

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. The scene features a mix of green fields, some with stone walls, and clusters of trees with autumn-colored foliage. A small village or hamlet is visible in the center-left, with several buildings and a church spire. A river or stream flows through the upper left portion of the image. The overall lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

Parish Plan for

NORTHCHAPPEL

Published December 2009



The Old Forge

**Centre village
across green**



**Working Men's Club,
Pipers Lane**

**Centre village
looking south**





Introduction from the Chairman of Northchapel Parish Council

I am delighted to introduce the Northchapel Parish Plan.

This document has been worked on over a number of years, and is the result of consultation within the community of Northchapel, with Chichester District Council and West Sussex County Council. We have also benefited greatly from the input of Action in rural Sussex and the Sussex Association of Local Councils.

The Parish Plan is an overview of the way we, as a community, wish Northchapel to develop in the years ahead, the problems and challenges we face, and how we propose to deal with them in partnership with the appropriate outside authorities.

We are happily supplied with an excellent local school, with a newly refurbished Village Hall, and a Village Shop and Post Office, however there is much to be addressed if we are to achieve our aim of making Northchapel a place that not only we, but also our children, will be happy to call home.

- We must ensure there is an adequate supply of appropriate and affordable housing to meet the needs of future generations (High Priority and Ongoing).
- We need to work to establish transport services which link the village to local townships on a regular basis (Medium Priority).
- We must work to provide leisure facilities for the younger members of our community (Ongoing).
- We must continue to campaign for proper control of the speed of traffic through our village (High Priority and Ongoing).

There is much more which needs to be done, but this plan gives us a template to work from, and gives outside agencies a clear idea about how Northchapel intends to fulfil its obligations within the Local Development Framework.

Our thanks are due to many people who have assisted in creating this document, but, in particular, I would like to mention Chris Spinks, who worked tirelessly on the early drafts, and to Jane Walter, Alex Brown and Pam Bruce who have brought the Plan to fruition.

John Morgan



**New development
in Valentine's Lea**



Doris





Northchapel Parish Plan

Why a Parish Plan?

The concept of the parish plan was first established in the Rural White Paper of 2000 as part of the Government's review of the planning process with the intention of providing parishes an opportunity to identify and express their current and future concerns in line with the core issues of the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Once compiled and published, the information contained within the parish plan can be used by the District Council to make appropriate adjustments to the LDF reflecting the views and needs of the community and all other authorities when assessing strategies for Northchapel.

Consultation Process

The need and wish to produce a parish plan was identified in the mid to late 1990's and a consultation process was established. The main element of the process was the production of a village appraisal which took the form of a questionnaire to establish facts and opinions of core issues contained within the LDF, namely:

Social:

- Housing, education, crime and anti social behaviour, services and facilities, transport;

Economic:

- Employment;

Environmental:

- Road safety.

The questionnaire was designed by the Parish Council and delivered to 370 households, which at the time was ascertained to be 100% distribution. Of this number 212 forms (57%) were returned and analysed on behalf of the parish by Action in rural Sussex.

In 2006 it was felt that additional consultation was required to accurately assess the need for affordable housing in the parish. A total of 368 questionnaires were delivered with 47 forms (13%) being returned.

The results of these consultations were brought together in an initial draft planning document which was presented to the village at the Annual Parish Meeting of 2005. In addition, a submission was made to Action in rural Sussex for additional comments and recommendations on presentation. A final draft of the plan was distributed to organisations within the community for comment before final publication.

Once published the plan will be used by the following:

- Northchapel residents and businesses
- Northchapel Parish Council
- Chichester District Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Sussex Police Authority
- Local groups and organisations
- Church Authorities
- Action in rural Sussex
- Sussex Association of Local Councils
- The Countryside Agency
- South Downs National Park Authority





Geographical Location & History

The Parish of Northchapel is situated in the north-western corner of Sussex, one mile to the south of the Surrey-Sussex border. Northchapel, as its name suggests, was once a chapelry in the north of Petworth parish. It was not until the end of the 17th century that it became a parish in its own right.

The parish landscape is predominantly rural and covers approximately 3,500 acres; it lies mainly on the clays of the Low Weald. To the west the land rises to lower greensand, with the distinctive shape of Blackdown framing the horizon; at 280m it is the highest point in Sussex. The western part of the parish lies within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; although the gently rolling landscape to the east is also very beautiful, with unspoilt farmland and abundant woodland. The entire parish now lies within the recently designated boundary of the South Downs National Park (2009).

The parish landscape reflects many aspects of its development over the centuries. Like many parishes in this part of the Weald early settlers created the pattern of small fields and woodlands that we see today. The natural resources have supported a wide variety of rural trades and woodland industries over the centuries, including Tudor ironworking, forest glass making, quarrying, and brick making.

The village settlement evolved around the village green and the parish church and developed in a linear fashion along the road – the present A283 – which divides the village in a north/south direction. There are several listed buildings, many of which are vernacular timber-framed houses, some clad with the traditional brick and tile familiar to this part of Sussex. Others are Georgian or Victorian giving the village its particular distinctive character, with the Georgian Toll House a notable landmark. The Parish Church of St Michael & All Angels, re-built in the 19th century, lies tucked behind houses on the east side of the village.



Over the past few years there has been a certain amount of infill-building in the village; traffic on the main road has inevitably increased, and yet Northchapel remains an essentially rural parish. The results of questionnaires for the West Sussex Parish Maps Project (2006) confirm that the peace and beauty of our landscape are highly valued.

**Frith in
winter and spring**





St. Michael's Close

**Leaside and
Valentine's Lea**



Housing and the Environment

The village appraisal of 1996 and the subsequent Housing Survey completed in 2006, demonstrated that there was support for some housing development within the parish but this should be of a very small scale and aimed towards supporting genuine local housing needs. Any new housing should have appropriate parking spaces allocated as congestion on estate roads is a problem.

A key concern was that the level of any development be appropriate to the scale of the village in the context of local amenities and facilities and not create the social problems often associated with an increase in housing stocks. In light of this, the following plan has been formulated:

What	How	By Whom
Continue to monitor the requirement for local affordable housing	Create an effective system for assessing true housing needs on a regular basis	Northchapel Parish Council Housing Associations District Housing Services
Ensure that new development is appropriate to the needs of the village	Effective communication and lobbying of housing providers and District Council	Northchapel Parish Council District Councillors
Ensure any new development does not impact on the social fabric of the village or create additional social problems	Ensure development is on a small scale and on a need only basis	Northchapel Parish Council District Councillors CDC Planning Department
Ensure new development does not adversely affect road and pedestrian safety by increasing level of motor vehicles parked on public highways	Ensuring new development accommodates adequate provision for parking	Northchapel Parish Council District Councillors CDC Planning Department
Provide affordable accommodation for families in the parish with a genuine or additional housing requirement	Ensure appropriate development agreements are formulated when development is undertaken	Northchapel Parish Council Housing Associations District Council CDC Planning Department





Pre-School and Primary Education

The primary school plays a critical role in the community's sustainability. The 1996 village appraisal showed that 88.5% of respondents were happy with the standard and range of primary school education available within the village. 90% of respondents to the questionnaire expressed a desire to see state-provided nursery education.

In 2008 West Sussex County Council's restructuring of the Rother Valley schools recognised the wishes of the local communities of Northchapel, Ebernoe and Lurgashall to provide all-through primary education for children to Year 6.

Numbers on the 2008/09 roll were 57. The intake for 2009/10 is likely to increase to approximately 70. The issue of nursery provision has been addressed and the new "Little Oaks" nursery group is now operating with a full roll of 27 children between the ages of 2 and 4.

The school has been rated as "outstanding" or "good" in all aspects of its work in the July 2009 Ofsted report. The school is determined to expand on these positive achievements and will continue to promote the benefits that can be obtained from local education by actively seeking to attract the children of the young families within the district and surrounding communities to use it.

What	How	By Whom
Maintain/increase number on roll for pre school and primary departments	Promote benefits of community based education to surrounding communities Promote unique learning ethos by prospectus and community involvement in activities (Open Afternoon) Recognise need for appropriate development of new housing to attract families Provide affordable housing for young growing families already in the catchment areas both in the private and social sectors	Headteacher & Governing Body Parish Council & CDC with Housing Associations Chichester District Council Planners and Housing Associations
Staffing	Recruit teaching assistants and school officers from the local communities	Headteacher & Governing Body
Foster contact with Parish Church	Continue Harvest Festival & Christingle Services Learning visits	Headteacher & Rector of community
with the community	Invitation to attend events either in school e.g. weekly sharing assemblies or elsewhere e.g. church services Distribution of Harvest Hampers within communities Termly family walk HSA events	Headteacher & Governing Body





Transport

Bus services in and around the village are regular but scarce. There are no scheduled services to Petworth or Midhurst, although they are both served by DoRiS (a Demand Responsive Service), which is a West Sussex County Council service. There are limited regular services to Chichester (twice a week) and to Haslemere (twice a week). It is estimated that this public transport is the only option for approximately 20% of families, who do not have the use of private cars during the day. The Petworth-based West Sussex Community Minibus Association also carries passengers to Petworth for shopping every Thursday.

With the closure of doctors' surgeries in the village, a small group of volunteers ferry residents to Chiddingfold for their appointments.

All the bus services are inadequate to meet the demands of those who work in the Midhurst and Haslemere areas. Their demands can only be met by the use of private transport, which adds to the congestion on the roads in the morning and evening rush hours.

What Ensure regular transport is provided for those who do not have their own means for reaching nearby towns/surgeries/hospitals etc. Promote improved community transport opportunities	How Parish Council involvement Parish News Liaising with local community groups and Parish Councils	By Whom WSCC Local voluntary drivers Community Groups
--	---	---



Mast in Frith

Transport to Grange Centre, Midhurst



Telecommunications

The parish has had to cope with a number of applications for the erection of telecommunication masts, supposedly to improve mobile phone coverage in the area. In the main, local opinion is against such masts, with concerns being voiced about their unsightliness, environmental impact and safety. The wish, therefore, is to keep them to a minimum and for differing companies to share those facilities which already exist. When new technology makes these masts redundant they should be removed.

What Ensure additional obtrusive telecommunication infrastructure is minimised Promote sharing of masts between operators	How Lobby CDC planners Monitor LDF for revisions to planning guidance. Promote National Park status Lobby CDC planning department Direct lobbying of phone companies where applications are made	By Whom Northchapel Parish Council National Park Authority English Nature Northchapel Parish Council National Parks Authority English Nature
--	--	---



Police, Crime & Public Safety

There has been no local policing in the village for many years, however a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) has been assigned to the village. The area is seen as a low crime area but this does mean that when a police presence is required, response times can be protracted. There is a Neighbourhood Watch scheme with coordinators covering the parish and representation at the regular meetings of the local Neighbourhood Panel. Regional links are good with information relayed through reports to the parish in the Parish News and newsletters.

Fire and ambulance services are mostly provided from Petworth and Haslemere, however when required at the not infrequent serious traffic accidents on the A283, services from Guildford and Chichester can be called upon. Often the distances involved means that the response times are less than satisfactory.

The major hospitals serving the area are the Royal Surrey in Guildford and St. Richard's in Chichester for emergencies, coupled with Haslemere Hospital for minor injuries during the working day.

What	How	By Whom
Promote better contact with West Sussex Police and PCSO	More regular communication between relevant parties	Parish Council Neighbourhood Watch West Sussex County Council
Reduce instances of vandalism and anti-social behaviour	Improve regular PCSO presence	Parish Council Neighbourhood Watch All parishioners
Ensure emergency services are readily available to serve the village	Lobby relevant service providers and monitor service provision	Parish Council West Sussex County Council Primary Care Trusts & Hospitals
Accident and emergency facilities	Petition and lobby appropriate Primary Care Trusts	Parish Council Chichester District Council Local health providers

Village Facilities

The overwhelming message from the Village Appraisal highlighted the need for additional facilities within the parish. It was felt the sporting facilities were appropriate, however, there was a need identified for additional provisions for teenagers within the locality.

Since the appraisal was undertaken the village hall refurbishment has been completed. The village hall lies off Pipers Lane at the end of the village green. It is the only large, freely accessible, indoor venue in the village, but in 2005 the building, fixtures, fittings and equipment required total renovation, replacement and repair. This major



refurbishment project was completed in January 2009 and has included a new entrance hall and ramp, an enlarged, modernised kitchen, new toilets, including disabled facilities, renovated main hall and new heating and lighting systems. Substantial funds were raised by the local community and the Parish Council, and successful grant applications made to various funding bodies, including the District Council, Age Concern and The Big Lottery. The completion of the project has ensured that all our users are able to access and enjoy facilities in the hall in safety and comfort. The hall is regularly used for social events and group activities, including Brownies and Rainbows, Kids Judo, Carpet



Bowls, Pilates, Dog Training and Mums and Toddlers. The annual Flower and Vegetable Show will now be held in the hall (July 2009) and Keep Fit classes and a possible Lunch Club are proposed for autumn 2009.

The children’s playground area lies between the village hall and the green. It was created with millennium funding in 2000 and later fenced following a request from residents. There are several new young families in the village and it is proving to be a popular facility.

Northchapel has an active Sports Club and a good deal of work has recently been undertaken to re-furbish the Sports Pavilion which lies beside the village green. There are senior and junior football, stoolball and netball teams and regular tournaments take place on the green. The success of the junior football teams was recognised in 2005 in the Calor Village of the Year competition when Northchapel won the National award for the Young People category.

The Working Men’s Club is situated on Pipers Lane, south of the green. It provides a social venue for members and hosts regular darts matches and quiz evenings.

The Village allotments lie east of the A283, opposite Valentines Lea. There are 23 half or whole plots which are extremely popular and there is usually a waiting list. Members exhibit at the village annual show and have taken part in church festivals.



**Millennium
Playground**

**Stoolball on
village green**





The Parish Church

The Parish Church, surrounded by the village graveyard, is situated in the centre of the village, to the east of the A283, and is dedicated to St. Michael & All Angels. Since 1936, the ecclesiastical parish of North Chapel has been unified with the parish of Holy Trinity, Ebernoe, and it appears that the parish of St. Laurence, Lurgashall, will also be added to the responsibilities of the Rector. The ecclesiastical parish of North Chapel covers a similar geographical area to that of the civil parish.

St. Michael's is the only church within the parish and thus must cater for all denominations by offering worship for a broad range of people. Since November 2008, the parish has been without a

rector but services have been maintained regularly and baptisms, weddings and funerals have all been held since the rector's departure.

The church is the publisher of the Parish News which is the principal written communication within the parish. The church is also the focal point for a number of other activities within the village including, for instance, bellringing, choir for festivals and special occasions directed by the organist who lives in the parish, and an annual flower and vegetable show and fête. Bellringing is a comparatively recent addition to the parish. A peal of five bells was installed in the church with the aid of a grant from the Millennium Bell Fund in time to "ring in" the millennium, and thereafter the bell ringers themselves raised the funds to enable a sixth bell to be installed. The talented team of church flower arrangers are in demand for other events in the parish as well as weekly displays in the church

Although responsible for two parishes, with the possibility of a third parish, the serving Rector will live in this parish. This means that there is the opportunity for the holder of this office to be a part of the local community and to be involved in activities, which although not specifically related to the church itself, are important in the inter-relation of the different village organisations and interests. This is particularly important so far as the young people in the village are concerned and the church is keen to foster a good relationship between itself and the village primary school which is encouraged to use the church for its Christmas and Harvest Services.

Young Peoples Input

The Purple Bus has visited the village on several occasions over the last 2 years. It has been relatively well supported and provides an informal venue for young people of the village to meet and participate in activities. It has also highlighted a gap in the provision of facilities for the young people who live in the village.

Recently a questionnaire was completed by those using the bus and the following themes were highlighted:



- Young people do want to travel to other towns for recreation and/or youth provision but transport is a big problem. This leads to risky behaviour such as lone walking or hitching.
- The teenagers in Northchapel feel that they need a youth club but some were concerned that it should not be too formal but led by their needs and desires.
- They enjoy being together as a group and taking part in activities but some said they felt that others in the village preferred them not to hang around in groups
- The young people felt that they would appreciate positive physical activities such as football, skating and biking.



Services

The Village Shop and Post Office provides a key service in the village. The recent change in ownership has seen a considerable improvement in the services provided (2008). The appraisal highlighted the need for improvements to be made and in light of the recent transformation, it is now up to the local community to maximise the use of this facility, especially the Post Office, which remains under threat.

There are two pubs in Northchapel. The Half Moon hosts quiz evenings and darts matches. The Deepwell has a large flat screen television, popular for watching sporting events. The coal yard is a longstanding family business and there is a car sales business.

What	How	By Whom
Promote the use of the village hall as a venue for events and activities Encourage sporting activities	Liaise with local community, organisations and service providers. Publicity via brochure, parish magazine and website	Village Hall Committee Sport Club Committee
Promote the village facilities, services and events	Promote easier access to communication outlets such as: * Parish News Magazine * Notice boards * Websites * Community Centres * Local Papers	Community groups



Half Moon Inn



Shop and Post Office



Deepwell Inn



Road Safety

The village appraisal highlighted a village-wide concern over the volume and speed of traffic passing through the village, particularly the danger posed in crossing the road in key areas and the level of HGVs using the route.

The volume and speed of traffic has increased over the last few years to such a degree that this creates problems of noise and safety for Northchapel residents and for those who visit the parish. Visibility for drivers leaving their houses and for pedestrians crossing the road is restricted because of the hills and bends within the village. Fast-moving traffic adds to this problem.

Over the past few years there has been much debate between Parish, District and County Councils, and Police Authorities to identify and implement traffic calming measures within the village and the parish. Road resurfacing has also taken place to both the north and south of the village and modification of some speed limits and traffic calming measures within the village have been agreed and implemented. The Sussex Safety Camera Partnership mobile unit is a frequent “visitor” to the village. Other measures such as warning signs and fixed cameras have been suggested; however priorities within the county and potential costs have so far prohibited further actions. The speed of through traffic on the A283 is still a major concern for all those who live in the parish.

It would be desirable if the volume of heavy traffic through the village could be decreased. The A3 and A29 provide convenient routes for heavy vehicles travelling north-south and it would seem sensible to encourage this transport to use these routes rather than to travel through rural communities.

Any future planning must include a review of the calming measures in place, with finances made available to ensure increased safety for those who live in the parish and for those who visit or travel through it.

What	How	By Whom
Continue pressure of West Sussex County Highways Department and West Sussex Police Traffic Divisions	Continued lobbying of statutory Highway Authorities	Traffic focus group Northchapel Parish Council The village
Continued revision/update of calming measures	Continued lobbying of statutory Highway Authorities	Traffic focus group Northchapel Parish Council The village
Encourage community awareness and participation in road safety initiatives	Promote initiatives via local communication outlets, such as: * Parish News * Notice boards * Websites * Community Centres * Local Papers	Traffic focus group Northchapel Parish Council
Introduce additional buffer zone speed limit restriction outside village to south	Continued lobbying of West Sussex County Highways Department and West Sussex Police Traffic Division	Traffic focus group Northchapel Parish Council

School crossing



School traffic in Pipers Lane



Traffic volume







**View to
Blackdown**



**Midhurst
Radar
Beacon**



Allotments



Parish Clerk: helencruikshank@btinternet.com
© Northchapel Parish Council