



Little Leigh Parish Plan

This is the Parish Plan of the village of Little Leigh. The Parish Plan outlines the vision Little Leigh residents have for the short and long term future of the village.

Inside you will find the background to the Parish Plan and the key steps that were taken over the past months to get the views of Little Leigh residents. From these views we have developed an Action Plan. However it is only the start.

You will see that from the Action Plan we will need the time and skills of volunteers to make these ideas become reality. The Parish Plan will be reviewed each year and no doubt new ideas emerge.

We hope the input from Little Leigh villagers can make the Parish Plan evolve into an active process that benefits the village and the people of Little Leigh.

This Parish Plan has involved a lot of hard work and co-operation from the residents of Little Leigh and many thanks goes to those who have contributed in any way.



Village History

The rural village of Little Leigh has a long history:

- Leigh is derived from "Legh" or "Lay" meaning pasture
- An old burnt stump found in Bartington suggests prehistoric settlement
- The village was held by William Fitz-Nigell, Baron of Halton, at the time of Domesday Book in 1086
- 1300-1500's: More land came under cultivation and the population increased
- 1600's: Holly Bush pub built
- 1700's: Trent and Mersey Canal completed
- 1800's: The Old School, now the Village Hall, built St. Michael's and All Angels completed
- 1900's: New Village School opened in 1960. Houses around Orchard Drive built taking number of houses to around 250



Little Leigh Now

Little Leigh falls in the administrative district of Vale Royal and is served by Little Leigh Parish Council, Vale Royal Borough Council and Cheshire County Council.

The village lies mostly between the A49 and A533 roads. The nearest town is Northwich (5 miles away) and Warrington, Chester, Liverpool and Manchester all lie within a 30 mile radius.

Farming is important in the Parish. The village is a diverse community with a mix of age ranges. Around two thirds of the population work, and nearly a fifth is retired. The remainder are predominantly children or students. Of the working population, a quarter are self employed or work from home.

The village has a school, post office and three pubs, the Leigh Arms, the Holy Bush and The Horns.

How the Little Leigh Parish Plan Developed

Work began on Little Leigh Parish Plan in 2004 with most of the key stages taking place in 2005. Parish Plans have been developed all over England and have been supported by a grant from the Countryside Agency.

They are designed to encourage villagers to have a say in how their village develops in the short and long term. The Plan also provides opportunities for local volunteering.

The key stages in developing the Little Leigh Parish Plan were:

- Successful application by Parish Council to Countryside Agency for grant.
- Steering Group of volunteers formed to oversee Parish Plan process.



- Questionnaire circulated to every household and business to get detailed views on how residents would like to see the village over the coming years. i.e. what needs protecting and what developments or activities people would like to see.
- Results of questionnaire recorded and collated and a "snapshot" report showing statistical results produced.
- An Action Plan was produced to reflect the views expressed and identify pieces of work needed to make these ideas a reality.
- Parish Plan produced and launched.

Gathering the Views of Little Leigh Villagers

The most important step in producing a Parish Plan is asking all villagers to give their views. The Parish Plan needs to reflect accurately the views and ideas of the population as well as their needs and concerns.

It was a big task to gather the views of all Little Leigh villagers.

In the spring of 2005 The Parish Plan Steering Group worked on producing a detailed questionnaire to be distributed to every residence and business in Little Leigh. The content was based on input from residents at the public meeting in March and the local knowledge of the Steering Group.



The questionnaire was divided into the following themes:

- Leisure and Social
- Children and Young People
- Local Services and Business
- Community Safety
- Environment
- Planning
- Transport, Roads and Traffic

The questionnaire was delivered to and collected from every home and business in the village in July 2005 and the results were collated.

We had a terrific response and over 15,000 individual questions were answered. This gave a good foundation of data to work from.

(Please see the back page for ways to get a copy of the questionnaire.)

A Firm Foundation for the Parish Plan

With over 15,000 individual questions answered, the next task was to collate all this information.

It was important to do this accurately and each member of the Steering Group took a number of completed questionnaires away and recorded the results. These were then brought together and published in the Little Leigh Snapshot Report. This is a report that summarises all the hard data from the responses to the questionnaire and is the foundation upon which this Parish Plan is built.

(Please see the back page for ways to get a copy of the Little Leigh Snapshot Report.)



The Little Leigh Action Plan

The Action Plan on pages 6 and 7 of this Parish Plan shows the actions that residents wanted to see as, expressed in their questionnaire responses.

Many responses covered a number of themes e.g. transport needs and the environmental impact. The Steering Group discussed this Action Plan at length and every part of it is based on the views expressed by villagers.

You will see in the second column of the Action Plan specific reference is made to the questionnaire results.

The Action Plan needed to be a mixture of short term, specific actions (e.g. re-launching a village newsletter) with longer term aspirations that villagers expressed (e.g. establishing a Youth Forum to co-ordinate future youth provision).

The Action Plan is not set in stone. This is the first Action Plan and it will be reviewed every year. This will allow villagers to monitor progress, change priorities and volunteer for existing and new initiatives.

Little Leigh Action Plan

Main Issues:	<i>based on questionnaire responses</i>	Possible Solution
Volunteers	All the actions of the Parish Plan require volunteers. Over 50% said they would volunteer to provide services and a third said they would help with events and activities	Establish a Volunteers Register to help support activities in the action plan
Leisure and Social Events and Activities	33% said they would help with organising events and activities. This was a very popular section of the questionnaire with people asking for a wide range of activities	Establish a leisure and social committee to organise a programme of activities and run events
	The Village Hall <i>This is the most used community facility in Little Leigh with nearly 40% of respondents having been to an event there. Many of the 429 responses on changes to the Village Hall were about improved facilities with promotion of activities also seen as important.</i>	Improve facilities and encourage more and varied use
Young People	There were 1676 responses to the question on facilities and activities for young people. Key issues were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting place for over 14s • Better playground • Open space and sports field 	Create a way of co-ordinating youth provision
The Environment of Little Leigh	<i>The question on environmental maintenance and improvement got a very big response (1308 answers) and residents identified a wide range of issues and concerns to address</i>	Co-ordinate improvements and maintenance
	Transport, traffic and parking <i>The list of improvements to transport and traffic management got the biggest reply to all questions (1383) with many issues having equal importance.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify problem areas of speeding and parking • Investigate possible solutions in discussions with "experts" and other villages • Develop transport solutions
	Planning matters <i>50% people who responded saw no need for more homes to be built in the village but 18% wanted affordable housing</i>	Use this village view to inform future developments
Improving services to and in Little Leigh	78% said they would like a list of available services and businesses 58% said they would like to see a list of volunteers to help with local services such as lifts to hospital 51% said they would volunteer to help	Explore how a services and business directory could be set up Explore the possible ways of creating more formal volunteer services
	Energy resources for the village <i>Nearly 50% of residents were interested in having mains gas</i>	Explore alternative forms of energy resources for the village
	Village shopping <i>Of all local facilities or services a village shop was the most popular</i>	Establish local solutions to village shopping
	Communication within the village	<i>A third of responses supported a village newsletter and/or an active website. There was similar support for a youth newsletter or magazine</i>

Parties involved	Action	Timescale
Parish Plan Group and Volunteers	Parish Plan Group to prioritise and co-ordinate actions in this plan, identify need for volunteers and let residents know of available opportunities	Short term and ongoing.
Parish Plan Steering Group Leisure and Social Committee Volunteers and Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Plan Steering Group to recruit a Leisure and Social Committee Leisure and Social Committee to meet and agree action plan Recruit volunteers for specific events 	Short term Medium term Medium term
Village Hall Committee Chester Diocese Parish Council Parochial Church Council User groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village Hall Committee to create action plan including costing/fundraising and identifying partners Implement development plan 	Medium term Medium/long term
Young People, Youth Leaders, Youth Forum, School, Parish Council, Parish Plan Group, VRBC and Cheshire County Council (Leisure), Youth Organisations	Youth Forum to be established to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get ideas from young people of different ages See what is possible Fundraise Provide voice for young people 	Short Term Medium/long term
Environmental Focus Group with members from Parish Council, Parish Plan Steering Group, local farmers and landowners, Volunteers Liaise with VRBC, County Council, Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Tree Wardens, Defra	Set up Environmental Focus Group to develop Environmental Action Plan looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved footpaths and cycle-ways Reduce litter and dog fouling Tree Planting Maintenance of verges and hedges Arrange plastic recycling Review Action Plan annually	Short term Medium Term Ongoing
Parish Plan Steering Group, Parish Council, VRBC and Joint Highways, Police, Primary School, interested residents, other villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include on the agenda of the Environment Focus Group Identify main problems and concerns and form action plan to address these 	Short term Medium Term
Parish Council, VRBC, Cheshire Landscape Trust Environmental Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Landscape Character Assessment will be considered Produce a Village Design Statement and review regularly 	Ongoing Medium term
Parish Plan Group, Parish Council and residents with particular knowledge and expertise Service providers User Forums	Ensure services are provided to the village and that they are accessible and meet need	Ongoing
Parish Council and energy suppliers	Identify energy suppliers and provide information on likely costs	Medium Term
Parish Plan Group, Local Businesses, Volunteers	Carry out a feasibility study	Medium/long term
Parish Plan Steering Group, Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaunch newsletter Continue to develop website Encourage individuals to contribute articles Advertise activities and events 	Short term and then ongoing.



Making Plans a Reality

So we have been through a long and detailed process. We have expressed our dreams and concerns in the questionnaire. We have a report that shows what the majority want to see. And now we have a Parish Plan that contains a detailed Action Plan.

This is just the start. We will show the Parish Plan to Vale Royal Borough Council and Cheshire County Council and all the other agencies and service providers we have identified.

However for these plans to become a reality and for real progress to be made it is the time, experience and expertise of villagers that is crucial.

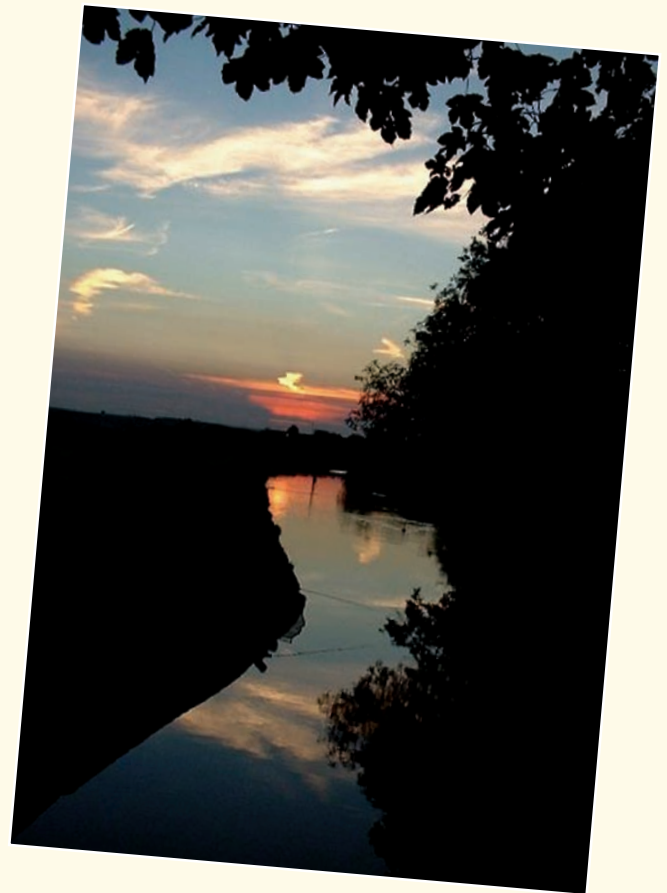
There will be many opportunities to volunteer in an area that interests you and in a way that suits you. Some people can give a lot of time, others cannot. All help is valuable and will be the basis for success and ensuring the Parish Plan stays alive and evolves over the coming years.

If you would like to have a chat about volunteering, please ring any of the villagers below:

- Ross Cormick : 01606 891626
- Sue Royal : 01606 892369
- Matthew Veasey : 01606 891541
- Sue Griffiths : 01606 891562
- Jean Davis : 01606 853161
- Janet Watson : 01606 891230

You can also find our more information about volunteering opportunities on www.littleleigh.net

or by writing to:
Parish Plan Volunteers
PO Box 419
Northwich
CW8 4WL



Parish Plan Documents

If you would like to see a copy of the Parish Plan Questionnaire or the Snapshot Report you can find copies in the Village Hall and the Post Office.

These documents can also be found on www.littleleigh.net

If you want a copy sent to you write to this address and specify which document you want sending:

Parish Plan Documents
PO Box 419
Northwich
CW8 4WL