.*

The key housing issues relate to:

- How many – do we wish to see more homes developed through new construction or conversion in the Parish?
- Where should they be located – within the Conservation Area or spread around the Parish; on “infill” or new sites?
- Of what style and price range or occupancy status (owner occupied or rented)?
- What are the special needs of young starter families on low incomes?
- What are the special needs of older people for supervised accommodation designed for their needs?
- What will be the impact of additional housing on traffic, parking, demand for leisure and other services?

Since the Pembridge Conservation Area was designated in 1984, most construction has occurred as infill with minimal pressure on the external boundaries of the village settlement. The major developments in Pembridge have occurred on a site adjacent to Court House on Bearwood Lane (14 dwellings), on the site of the old garage on East Street and rented housing at Sandiford Plock off Bridge Street.

The questionnaire survey asked residents whether Pembridge had enough homes. 36% answered affirmatively; 20% said no and the balance (44%) stated that they didn’t know. Similarly, 29% felt the current mix of homes was right; 31% felt that it was not and 40% felt unable to express an opinion.

<b>Has Pembridge enough homes for current population?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	134	36%
No	74	20%
Don't know	160	43%
Total number of Parishioners responding	368	100%
<b>Is the mix of homes right?</b>		
Yes	103	29%
No	111	31%
Don't know	145	40%
Total number of Parishioners responding	359	100%

Qualitative comments about housing that were written on the questionnaire by some residents expressed a variety of views regarding the amount and type of housing. Some parishioners feel strongly that whatever housing is built should support the existing character and identified the Border Oak style as desirable; some others thought that over reliance on replicas of black and white buildings would give an artificial character. A consistent concern was the impact that more housing would have on village congestion, traffic and demand for scarce parking.

The need by younger people for affordable housing was recognised by parishioners surveyed. Some 78% or 283 respondents stated that they supported the idea of affordable (rental) housing for the young. Of those 40 persons aged between 18 and 30 who responded, 29 indicated that they would require affordable housing in order to stay in the village. The survey also produced clear evidence of the demand for sheltered accommodation by persons over the age of 60. Some 46 individuals anticipated needing such accommodation at some point in the next 10 years.

<b>Do you support affordable housing for the young?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	283	78%
No	24	7%
Don't know	54	15%
Total number of Parishioners responding	361	100%
<b>Would you require affordable housing in order to stay?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	29	19%
No	11	7%
Don't know	113	74%
Total number of Parishioners responding	153	100%

Housing prices in Pembrige reflect national and regional patterns but are in part aggravated by migration by former city dwellers in parts of the countries where average house prices exceed those in rural areas by a wide margin. Based on the Council Tax Register for 2001, the majority of homes (65%) are banded A-D, with 161 (35%) of dwellings assigned in the tax band E to G.

Rural wage levels do not enable the majority of locally employed people to afford to buy homes sold at commercial rates. The following table presents average house prices in the HR6 postal code regions between October and December 2002.

<b>Average House Prices for Postal Code Area HR6, Oct-Dec, 2002</b>						
<b>Change</b>	<b>October</b>		<b>November</b>		<b>December</b>	
	<b>Ave. Price</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Ave. Price</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Ave. Price</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Terraced</b>	£83,100	0%	£84,700	+ 2%	£84,700	0%
<b>Semi-detached</b>	£109,300	+ 2%	£110,600	+ 1%	£110,600	0%
<b>Detached</b>	£163,300	0%	£165,300	0%	£165,300	0%
<b>Flat and Maisonettes</b>	£50,900	0%	£51,700	+ 2%	£51,700	0%
<b>All Properties</b>	£122,700	+ 1%	£124,300	+ 2%	£124,300	0%

*Source: Hometrack, 2003*

The Housing Committee of the Parish Plan Steering Group investigated a number of options for providing affordable housing that included the following:

### **Shared Ownership**

Purchasers buy part of the equity of the property (usually with a mortgage) and pay subsidised rent for the remainder. The proportion of the purchase to rent varies from 25% to 75% and the rental element is based on 4% of the unsold equity. Purchasers can buy extra shares over time (staircasing) and can build up to buying property outright. The properties are built or refurbished by a Housing Association or, alternatively, for Do It Yourself Shared ownership, the purchaser can identify a property for shared ownership up to certain price limits.

### **Homebuy**

Purchasers select property they wish to buy and are given an interest free loan of 25% of the purchase price of their home (subject to specified upper price limits) The loan can be repaid at any time and must be settled when the property is sold. The amount repayable is 25% of the value of the home at the time of the repayment. A form of this type of scheme (the Starter Home Initiative) is now being used to assist key workers in high demand housing areas to purchase homes that they could not otherwise afford.

### **Low Cost Home Ownership**

As part of the planning consent for new developments, developers can be obliged to provide a number of homes to a Local Authority at a reduced rate. These properties are offered to Council House tenants who have expressed an interest in purchasing their own home. The purchasers pay 75% of open market value and the Local Authority owns the remaining 25%. The properties come with restrictions on sub letting, resale price and the Local Authority is given the first option on nomination of a purchaser.

## **Services and Business**

The key service-related questions in the survey focused on health care access and the village shop.

### ***Village Shop***

One in three parishioners, according to the survey, rate the Village Shop as either “good or very good” with the majority (49%) applying a rating of adequate. Some 37% claim to use the shop on a daily basis; 35% visit it weekly and the remainder less often. Factors suggested as likely to improve frequency of use include “better prices”; elimination of the steps needed to access the shop; more friendly service and an enhanced range of produce.

### ***Access to Health Care Services***

As the following table illustrates, most parishioners considered that access to health care facilities was adequate with 15% and 12% indicating difficulty accessing dental and hospital services respectively. These results need to be viewed in the context of car usage - 77% of the parish population currently rely on their own transport; only 23% use the bus service.

<b>Which health care services are difficult to reach?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Hospital	26	12%
Doctor	6	3%
Chemist	14	7%
Chiropodist	9	4%
Optician	31	15%
Dentist	31	15%
None	118	56%
Total number of Parishioners responding	211	100%

### ***Business Overview***

Pembridge is not only home but also acts as workplace for a considerable number of Parishioners. While a comprehensive inventory of businesses was not undertaken, a questionnaire survey developed for the business community (self-employed and business owners) was completed by 38 individuals (see Appendix 3). The Farming/Agriculture/Equestrian category accounted for 13 of these (six of whom are also involved in tourism); Tourism totaled 13 and the remaining (25) businesses encompassing a range of activities including: Shop/Post Office; Inns, Haulage, Design & Print, Accounting, Building repairs, Computer programming, PR and Communications, Industrial Psychology, Massage Therapy, Nursery School, Kitchen Design and Build, a Blacksmith and Property Rental Company.

In addition to the individuals directly involved, these businesses provided employment for 41 persons full-time, while 21 provided 64 part-time jobs.

Of these 38 businesses, some 33 indicated that their services are suitable for sale to local residents and that all but one of these would be happy to be included in a Pembridge Services Directory for use by Parishioners while 28 (74%) of them would use a Village Resource Centre if one were established. When asked "what would your business prefer to buy locally?", the most frequent response related to business services – photocopying, printing, marketing, office supplies with foodstuffs being mentioned by 5 others. Two would like access to a computer technician while 13 other categories were mentioned that were either very specific to the industry (e.g., clay for the pottery) or very general (e.g., customers!).

Fourteen of the businesses had a web site and the same number would like a high speed (broadband connection) although significantly, almost twice as many (24) hadn't a web site and therefore didn't perceive a need for a fast connection.

Of the 36 businesses that responded to the question, only 12 expected to expand their business over the next five years. The most frequently identified constraint to growth was traffic/parking; the lack of community marketing (7), red tape and a perceived lack of community support. These results complement and match results to the question "what, if anything, might the Parish do to help you expand or improve your business? Again, the largest response (6 each) related to transport/parking and local marketing while four thought that a more positive attitude from the Parish Council was needed. Other comments included campaigning for lower rates, a business centre, high speed internet access and a local business advertising board in the car park.

These questionnaire results do suggest that the Parish as a whole pay greater attention to the needs of small business in the future in light of the national trend towards growth coming from self-employed persons and "small medium-sized enterprises" engaged primarily in the service sector and, increasingly, in the knowledge economy. Electronic communications (internet, fax etc.) have freed many individuals from the need to locate in or near a major city in order to secure and complete work assignments. These same individuals (often self-directed, educated and entrepreneurial) are also known to value "quality of life" factors such as lack of congestion, access to countryside, safety, clean air and quality food etc.

The main challenge in the future will be to find land and buildings suitable for additional businesses, especially if all available plots of land are used for housing. While many of these businesses can be operated from residential units, retail outlets need access to "passing trade" and to be located near the major thoroughfares.

There is currently no complete inventory of businesses in the Parish that could form a Directory of interest to and use by residents and that would also help local persons find full or part-time

employment. Nor is there an inventory of available buildings or sites that would be suitable for commercial purposes. There is clear evidence of demand for some form of Business Centre.

### **Farming**

While agriculture remains the mainstay of the local economy, and manages the landscape that supports tourism and the appeal of the Parish as a place to live and work, it is not in a strong, healthy state thanks to the after effects of the BSE crisis, the foot and mouth epidemic and declining commodity prices for the products generated locally. The Business working committee identified a number of negative impacts resulting from this situation:

1. Farmers, their wives and families are finding work away from the farm.
2. They are leaving (retiring, dying, selling) and not being replaced by sons.
3. Buildings (old and sometimes new) are becoming redundant.
4. Land is being let on short term leases to 'Business' farmers who are desperately trying to achieve economies of scale.
5. Smaller farms are getting fewer-larger farms getting larger.
6. Houses/buildings being sold.
7. Increased specialization (chicken houses, potatoes, cider fruit).
8. Some diversification ( B & B, caravans, contracting).
9. Some niche farming (organic, Xmas trees, strawberries, cider) .

The committee believes that if farmers could stay in their farms they would look after the land in traditional ways and have a greater inclination towards good land management practices to the benefit of the community as a whole. To help these farmers, then efforts must be made to:

- Create more jobs in the area that farmers and their families could do part time.
- Help farmers convert redundant buildings to new uses.
- Help farmers diversify their production further by finding new markets (eg flowers, fuel crops).
- Identify green grants and countryside stewardship funds.
- Encourage "Countryside" type tourism (walking, riding, fishing, photography, painting ).
- Encourage sale of local produce through shops and use by tourism outlets (bed and breakfasts, self-catering).

Of the 13 farms responding to the business questionnaire seven produced lamb, six beef, six focused on corn, grain and cereals and 4 on potatoes. Only four farms sold directly to consumers and only two additional farms indicated they might do so in the future. Eleven of the farm respondents had redundant farm buildings that could be converted to other uses with the majority (8) preferring residential rather than commercial use.

In the main questionnaire survey, parishioners were asked which of any farm-related service they would like to use in the parish. Some 247 people responded in some way to this question with the results as follows:

<b>What farm-related services would you like to use?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Gardening	26	11%
Hedge laying	21	9%
Open farm	5	2%
Golf range	36	15%
Fishing	23	9%
None	136	55%
Total responses	247	100%

## **Tourism**

Tourism is the second most important source of economic activity in the Parish and generates the main source of revenue from external sources. There are currently seven bed & breakfasts, eleven self-catering establishments, two camping/caravan park and farm shop, two inns, a Visitor Centre and tea room that offers cycle rental, a cider mill, two galleries, a pottery, the village shop and post office and two shops selling “collectibles”. They depend directly on the ability of the Parish to attract both day visitors and overnight stays while Broxwood court offers, in addition to accommodation, conference and leisure activities.

Rural tourism was badly hit by the foot and mouth crisis in the Spring of 2001 and visitor numbers are only now starting to return to pre-crisis levels. A major amenity for tourism in the village is the Visitor Centre located at King’s House that provides tourist information to visitors and also books overnight accommodation for those who arrive without having made such provision. As King’s House is “on the market” there is reason for concern regarding the negative impact of a withdrawal of this service.

The Parish is very dependent on the efforts of Herefordshire Council for the marketing of the “Black and White Village Trail”, of which Pembridge is just one community, supplemented by the voluntary initiatives of the Visitor Centre and Pembridge Tourism Association. The Centre has produced at its own expense a Walking Guide to the village. A Pembridge brochure – designed to attract visitors to the Parish – is now out of print and needs replacing. Thanks to funding obtained three years ago from the EU, Herefordshire Council and the European Regional Development Fund, the PTA owns a very rich and attractive web site ([www.mediaeval-pembridge.com](http://www.mediaeval-pembridge.com)) but this site is in need of expansion and refurbishment. There are no funds currently available to support pro-active marketing and public relations for the village even though Pembridge is blessed with considerable marketing talent within its resident population.

In terms of both resources (heritage, landscape, attractions nearby) and services, tourism in Pembridge is deemed highly viable and capable of sensitive expansion, but as not yet fulfilling its potential. What is needed is a clear idea of the kind of tourism that should be encouraged and attracted and a bold statement regarding the means by which this “industry” could be grown i.e., a Parish Marketing Plan and revised brochure, web site, articles in press and travel magazines and supplements.

Residential support for a local Heritage and Landscape Interpretive Centre has been given (80% in favour) but there is no obvious location for such a service. The remaining plots of centrally located land and buildings are all being developed for residential and non-commercial purposes. As stated elsewhere (see Environment), there is a need for more interpretive information in the form of strategically located information boards, less obtrusive plaques and leaflets. While the village looks most attractive in the summer, and on Bank Holidays it is full to capacity, there is a need to brighten up the appearance of the village in the colder and winter months and extend the tourist season. Serious consideration should be given to a resurrection of both the May Cowslip Fair and the Autumn Woodcock Fair – the latter could form part of a pre-Christmas mediaeval fair or market attracting arts and crafts sources from surrounding areas. Some form of aesthetic, themed lighting display to brighten the village at Christmas and through the winter would also add to its appeal and attract visitors when the local businesses most need the trade.

## Leisure and Facilities

The results of the questionnaire survey combined with observations of the planning steering group suggest that parishioners enjoy both a vibrant social life and a strong sense of community. There is, however, a growing demand for more leisure activities particularly for the younger generation. With the exception of the Millennium Meadow, most facilities and recreational spaces are suited to the interests of adults not children and teenagers.

Since the lower age limit was 16 years, the aspirations of younger children were not covered by the initial questionnaire survey. To rectify this situation, children were polled separately. It should be noted, however, that a significant number of adult respondents commented on the lack of facilities and services for the younger generation (8-16 year olds). Parishioners are clearly in support of any initiatives designed to make the Parish work better for its young: 48% of the adults said there is a need for a play-school for pre-school children and 47% indicated a need for “an after school club”. The balance were not against these ideas – they merely didn’t feel able to express an opinion either way.

### Village Hall

The survey results reflected a high usage of the Village Hall by Parishioners. Out of the 380 respondents to the survey, 342 responded to the question regarding Village Hall use with some 65% indicating that they utilise the facilities to some degree. The results suggest that there is scope for increasing the frequency of use of the facilities by catering for a wider range of interests. 81% of the respondents expressed future interest in attending extra-mural activities with the most popular of these being Computing/Internet studies (35%), Arts and Crafts(29%) and Aerobics and Keep Fit (29%), Languages (28%), History (27%) and Cooking/Cuisine (23%). Although DIY (17%), Music (13%) and Photography (13%) got fewer mentions, there was nevertheless significant interest in these topics.

Types of classes	Responses	Percent
Computin/internet	104	35%
Arts & Crafts	87	29%
Languages	84	28%
Photography	39	13%
DIY	50	17%
Music	40	13%
Cooking/cuisine	67	23%
Aerobics/keep fit	86	29%
History	79	27%
Total interested in evening classes (q10)	297	100%

Survey results suggest that instructional assistance will have to be sought from people living outside the area. Although 43% of Parishioners responding to the survey possessed some skill they were prepared to pass on to others in the community, the scope was rather restricted. Shortfalls were observed in Languages, Cooking, Aerobics, DIY, Music and History.

Since the existing space in the Village Hall is almost fully booked, more rooms will need to be provided to cope with the proposed greater range of interests. Space is available at the north end of the grounds to the Village Hall for tennis courts and a Bowls Green. Of the 380 residents who responded to the question on outdoor activities 31% spontaneously expressed interest in Tennis. (Note: Bowling was not listed in the questionnaire because of a potential negative impact this would have on existing facilities in the district).

### **Millennium Meadow**

The initial survey question relating to the use of the Millennium Meadow did not distinguish between adult and child use and, as a consequence, the results presented below are biased towards the interests of adults (over 16) who were the target respondents. They do, however, suggest a relative order of priority for the activities included.

<b>Adult Uses of the Millennium meadow</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent*</b>
Concrete half pipe	12	3%
Cricket nets	40	11%
BMX track	26	7%
Tennis courts	116	31%
Basketball court	30	8%
Football net	50	13%
Climbing wall	39	10%
cycle pad	23	6%
Sand pit	23	6%
Roundabout	32	8%
Rocking Horse	26	7%
Play village	32	8%
Wildlife	139	37%
Spectator seating	106	28%
Secluded seating	83	22%
Picnic spot	101	27%

*\*Percentage of total respondents indicating use of each facility*

The results of the survey show that the most popular facilities amongst the adult population were a wild life area (37%), tennis (31%), spectator seating (28%), picnic facilities (27%) and the elderly showed a keen interest in the provision of secluded seating (22%).

A supplementary questionnaire was organised by the youth representative for the Millennium Meadow Development Group and completed by 97 children out of a total distribution of 100 questionnaires. Its purpose was to ascertain what facilities young people in the Parish would like to use. As indicated in the table below, the most popular was a climbing wall (92%) followed equally by a Concrete Half Pipe (75%), and football net/wooden target board (75%).

<b>Child Uses of the Millennium Meadow</b>	
Concrete half pipe	75%
Cricket nets/	47%
Football net/ wooden target board	75%
Climbing wall	92%
Cycle pad	54%
Sand pit	47%
Rocking Horse	47%
<i>97 Total Respondents</i>	

The children surveyed indicated that they would use their chosen facilities an average of 3-4 times a week if they were available.

In the “other” category, the most requested facilities were as follows: zip wire, trampoline, basket/netball Net, tennis court and slide.

### **Mobile Library**

Only 16 respondents (4%) indicated that they used the mobile library. Several parishioners indicated on their survey forms that they were unaware of its existence. Those parishioners who use the library rated its service as good or reasonable.

### **Transport**

The vast majority of the Parishes residents use their own car for transport and, as a consequence, 77% of the respondents never use the local bus service. As a consequence only 20 respondents (6%) rated the bus service as essential and a further 18% considered it important. Of the respondents who answered the question, 5% thought it good, 17% considered it reasonable, 15% thought it poor and 62% indicated that they had no opinion.

<b>How often do you use the local bus services</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Regularly	18	5%
Occasionally	69	18%
Never	286	77%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	373	100%

<b>How important is the bus service to you?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Essential	20	6%
Important	56	18%
Not important	159	51%
No opinion	77	25%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	312	100%

<b>How do you rate the bus service?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Good	12	5%
Reasonable	39	17%
Poor	34	15%
No opinion	138	62%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	223	100%

Parishioners were also asked whether they would use a Community Taxi Service if one were operated. Slightly less than half of the respondents to this question (41%) indicated that they might make some use of such a service.

<b>Potential use of a Community Taxi</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Daily	4	2%
Weekly	25	13%
Every couple of weeks	22	11%
Monthly	44	23%
Not at all	100	51%
Total Number of Parishioners Responding	195	100%

## D. Planning Guidelines

The following planning guidelines are based on: the survey results; qualitative research conducted by the Parish Plan Steering Committee; discussions with the Parish Council and further community input derived at public meetings.

### Traffic Guidelines

In light of the critical importance of addressing the negative impact of increasing traffic through the Parish, the following guidelines are proposed:

- The Parish Council and all village organisations need to reach a common understanding of the issues and potential solutions associated with traffic within the parish that reflects public concern, that respects the designation of Pembridge as a *Conservation Area* with unique and special historical and landscape value and that enables all representatives (including all parish and county councillors, the M.P. and M.E.P.) to speak with one firm voice.
- That in light of the negative impact of noise, pollution and safety on both residential “quality of life” and the appeal of Pembridge as a tourism destination, every effort be made to divert **non-local** Heavy Goods Vehicles from traveling through Pembridge and other traffic be made to reduce speed.
- That such diversion and calming efforts should be investigated and implemented in the following order of priority:
  1. The re-routing of the A44 from Golden Cross to Sarnesfield and Lyonshall with a bypass that links with Rhyse Lane on the north side of the existing A44.
  2. Development of a relief road from the east end of the Shobdon Industrial Estate – possibly along the route of the former railway dismantled in the 1960’s.
  3. Construction of a new bypass diverting all but local traffic around Pembridge (if priorities 1 and 2 can be proved infeasible).
    - Such diversion efforts must be accompanied by the following additional measures to be effective:
      1. Enforcement of any weight restrictions imposed – including heavy fines.
      2. Significant improvements to existing signage and the provision of adequate signage for the new routes that entry by HGVs is prohibited.
      3. A concerted effort by all businesses located in the Parish and neighbouring Shobdon, generating and receiving deliveries, to advise their suppliers and drivers of the re-routing.
      4. Significant improvements to tourist-related signs, literature and promotional programs along and for the Black and White Trail that encourage leisure traffic to include Pembridge in their itineraries.
      5. Introduction of traffic calming measures in Pembridge suitable for a B-road in a residential area (e.g. a flashing “School Children Crossing” in East Street that would enable everyone to cross safely from school to the Millennium meadow, a 20 mph speed restriction, and speed cameras).
- Any diversion or traffic calming measures should be designed aesthetically and be compatible with the unique historical ambience of the parish.

- There should be an immediate investigation of small pockets of land within the conservation area that could be used by residents for off road parking with priority given to residents having to currently park on access roads where road width is restricted. Routes linking such off road parking areas most directly with residences should be identified and permissive paths negotiated with local landowners.

Proposals for any further housing development should be accompanied by a traffic and parking impact analysis and provision made for sufficient off road parking to accommodate the needs of the residents.

## Environmental Guidelines

In light of the fact that Pembridge is situated in a *Conservation Area* and its natural beauty and architectural heritage offer value to both residents and visitors, the following guidelines and recommendations are made:

- A new set of designs be developed (possibly by competition) for all street furniture in and around Pembridge that reinforce the unique character and ambience of the village and also interpret and communicate interesting and useful information about the Parish to residents and villagers. This initiative to include the provision of signs, interpretive boards and plaques, public seating, litterbins etc.
- Additional public seating should be provided particularly in the Churchyard, adjacent to the River – east and west of the bridge and in the Millennium Meadow.
- Recycling facilities be introduced at the Village Hall provided that they are properly screened and their use is hidden from view. A supervisory committee should be appointed by the Parish Council to ensure bins are emptied and the site is maintained in a clean and tidy manner.
- The feasibility of a Pembridge Landscape and Heritage Interpretation Centre be reinvestigated and a digital compilation made of all available documents, photographs and records that could be used in such a centre to interpret and present the historical resources of the Parish.
- The Parish Council initiate a Pembridge in Bloom competition by subsidising the cost of containers and plants and encouraging winners to compete in national competitions: a program of container tree planting be investigated to locate trees and shrubs where their presence can absorb noise, dirt and fumes along the main thoroughfare without interfering with public access.
- Local businesses and social groups be encouraged to adopt a section of the main roads (East and West Street, Bridge Street and Bearwood Lane) and commit to keep them litter free.
- That more local gardens and farms be encouraged to open for public viewing on designated days a year and interpretive walks supported and promoted on the same day – “Pembridge Perambulations”.

## Housing and Settlement Guidelines

In light of the current pressure on infrastructure (notably sewage, electricity and off street car parking) the following planning guidelines be followed:

- Further commercial housing development be restricted to within the settlement boundary of Pembridge or the renovation of farm buildings located in the remainder of the Parish.
- Any new such development be required to make adequate provision for off street parking.
- A professional housing needs study be conducted to quantify the need for affordable housing in the Parish and provision be made for the location of such housing outside the settlement boundary.
- There is evidence to suggest mis-matches between types of homes likely to become available and those local households need or can afford. As the population continues to age, there will be a growing need for health care support at home and sheltered accommodation for the elderly within walking distance of village amenities. Likewise, as national house prices continue to rise at a faster pace than local wages, the need for low cost rental housing by workers involved in the farming and service sector will also continue to grow.
- Provision also be made for landscaped and screened parking areas on the periphery of the village that can be used to support activities and events held periodically in the village, the church, pubs and galleries.

## Services and Business Guidelines

In the context of this business analysis, the following guidelines and recommendations are made

- There is a serious need for all the agencies involved in Parish affairs to adopt a more “business friendly” approach and work to find ways of attracting new businesses to the village and to support existing operations through operation of a local Business Centre and access to professional advice regarding available grants and application processes. Representation to BT should be made to accelerate the timing for the provision of broadband access to the village.
- A detailed inventory of businesses and self-employed persons needs to be completed and a Directory of Pembridge Services developed for distribution in print and online form.
- An inventory of potential commercial space (land and redundant farm buildings) needs to be developed and the Parish Council encouraged to seek applications for commercial development in addition to and, in some cases, as an alternative to residential development.
- Application needs to be made for funding to support further marketing of the Black and White Village Trail as a whole and Pembridge in particular. A marketing and PR plan needs to be developed and refurbishment of the web site and brochure costed and commissioned.
- Potential funding sources (government and sponsorship) and locations for a Pembridge Heritage and Landscape Centre need to be identified and plans drawn to make this concept a reality.

- A landscape interpretive brochure/pamphlet that describes local farming practices and conditions and describes landscape features should be produced to create a better understanding of the issues affecting the countryside and create a closer relationship between the tourism and farming communities in Pembridge.
- An inventory of Pembridge related attractions and events is needed as a precursor to a feasibility assessment of a spring and autumn fair using a mediaeval theme (e.g. resurrection of the Cowslip and Woodcock events that had been held in Pembridge for hundreds of years up until the last war).

## Leisure and Facilities Guidelines

The challenge with making recommendations about leisure facilities and services stems from the need to link the service offered with people (usually volunteers) willing to help or supervise. The survey does highlight those activities and services that might have more appeal than others. That Pembridge is soon likely to outgrow the existing provision of space in the Village Hall and that there is an unsatisfied need for more events, activities and facilities for its younger residents both indoors and outdoors is, however, clear. In this context, the Steering Group recommends:

- Responsibility for developing further leisure activities and facilities be assigned to a group of volunteers that can focus on the total need (e.g. Millennium Meadow and Village Hall) in an integrated way.
- Plans be drawn up by this group to extend the Village Hall by two rooms: One large sports room to provide supporting facilities primarily for children above 8 years of age (badminton, hand/net ball, table tennis, snooker/pool, darts, basketball, karate etc). This room could possibly be used for dances and music festivals. A second Arts and Crafts room which could double as a lecture hall offering short courses or single lectures in the wide range of topics identified by the adult residents during the Survey. The following supporting facilities would be required for the Arts and Crafts room: TV & video, slide and overhead projector, screen, computer facilities, seating, tables etc.
- The work being undertaken by the Millennium Meadow Development Group be supported and a funding and development plan created for public inspection and input. The Meadow area should be designed to attract and appeal to all ages but particular emphasis be given to the needs and interests of young children.
- The demand for tennis and bowling facilities at the Village Hall be confirmed as overhead lighting, changing rooms and showers will need to be built.
- Such plans to include the identification of capital funds (potentially from regional grants) and operational capital, income and costs and also identify suitably qualified individuals within the community willing to plan, promote and manage service provision.
- Particular attention be paid to the social and developmental needs of the older children (11-16 year olds) to ensure they have a safe place in which to meet and socialise. Further research be undertaken with members of this age group to determine precisely what initiatives would generate the greatest positive impact on them.

Assistance be sought from other levels of government – notably Herefordshire Council.

## Transport Guidelines

- Further research be undertaken into to the need for an improved bus service and the feasibility of encouraging more residents to use public transport. The proportion of parishioners using the bus service could be improved if a more practical timetable (especially to Kington and Hereford) were introduced.

## F. Action Steps

TOPIC	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Traffic</b>	<p>Communication of resident's concerns and priorities be made to relevant planning authorities.</p> <p>Current restrictions be more vigilantly enforced.</p> <p>Research be undertaken into spaces suitable for additional off street parking</p> <p>Insistence that any further housing developments make adequate provision for off street parking</p>	Parish Council
<b>Environment</b>	<p>Investigation be made as to the availability of funding for the design &amp; procurement of adequate street furniture and an attractive signage programme</p> <p>Application be made to the relevant agencies for re-cycling facilities and a supervisory committee be appointed</p> <p>Investigation be made as to the availability of funding to support a feasibility analysis for a Pembridge Heritage and Landscape Interpretation Centre and digital compilation of local materials.</p> <p>Further investigation be made of a programme whereby local businesses and social groups can adopt a road to keep clean and tidy.</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Re-Cycling Committee of Parish Plan</p>
<b>Leisure</b>	<p>All groups currently involved in managing and developing aspects of the parishes leisure facilities, events and activities meet to streamline and integrate action and thereby minimise duplication and complete gaps in provision.</p> <p>Conceptual plans be developed to enable costs to be compiled for the expansion of the Village Hall and sources of funding assistance be investigated.</p> <p>Funds be sought to equip the Millenium Medow with recreational equipment desired by the younger residents of Pembridge as identified in the user study.</p> <p>Provision of a safe, sheltered meeting place for teenagers be investigated</p>	<p>Village Hall Management, Pembridge Amenity Trust, Pembridge Show Committee, Millennium Meadow Development Group</p> <p>See above</p>
<b>Housing</b>	<p>Application be made for a professional housing needs survey and an inventory of available sites with potential for conversion (farm buildings) be conducted.</p>	Parish Council

<p><b>Business, Tourism &amp; Farming</b></p>	<p>Investigate the potential for amalgamating the Pembridge Tourism Association with the broader business community (eg a Pembridge Business and Tourism Group) that would assume responsibility for seeking and applying for funds to support the marketing of the Parish and development of further support services.</p> <p>Complete a detailed inventory of businesses and self-employed persons and prepare a Directory of Pembridge Services for distribution in print and online form.</p> <p>Inventory potential commercial space (land and redundant farm buildings) seek applications for commercial development in addition to and, in some cases, as an alternative to residential development.</p> <p>Develop a Pembridge marketing plan, refurbish and enhance the village web site and create an online e-commerce facility to promote and merchandise local produce (e.g., PJ's Apple Juice, Whiting prints, local preserves, bakery goods and souvenirs.</p> <p>Investigate potential funding sources (government and sponsorship) and locations for a Pembridge Heritage and Landscape Centre</p> <p>Develop a landscape interpretive brochure /pamphlet that describes local farming practices and conditions and describes landscape features should be produced to create a better understanding of the issues affecting the countryside and create a closer relationship between the tourism and farming communities in Pembridge.</p> <p>Prepare an inventory of Pembridge related attractions and events as a precursor to a feasibility assessment of a spring and autumn fair using a mediaeval theme (e.g. resurrection of the Cowslip and Woodcock events that had been held in Pembridge for hundreds of years up until the last war).</p>	<p>Local businesses</p> <p>Parish Council</p> <p>Pembridge Business &amp; Tourism Group</p> <p>Pembridge Business &amp; Tourism Group</p> <p>Pembridge Business &amp; Tourism Group</p> <p>Pembridge Business &amp; Tourism Group</p>
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## Appendix 1: Methodology

- Sept 2000 Letter from chairman of Parish Council asking parishioners to volunteer to participate in Village Design Statement project.
- Oct 2000 VDS Committee established
- 26 Oct 2000 Open Day to explain to parishioners the purpose of VDS and for them to complete questionnaire on issues affecting their lives in the Parish.
- Nov 2000 - April 2001 VDS Committee splits into task groups to investigate and consult on issues raised in questionnaire.
- May 2001 Countryside Agency informs Committee that VDS can only be funded if it forms part of a Parish Plan under its Vital Villages Scheme.
- Sept 2001 Parish Council agrees that Parish Plan be undertaken and VDS Committee becomes Parish Plan Committee.
- Oct 2001 Funding agreed with Countryside Agency and Pembridge nominated as “pilot” for the scheme.
- Nov 2001 Parish Plan Committee splits into 7 task groups, co-opts other members and continues consultation and planning meetings.
- 26 Mar 2002 Public Meeting with attendance of representatives from HC and Welcome to our Future. Issues and progress discussed.
- July 2002 All members of the Parish’s 453 households issued with a questionnaire and a supplementary questionnaire issued to all businesses.
- Sept 2002 Questionnaire analysis completed.
- 20 Oct 2002 Draft of Parish Plan approved by Parish Council.
- 4 Nov 2002 Drafts amended and submitted to Countryside Agency and Herefordshire Partnership.
- 20 Nov 2002 Copies of final draft available to Parishioners.
- 27 Nov 2002 Public Meeting to discuss findings and gather input from Parishioners.

Throughout the process, updates on progress have been included in “Pembridge Online”, a quarterly publication available to all Parishioners.

# **Appendix 2: Original Personal and Business Questionnaires**

## Pembridge Parish Plan: Adult (16 years & over) Personal Questionnaire

The purpose of the Parish Plan is to identify the kind of Parish that we want Pembridge to be over the next five to ten years. While change of some kind is always inevitable, by discussing what we want and don't want, we have the chance to ensure that change is desirable.

Various government-appointed agencies, including some with funds available, have indicated that they can only help us if we have a Parish Plan. Your opinions are vitally important, so please take the 15 minutes needed to answer these questions. It's your investment in our future. Your responses will be confidential and the answers grouped together to give a representative picture of the views of all. We'll be compiling the results of this survey in June.

If you are self-employed, offer a service or sell products in the community, please complete the blue business questionnaire also. If you have any questions and concerns, please call me, \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ I will collect the questionnaire on \_\_\_\_\_ **THANKYOU!**

1. Please tick which of the following describes you:

SEX:	Male	Female			
AGE:	16-24	25-29	30-44	45-59	60+

2. How long have you lived in the Parish of Pembridge?

- |   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 10 years      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 months to a year | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 10 years |

3. How satisfied are you with your parish as a place to live?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

4. On the whole, do you think that over the past two years Pembridge has got better or worse?

- Better
- Worse
- Not changed much
- Have lived here less than 2 years

5. What are the reasons for any changes you have experienced?

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6. Over the past year, have you been involved in any local county or parish voluntary activity or association? If yes, please describe.

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7. Do you presently use the Village Hall and for what purpose?

- Yes, Weekly for: \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes Monthly for: \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes, but less often for: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not at all, because: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What kind of sporting activities would you take part in within the Parish if both facilities and appropriate organisations existed?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Which of the following general outdoor activities and facilities proposed for the Millenium Meadow might you use?

Concrete Hall Pipe	
Cricket nets	
BMX track	
Tennis Court	
Basketball Court	
Football net	
Climbing wall	
Cycle pad for learners	
Sand pit	
Roundabout	
Rocking Horse	
Play Village	
Wildlife area (nature zone, wildflower meadow)	
Spectator seating	
Secluded seating	
Picnic spot	

10. If adult education / evening classes were to be organised in the parish, would you be interested in attending?

- Yes, definitely
- Possibly
- Not at all

11. If yes, what kind of classes might you like to attend?

- Computing/Internet
- Music
- Arts/crafts
- Cooking/cuisine
- Languages
- Aerobics/keep fit
- Photography
- History
- DIY
- Other

12. Do you have any skills and interest that you would be willing to share with other parishioners (eg gardening, cooking, painting, computing, flower arranging, writing, photography etc?)

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13. Do you use the mobile library service?

- Yes  No

14. If yes, how do you rate the service provided by the mobile library?

- Good  Poor  
 Reasonable  No Opinion

15. Do you feel there is a need for a playschool for preschool children in the village?

- Yes  No  Don't Know

16. Do you think there is a need for an "after school club" in the Village?

- Yes  No  Don't Know

17. How do you rate the shopping facilities in the parish?

- Very good  Adequate  No opinion  
 Good  Poor

18. How often, on average, do you purchase items in the Village Shop/Post Office?

- Daily  Less often  
 Weekly  Never  
 Monthly

19. What would encourage you to use the shop more?

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20. Are there any farm-related services (such as gardening/hedge laying/open farm/golf range/fishing) you would like to use in Pembridge?

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21. Which, if any of the following health care services do you have difficulty getting to?:

- Hospital  Chiroprapist  Other medical facility  
 Doctor  Optician  
 Chemist  Dentist

22. Do you think that Pembridge has enough homes for the current population?

- Yes  No  Don't Know

23. Do you think the mix of homes is right for the current population?

- Yes                                       No                                       Don't Know

24. In a Parish where many incomes fall well below the national average, do you support the idea of affordable housing for the young (e.g. rentable one-bedroom starter homes?)

- Yes                                       No                                       Don't Know

25. (ONLY ANSWER THIS QUESTION IF YOU ARE AGED 18-30 AND LIVING WITH OTHERS NOW) Would you require affordable housing in order to stay, live and work in or near the Parish?

- Yes                                       No

26. (ONLY ANSWER THIS QUESTION, IF YOU ARE AGED 60+). Do you anticipate that you might need or want sheltered accommodation in the parish over the next 5-20 years?

27. How do you rate the issue of traffic in the village?

- No problem                               Minor problem                               Major issue

28. If traffic is a problem, what do you think is the cause?

- Speed                                       Both  
 Volume                                       Other

According to the Herefordshire Transport Plan, 4500 vehicles travelled through Pembridge on an average day in 1999 of which 15% were heavy goods vehicles. Rural traffic is expected to grow faster than the national average. What action do you favour to deal with the traffic issue in our Parish? - (please tick the measures you favour):

- Do nothing
- Traffic calming measures
- Re-route the A44 past Sarnesfield and Lyonshall with weight restrictions to divert HGVs
- Construct a bypass south of Pembridge
- Construct a bypass north of Pembridge
- Divert HG vehicles away from Pembridge

29. Which of the following calming measures would be most effective in slowing down traffic and protecting pedestrians through the village?

- A spot roundabout at the junction with Bridge Street
- Raised surfaces (humps) on the A44
- One or two pedestrian crossings
- A 20 mph speed limit
- A "flashing, children crossing sign"
- Speed cameras
- Parking bays on A44
- Other (please specify)

30. How often do you use the local bus service?

- Regularly                       Occasionally                       Never

31. How important is the bus service to you?

- Essential                                       Not Important (go to question 36)  
 Important                                       No opinion

32. How do you rate the bus service?

- Good     Poor  
 Reasonable                                       No opinion

33. Where do you travel to using the bus?

- Kington only                       Leominster only                       Both

34. How might the service be improved?

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35. Funding may be available to support a Community Taxi Service. If one were operated in Pembridge, how often might you use it?

- Daily     Monthly  
 Weekly     Not at all  
 Every couple of weeks

36. Do you currently recycle any household waste?

- Yes     No

37. Are recycling collection facilities available in the village/parish?

- Yes     No

38. Do you use recycling facilities outside the parish?

- Yes     No

39. Would you recycle materials if facilities were available in Pembridge?

- Yes     No

40. Which materials do you recycle?

- Paper and cardboard                       Textiles                                       Cans  
 Glass     Plastic     Green/garden waste

41. Where in the Parish do you think a recycling facility would best be situated?

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42. Please rank in order of importance the following measures designed to improve the overall appearance of the Parish.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduction & Standardisation of signs | <input type="checkbox"/> More litter boxes     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More flowerboxes, plants             | <input type="checkbox"/> More off road parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More seating                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Street cleaning                      |  |

43. Do you think that more countryside and heritage information should be made available to the community and visitors?

- Yes                                       No                                       Have no opinion

44. Would you support a Heritage/Landscape Interpretive Centre funded from outside the Parish and designed to help visitors better understand the area?

- Yes                                       No

45. The church is an important amenity and historical landmark in Pembridge that is supported by a diminishing congregation. How might the larger Parish Community make better use of this asset? What additional activities and services might it be used for?

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46. What landscape features of the parish need to be protected, enhanced or added to?

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47. Which of the following issues covered in this survey are the most important to you?

- |                                  |                                    |   |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport | <input type="checkbox"/> Services, retail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure   | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment      |

48. What other comments, suggestions, concerns do you wish to express that may not have been covered in this survey. We are particularly interested in creative suggestions for improving the quality of life for all residents of Pembridge.

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## Pembridge Parish Plan: Business Questionnaire

This questionnaire is addressed to any adults in the Parish that offer a service that could be used by residents both within and outside the parish boundaries. Our intent is to find out how you might be helped to grow your business or service.

1. What type of business do you run or what service do you offer (e.g., design, hair dressing, gardening, driving, editing, accounting etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Are these services suitable for sale to local residents?

Yes  No

3. If yes to Q2., would you be willing to be listed in a Pembridge Services Directory for use by other parishioners?

Yes  No

4. If a village resource centre were opened (with photocopying, binding, laminating, business services) would you use it?

Yes  No

5. What constraints, if any, affect the growth of your business (e.g. lack of community marketing, traffic, parking, lack of premises?)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What kinds of products and services relating to your business would you prefer to buy locally from within the Parish, if you could find them?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you employ local people from Pembridge Parish and neighbouring Parishes and, if so, how many?

\_\_\_\_\_ persons full-time

\_\_\_\_\_ persons part-time

8. Do you expect to expand your business over the next five years and employ more people?

Yes  No

9. Does your business have a web site?

Yes  No

10. Would a high speed internet connection help your business, if available?

Yes  No

11. What, if anything, might the Parish do to help you expand or improve your business?

IF YOU ARE A FARMER, PLEASE WOULD ONE MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD COMPLETE QUESTIONS: 12-20

12. How large is your farm or small holding? \_\_\_\_\_ acres

13. What produce is generated from your farm?

14. What produce do you sell to customers direct and locally via farm shops or farmer's markets?

15. If you do not sell directly to consumers now, might you consider doing so in the future and what do you see as the opportunities and constraints?

16. Do you have redundant buildings on your farm that could be converted for non-farming purposes?

Yes  No

17. What types of use would you prefer these buildings be put to, if given a choice?

- Residential
- Commercial uses
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

18. Which of the following "countryside tourism" activities do you offer on your farm or which would you consider offering in the future?

- Self-catering accommodation
- B & B accommodation
- Caravan Park
- Guided Walks
- Non-guided walks with interpretive signs on property
- Riding
- Fishing
- Photography or painting
- Other

19. What action, that could be taken by the Parish and the local community, would most help your farming business?

\_\_\_\_\_

IF YOU OPERATE SOME FORM OF TOURISM-RELATED BUSINESS, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 21-28

20. What type of tourism-related business do you run?

- Self-catering accommodation
- B & B accommodation
- Caravan park
- Eating establishment
- Attraction (gallery, specialty retail)
- Event (eg Pembridge Show)

21. Do you employ local people, and if so, how many?

\_\_\_\_\_ persons full-time

\_\_\_\_\_ persons part-time

22. What are the constraints - relevant to tourism - to growing your business?

\_\_\_\_\_

23. Can visitors pre-book or buy your services online?

yes

No

24. Would you be interested in being able to sell your services online?

Yes

No

25. Are there locally produced products and services that you could offer your guests (eg food hampers of local jams, cheese, cider, potpourri), catering, guided walks by appointment, cycle rental)

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26. If Pembridge had a community taxi service, would this help your business (eg picking up and dropping off visitors at Leominster or Hereford train stations?)

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27. What action, that could be taken by the Parish and the local community, would most help your tourism-related business?

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## **Appendix 3: Questionnaire Results**

1	<b>Sex</b>	#	%
	Male	158	46%
	Female	184	54%
		<b>342</b>	100%
	<b>Age</b>		
	16-24	24	7%
	25-29	16	4%
	30-44	65	18%
	45-59	128	35%
	60+	130	36%
		<b>363</b>	100%
2	<b>How Long have you lived in the Parish?</b>		
	Less than six months	22	6%
	6 months to a year	9	2%
	1-2 years	18	5%
	2-5 years	45	12%
	5 - 10 years	79	21%
	more than 10 years	<b>200</b>	<b>54%</b>
		<b>373</b>	100%
3	<b>How satisfied Are You with the Parish?</b>		
	Very satisfied	<b>181</b>	<b>49%</b>
	Fairly satisfied	146	39%
	Neither	38	10%
	Fairly dissatisfied	5	1%
	Very dissatisfied	2	1%
		<b>372</b>	100%
4	<b>On the whole has Pembridge got better or worse?</b>		
	Better	85	23%
	worse	55	15%
	Not changed much	<b>183</b>	<b>50%</b>
	Have lived here less than 2 years	44	12%
		<b>367</b>	100%
6	<b>Involvement in voluntary activity</b>		
	Yes	88	30%
	No	<b>204</b>	<b>70%</b>
		<b>292</b>	100%
7	<b>Do you use the Village Hall?</b>		
	Yes weekly	38	11%
	Yes,monthly	19	6%
	Yes but less often	<b>164</b>	<b>48%</b>
	Never	121	35%
		<b>342</b>	100%
9	<b>Uses of the Millennium meadow</b>		
	Concrete half pipe	12	3%
	Cricket nets	40	11%
	BMX track	26	7%
	Tennis courts	<b>116</b>	<b>31%</b>
	Basketball court	30	8%
	Football net	50	13%
	Climbing wall	39	10%
	cycle pad	23	6%
	Sand pit	23	6%
	Roundabout	32	8%
	Rocking Horse	26	7%
	Play village	32	8%
	Wildlife	<b>139</b>	<b>37%</b>
	Spectator seating	<b>106</b>	<b>28%</b>
	Secluded seating	83	22%
	Picnic spot	<b>101</b>	<b>27%</b>
		380	100%
10	<b>Interest in attending adult evening classes</b>		
	yes	71	19%
	not at all	69	19%
	possibly	<b>226</b>	<b>62%</b>
		<b>366</b>	100%
11	<b>Types of classes</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Computing/internet	104	35%
	Arts & Crafts	87	29%
	Languages	84	28%
	Photography	39	13%

	#	%
<b>1 Sex</b>		
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60+	130	36%
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<b>11 Types of classes</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
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# Questionnaire Results

	DIY	50	17%
	Music	40	13%
	Cooking/cuisine	67	23%
	Aerobics/kep fit	86	29%
	History	79	27%
	Total interested in evening classes (q 10)	297	100%
12	<b>Skills and interests willing to share</b>		
	Gardening	18	11%
	Cooking	7	4%
	Painting	8	5%
	Computing	9	6%
	Flower arranging	4	2%
	Writing	4	2%
	Photography	4	2%
	Total indicating a skill willing to share	162	100%
13	<b>Do you use the Mobile Library?</b>		
	No	356	96%
	yes	16	4%
		372	100%
14	<b>How do you rate the service?</b>		
	Good	18	12%
	Reasonable	3	2%
	Poor	0	0%
	No opinion	124	86%
		145	100%
15	<b>Is there a need for playschool for preschool children?</b>		
	yes	173	48%
	no	3	1%
	Don't know	181	51%
		357	100%
16	<b>Is there a need for an "after school club"</b>		
	yes	169	47%
	No	9	3%
	Don't know	182	51%
		360	100%
17	<b>How do you rate the shopping facilities?</b>		
	Very good	29	8%
	Good	94	25%
	Adequate	184	49%
	Poor	42	11%
	No opinion	23	6%
		372	100%
18	<b>How Often Do you shop?</b>		
	Daily	133	37%
	Weekly	128	35%
	Monthly	40	11%
	Less often	45	12%
	Never	18	5%
		364	100%
20	<b>What farm-related services would you like to use?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Gardening	26	11%
	Hedge Laying	21	9%
	Open farm	5	2%
	Golf-range	36	15%
	Fishing	23	9%
	None	136	55%
	Total Responses	247	100%
21	<b>Which of the following health care services are difficult to reach?</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Hospital	26	12%
	Doctor	6	3%
	Chemist	14	7%
	Chiropodist	9	4%
	Optician	7	3%
	Dentis	31	15%
	None	118	56%
	Total responses	211	100%
22	<b>Has pembridge enough homes for current population?</b>		
	Yes	134	36%

	No	74	20%
	Don't Know	160	43%
		368	100%
23	<b>Is the Mix of homes right?</b>		
	yes	103	29%
	No	111	31%
	Don't Know	145	40%
		359	100%
24	<b>Do you support affordable housing for the young?</b>		
	Yes	283	78%
	No	24	7%
	Don't Know	54	15%
		361	100%
25	<b>Would you require affordable housing in order to stay?</b>		
	Yes	29	19%
	No	11	7%
	Does not apply	113	74%
		153	100%
26	<b>Do you anticipate needing sheltered accommodation?</b>		
	Yes	46	27%
	No	39	23%
	Does not apply	88	51%
		173	100%
27	<b>How do you rate the traffic problem?</b>		
	No problem	20	6%
	Minor	96	27%
	Major	239	67%
		355	100%
28	<b>Causes of the traffic problem?</b>		
	Speed	84	24%
	Volume	119	33%
	Both	148	41%
	Other	6	2%
		357	100%
	<b>Actions needed to mitigate the problem</b>		
	Nothing	11	2%
	Traffic Calming	106	19%
	Re-route the A44	114	21%
	By pass south of Pembridge	53	10%
	By pass north of Pembridge	70	13%
	Divert HGV away from village	196	36%
		550	100%
29	<b>Effective calming measures</b>		
	Spot Roundabout	8	1%
	Raised surfaces	94	15%
	One or two pedestrian crossings	135	21%
	a 20 mph speed limit	150	23%
	a flashing children's crossing sign	87	13%
	speed cameras	128	20%
	parking basys on A44	46	7%
		648	100%
30	<b>How often do you use the local bus services</b>		
	Regularly	18	5%
	Occasionally	69	18%
	Never	286	77%
		373	100%
31	<b>How important is the bus service to you?</b>		
	Essential	20	6%
	Important	56	18%
	Not important	159	51%
	No opinion	77	25%
		312	100%
32	<b>How do you rate the bus service?</b>		
	Good	12	5%
	Reasnable	39	17%
	Poor	34	15%
	No opinion	72	32%
		157	70%
33	<b>Where do you travel to on the bus?</b>		

	Kington	4	6%
	Leominster	32	47%
	Both	32	47%
		68	100%
<b>35</b>	<b>Potential use of a Community Taxi</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Daily	4	2%
	Weekly	25	13%
	Every couple of weeks	22	11%
	Monthly	44	23%
	Not at all	100	51%
	Total Responses	195	100%
<b>36</b>	<b>Do you recycle household waste?</b>	#	%
	No	91	25%
	yes	275	75%
	Total responses	366	100%
<b>37</b>	<b>Are there collection facilities in the village?</b>	#	%
	no	311	97%
	yes	9	3%
	Total responses	320	100%
<b>38</b>	<b>Do you use collection facilities outside the parish?</b>	#	%
	No	89	25%
	Yes	274	75%
	Total Responses	363	100%
<b>39</b>	<b>Would you recycle if there were facilities?</b>	#	%
	no	20	6%
	Yes	336	94%
	Total responses	356	100%
<b>40</b>	<b>What materials do you recycle?</b>		
	paper and cardboard	267	75%
	glass	270	76%
	textiles	82	23%
	plastic	69	19%
	cans	145	41%
	green garden waste	139	39%
	Persons indicating a willingness to recycle	356	100%
<b>43</b>	<b>Should more countryside/heritage info be given to visitors</b>		
	yes	210	60%
	No	33	9%
	No opinion	105	30%
		348	100%
<b>44</b>	<b>Would you support a Heritage Landscape Centre?</b>		
	No	61	20%
	Yes	245	80%
		306	100%
<b>47</b>	<b>Which of the following issues in the most important to you?</b>		
	Housing	94	25%
	Traffic	236	62%
	Transport	46	12%
	Leisure	62	16%
	Services	81	21%
	Environment	186	49%
		380	100%



# P e m b r i d g e P a r i s h P l a n