

Appendix 2k

Somerby Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Community Group consultations

1. Somerby Doctors' Surgery
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1. Somerby Surgery

Date: 3rd March 2017.

Present: Ian Razzell, Cllr Pat Fynn, Christine Tolond

Venue: Somerby Surgery

This report by: Christine Tolond

The discussion broadly followed the order of points prepared and distributed in advance of the meeting by Carl Powell.

Mr Razzell explained that whilst there were reciprocal arrangements in place to allow some sharing of staff resources between the Market Overton and Somerby Surgery and the Oakham Surgery, that they were two distinct separate practices, each with its own GP code. There are 8 partners in total, three of whom own the Oakham site with the remaining five owning five other sites where Primary Care is given. Further medical services are provided by a number of salaried part-time sessional doctors to meet demand. Capability and capacity are shared between all three surgeries as appropriate and agreements provide for doctors from the Oakham practice to cover periods of leave and any vacancies on at least a 50% basis, using additional locums where necessary, and vice-versa.

Whilst transferability of patients between the different surgeries takes place, this can be down to patient choice but the focus is on each surgery being able to meet the needs of its local residents. Patients would be asked to travel in exceptional circumstances only.

There are currently 3,983 registered patients at the Market Overton and Somerby practice and there is the capacity to accommodate up to 1,000 additional patients. As funding is still allocated on a per capita basis, any increase in patient numbers is accompanied by an increase in funding. The Oakham practice is currently at capacity with 16,000 registered patients. A number of patients have moved from Oakham to Market Overton and Somerby surgery by request which is the main reason why patient numbers have increased by 12% over the past year and has led to the appointment of an additional nurse with an extra receptionist in the pipeline. Whilst it can be

difficult sometimes at the Oakham practice to be able to get an appointment with the doctor of choice, this was not the case at Somerby or Market Overton.

In recent years the practice has experienced some GP recruitment difficulties, in line with the national average. An effective way to address this issue has been to maximise the use of other clinical healthcare professionals and to re-direct patients who do not always need to see a doctor, as appropriate. This will focus mainly on Clinical Nurse Specialists for the management of chronic conditions, e.g. diabetes or asthma, there are plans in place for a 'wellness advisor' to be appointed and the practice has recently appointed a prescribing nurse. This will help facilitate moving to a separate dispensary based in the Somerby surgery instead of the current shared arrangement.

There is additional physical capacity available within the current Somerby surgery building with 'spare' clinical rooms often available and the building was designed with the potential to create extra space by building into the loft and possibly extending to the rear of the plot. Parking is not a problem at present and there is capacity to increase the number of parking places.

Mr Razzell stated that whilst the practice had no particular views on the number or scale of housing developments currently being proposed in Somerby, the surgery would currently be able to accommodate the impact of up to 130 extra houses with a potential 300 additional patients, including special provision for children. He did not see this leading to the need for more patients to travel to Market Overton unless through choice.

Additional capacity can be created by using extended hours although this would most likely be in Oakham. Mr Razzell confirmed that additional Saturday morning clinics would be starting at the Oakham practice in April.

In respect of capacity planning, Mr Razzell referred to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment undertaken by NHS England and Clinical Commissioning Groups, and referred us to a publication available on NHS Digital which sets out the numbers of patients registered at each GP practice, which is updated on a quarterly basis.

He confirmed that the practice would be very willing to support initiatives around healthy lifestyles and recreation. He is currently talking to Rutland County Council about such initiatives e.g. Active Rutland and confirmed that the Wellness Advisor pilot which would be starting in Uppingham the following week would be funded for one year from the Best Care Together Fund. He also indicated that the practice would wish to be an active partner where possible in the development and delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Somerby Primary School

Date: 3rd February 2017.

Present: Philippa Plant (Headteacher) Mr Sheta (Manager) Mary-Anne Donovan, Carl Powell Tolond

Venue: Somerby Primary School

This report by: Carl Powell

Neighbourhood Plan

MA outlined the neighbourhood planning process, the committee and consultation structure of our neighbourhood plan and progress so far. It aspires to produce a draft plan by the end of April and

for a referendum to be held in November.

MA further described the significance of 'settlement roles' as a driver for housing allocations. For example the draft Melton Local Plan allocates a minimum of 49 new houses to Somerby village. Planning applications have already been made for about 77 new houses and Cooks Trust land has been identified for about 42 more, making approximately 120. This raises issues of sustainability and capacity of facilities – including the school.

MA outlined Cllr Leigh Higgins' suggestion that new housing should be spread more evenly across settlements and the whole south of the Borough rather than concentrated on a small number of identified settlements. She also reported local support for new developments being 'small' meaning something like 10 or less.

Status of the school

The school is a Grade 2 listed building.

The school has achieved a rating of 'good' in 2016.

The school is an academy but bound by Leicestershire admissions policy so, for example, it can be obliged by the LEA to accept a specified number of pupils.

PP points out that Melton Borough has unusually high 'pupil mobility' with parents being very willing to switch children between schools for various reasons of their own. Having said this Somerby School is quite stable now; in 2016 none of their pupils 'switched'.

Ethos of the school

PP considers it 'very much a village school'. For example, all parents have her phone number and class sizes are small. One consequence of overall small size is that classes are very mixed in age, for example children aged 3, 4, 5 and 6 might be taught in the same class. The school does offer some after-school activities (reading, computing, music) but does not have capacity to provide before- or after-school care or a breakfast club. Small size also makes it difficult to conduct team sports.

The small size and 'village' character of the school is attractive to many parents but not all because of the limitations described above.

Parents have to be 'attracted' to the school, because they can choose where to send their children. PP describes this as really a competitive process, comparable to 'marketing' the school.

Attendance, capacity and expansion

Four years ago the school only had 10 pupils and was in danger of closing. It is now doing very much better. Presently the school has 33 children, and expects 6 more in September 2017. These pupils by no means all live locally – some are from Asfordby and Oakham, for example. Conversely not all local parents choose to send their children here; for example some Somerby children are educated privately in Oakham, and others are sent to Wissendine School which is popular because it is rated Excellent.

The maximum capacity of the school is 49 and the limiting factor is square footage of the building. The LEA have set a target for growth to 67 which PP considers would work well academically – allowing four classes, separating the 3-4 year olds from the 5-6 year olds.

Enlargement of the building

Accommodation of 67 pupils would require substantial enlargement of the building - specifically, a new classroom. This could not be built to the south because of a grade 2 listed wall, so would have to be built to the west on what is now a playing field/paddock. The school is aware that they are in a conservation area and this might constrain the style of any extension. This constraints would have to be resolved. The LEA have already had architects visit the site and the school expects a decision

by 15th December 2017.

MA highlighted that all new building must be sustainable and take into account, among other things, the conservation area, landscape, heritage and environmental sensitivity.

Funding

The school receives an annual sum per pupil and also a fixed sum of £150,000 per year. However the latter is to be reduced to £110,000 creating a funding gap which it is intended to fill by admitting more pupils. Notwithstanding the value placed on being a 'small village school', financially the school desires substantially more pupils over the next 2 years. This links in with the LEA target of 67 pupils and enlarging the building. These developments may partly depend on Section 106 contributions, so considering housing development in Somerby, PP sees new houses as new pupils and therefore new revenue.

Parking and road safety

These are significant issues for the school. Very few pupils walk to school, even those living in Somerby Village apparently. Only about 12 (number to be confirmed) of present pupils live in Somerby parish.

Parking for 'pick up and drop-off' relies substantially on the goodwill of the Stilton Cheese Inn allowing parents to use its car park. CP pointed out that consultation has disclosed considerable local concern about parking and congestion on Somerby High Street and there may be support for a policy requiring all new building development (of whatever type) to include sufficient off-road parking for its residents, staff, customers and visitors.

Somerby High Street is often busy and congested, particularly at times affecting pick-up and drop-off at the school. This is concern for pupil safety. The school would like a zebra crossing, or preferably two – one outside the school and another further east toward the village shop. At present however they have been told they are unlikely to get these. CP gave the opinion that zebra crossings plus the 'no parking' zones to either side of them would probably be unsustainable as parking space is already at capacity on the High Street.

The school has asked for a traffic survey to be done on the High Street and Cllr Leigh Higgins is involved with this request. MA expressed the possibility of the Neighbourhood Plan taking part in this as well but no details were discussed.

Facilities for children in Somerby village

MA and CP asked what facilities there are, how useful they are, and how they might be improved. PP considered it a 'challenge' to pursue activities outside the school and felt there was not much opportunity. However the school does sometimes take advantage of the nearby countryside and public footpaths. Children have visit the horse-pond, a farm, and Burrough Hill Fort with the help of the Cooks Trust.

Possible engagement event

MA and CP asked if the school would be interested in an event with the Neighbourhood Plan, perhaps themed on the local environment. PP said the school would be interested but no details were agreed.

Miscellaneous

If the Neighbourhood Plan obtains useful data on numbers of 'under-fives' in the Parish it will share it with the school.

3. Somerby Memorial Hall (village hall)

Date: 28th April 2017

Present: Rachel Jackson (Committee Chair), Christine Tolond

Venue: Somerby Memorial Hall

This report by: Christine Tolond

Meeting supplemented by telephone discussion with Mel Davies (Treasurer).

Somerby Village Hall was constructed through the efforts of local people to provide a venue for village and family events as well as a meeting place for clubs and societies. It is a much valued asset of the village and is currently a well-used venue for many activities and social events, ranging from toddler groups, the camera club, film showings, concerts, plays, and many other activities and social and celebratory events. It has a dedicated website providing more details on what is on offer.

The hall is managed by a committee of volunteers operating under a formal constitution. The hall is entirely self-funding and the Committee is responsible for arranging bookings and events throughout the year to raise sufficient funds to cover the annual running and maintenance costs and secure improvements where necessary or desirable eg. The recent new roof. The Committee is registered as a charity with the members designated as trustees. There are a total of 10 members which operate on a democratic basis and any village resident is eligible to join. The Committee Chair is appointed for a three year period after which an election process takes place. The potential financial liability of Committee members is covered by an insurance policy. Income targets may vary each year depending on changing requirements. At the present time, a new boiler is required and plans are being made for an upgrade to the kitchen facilities.

Past experience of possible access to Section 106 funding from developers has proved disappointing due to the restrictive nature of the contracts on offer and the fact that only partial contributions are offered eg. 15% with the Committee being responsible for raising the remaining 85%. There has been a similar experience with possible grants which sometimes require match funding and may include ambitious target dates when it has proved extremely difficult to raise funds by a deadline. This has led to a pragmatic preference by the Committee for independent fund raising where they have full control of targets, deadlines and issues. The Parish Council can be approached for a contribution of 12.5% funding on proposals and this has proved very helpful in the past.

The Committee owns the land surrounding the hall with a right of access provided to a garage at the rear of the site. As with all areas of the village, parking can be a problem at times of peak use. The car park is used by some village residents, by people attending events at the Methodist chapel and the pub and consideration has been given previously to introducing a barrier operating system. This has not been actively pursued as yet due to the difficulties inherent in managing such an access system although this can be reviewed at any stage should the problems increase.

4. Pickwell & Leesthorpe Village Hall

Date: 1st February 2017.

Present: Shirley Campbell (Chair), Cllr Pat Fynn

Venue: Private home

This report by: Cllr Pat Fynn

At present there are no regular weekly or monthly events taking place at Pickwell village hall. The hall is booked for childrens' birthday parties at times. Usually in November a craft sale charity event takes place. Recently some younger residents from Pickwell have expressed an interest in being part of the village hall committee. SC thinks that having a domestic cooker only is an issue, also crockery and everything else is there to hold events serving food. In the past there used to be a regular Yoga class: SC is not sure why this ceased to be run. The hall committee has not put much efforts into advertising the hall facilities as e.g. not advertising in the school for birthday parties or in the parish magazine Towards for the wider community to be aware of the facility. Parking is an issue, also to invest into a car park is not justifiable for current level of use. Visitors of the village hall usually find parking down Main St, along Leesthorpe Rd or down West End.

5. Parish Community Hub

Date: 15th May 2018

Present: Davina Bates (Chair), Carl Powell

Venue: Private home

This report by: Carl Powell

'The Hub' is a community organisation with a Constitution (copy furnished) and a Steering Group (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and two other voting members). The aims of the Hub are to promote the benefit of the residents of the Parish without distinction:

- (a) By bringing together the aprishioners, voluntary and other organisations, together with statutory authorities, in a common effort.
- (b) To advance social well being and education by support for the development of social, environmental, cultural, sport and historical focussed activities, for recreation and leisure time occupation, with the aim of improving the conditions of life for the residents.
- (c) To take an active assisting role in raising awareness and knowledge of resources, support structures and information.
- (d) By the promotion of other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.

Formed in 2011 against a backdrop of falling access to services in the Parish. A structure was needed to enable access to funding , such as from LCC to introduce new technology (computers) to an unfamiliar generation. It was also helped by the Rural Communities Council and by Melton Borough Council which provided valuable hardware (laptops, ipods).

Computer skills

Inability to use a computer has become a social disadvantage. A 6 week course was designed being delivered weekly by a professional tutor and volunteers in the Methodist Church. The Parish Council contribute to the cost of this. 22 people attended the first course in 2010(?) and they

continue to the present with perhaps 8 or 9 students at a time. Students tend to be older people but this is certainly not a requirement.

Community lunches

The first of these took place in 2012. These are reasonably priced and aimed especially at people who live or dine alone. Again these tend to be older people, but there is no 'bar' and the endeavour is inclusive. People attend from a wider area than Somerby Paris (the '16 villages' south and west of Melton). A team of 5 volunteers arrange transport, venues, administration and the lunches themselves. They are very popular and attendance is usually 60-65 people. The Churches have become involved and help with some funding.

Other activities

'The Hub' contributed to and help organise an event and exhibition in 2014 to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem (with which Somerby Village has historic connections). Small gifts such as cards and flowers are purchased for people suffering a bereavement or marking a birthday or other special occasion.

Representations to Neighbourhood Planners

Davina recommended three specific areas for consideration:

- Domiciliary care (housing types and services to allow people to continue to live in the Parish and/or their own home after such time as they find themselves alone or in need of support)
- Public transport (for those who cannot drive; not only to enable parishioners to visit outside the Parish eg. To town but also to enable friends, relatives, carers and helpers to affordably enter the Parish to visit them. This is a consideration for anyone unable to drive – such as children – not just the elderly or infirm)
- Connectivity (Postal service; Access to Broadband and the hardware and skills necessary to benefit from it).

6. South West Framland Group of Churches

Date: 9th March 2017

Present: David Perril (Church of England Reader), Carl Powell

Venue: Private home

This report by: Carl Powell

The churches of Somerby Civil Parish are all Church of England churches and consist of:

- All Saints, Somerby
- All Saints, Pickwell
- St Mary the Virgin, Burrough-on-the-Hill

All of these are grade 1 listed buildings. The churchyards of Somerby and Pickwell churches are closed. The churchyard of Burrough-on-the-Hill church and Somerby cemetery (Pickwell Road) are open.

The South West Framland group comprises 17 churches. Within it the churches of Somerby, Pickwell and Burrough form a smaller group of five with Great Dalby and Little Dalby. Holy Communion is held at one of these every Sunday meaning there will be a service roughly three weeks in five in Somerby Parish. Additionally there is an evening service one a month somewhere in the group of five. This

rotating arrangement ensures all the churches are used for services and shares ease of access across the Parishes.

South West Framland is currently in interregnum (meaning there is no priest) and the above described arrangements are in place partly to manage this, but it is hoped the interregnum will end with the appointment of a priest in the relatively near future. This it is hoped would increase the number of services.

Mr Perril is a qualified C of E Reader licensed by the Bishop to officiate at services and maintain pastoral care within the South West Framland group of parishes. These capabilities, together with the services of local retired clergy keep all our churches open for worship during the interregnum.

About 17 to 25 people attend the daytime services, about 12 - 15 the evening services, with the major festivals, i.e. Christmas, Easter, Harvest Festival etc. attracting larger congregations. It is important to understand that Sunday worship does not represent all or even most of the Church's activity in the Parish. Other occasional services are held such as a Christmas service for the school, a Mothering Sunday service and the Arnhem service. Weddings, funerals and baptisms are of course additional and the Church runs other activities such as a prayer group and a Bible study course for Lent. Time is also spent serving, for example, the housebound elderly and parishioners in hospital.

In addition to regular worship our churches accommodate a variety of activities and groups such as the Christmas tree festival, flower festival, scarecrow festival, bell-ringers and the Somerby Singers. Burrough church fills the role of 'village hall' there as there is no other community building there.

Mr Perril sees the role of the Church as "providing a Christian presence in the community, not just filling pews".

Acknowledging the present usefulness of the Church and its buildings to the community, it was asked whether even more community activity could be supported in or by them. Mr Perril was very receptive to this idea but pointed out some practical limitations; Burrough Church has toilets and limited kitchen facilities but Somerby and Pickwell have neither, not even running water.

The subject of 'tourism' in the Parish was discussed – in a wide sense of people visiting from anywhere outside the Parish for various recreational reasons. The Parish churches, although this is not their purpose, do contribute to 'tourism' both as buildings which are architecturally important and attractive in their setting and for special interests such as the Arnhem Campaign connection, the old weathervane in Somerby church, and the 1000 year old font in Pickwell Church. Mr Perril thought the Parish "better described as a leisure area than a tourist area" and was positive about supporting this role. He pointed out that annually in September a church tourist trail for cyclists takes place, walkers on the Leicester Round also stop off at the churches, and Somerby Camera Club has photographed them.

The possibility of selling items such as local crafts, postcards, refreshments etc in the churches to benefit both the churches themselves and the wider community was raised. There would be no objection to this in principle though in practice the potential was thought to be limited.

The possibility of significant housing development in the Parish (particularly Somerby village based

on present planning applications) was discussed. Possibly if more people lived in the Parish more people would use the churches and contribute to their sustainability, but not necessarily. Furthermore there is no such objective. As Mr Perril puts it “The Church will serve whoever is here”.

The Church owns no significant land in the Parish other than the churches and churchyards themselves. There are presently no plans to build on any of it.

An opinion was sought on poverty and deprivation in the Parish and ‘hard to reach groups’. Although there are undoubtedly people in our Parish facing difficulties of various kinds (which would be confidential matters if the Church knew of them) there is no evidence to contradict census data and local perception that the Parish as a whole is relatively prosperous or at least not problematically deprived.

7. All Saints Church, Pickwell

Date: 1st February 2017

Present: Shirley Campbell, Cllr Pat Fynn

Venue: Private home

This report by: Cllr Pat Fynn

Currently there is a service held at Pickwell church every 6 weeks. Usually approximately 30 people attend. SC describes the church as a vibrant church. In the past there used to be events such as talks, book launches or concerts. Since Charles Campbell is not organising such events anymore the church has been used much less for such events. SC thinks that if somebody took this on it could be very successful. Events in the past were often booked out and up to 150 people would attend. The church is of historic interest especially the 1000 year old font. The church is open to visitors every day. Similarly to the parking situation at the village hall the church has no parking facility as such but visitors have to park along the roads nearby.

8. Somerby Town Estates

Date: 13th April 2017

Present: Margaret Glover (Secretary), Cllr Pat Fynn

Venue: Private home

This report by: Cllr Pat Fynn

Somerby Town Estates is a registered charity with land holdings of 15 acres (6 ha) of agricultural land let through an agent, and 2.8 acres (1.1 ha) acres of allotment land let as individual units. This came from the charitable bequests of Longwill and of Gobert dating back several centuries. The original bequests were to benefit the poor of Somerby village (not the Parish). This has changed over time and now only three residents receive £100 at Christmas. Funds, besides maintenance and insurance, go towards maintaining the church clock and to requests for assistance from villagers. In the past Brownies, the primary school and individual students amongst others have benefitted.

The charity is administered by six trustees of which three are appointed by Somerby Parish Council every four years, and the others co-opted. They meet twice yearly.

They have no intention of changing or selling their assets. Access to Mill Lane allotments is by a narrow right of way across land owned by Trevor Hornbuckle.