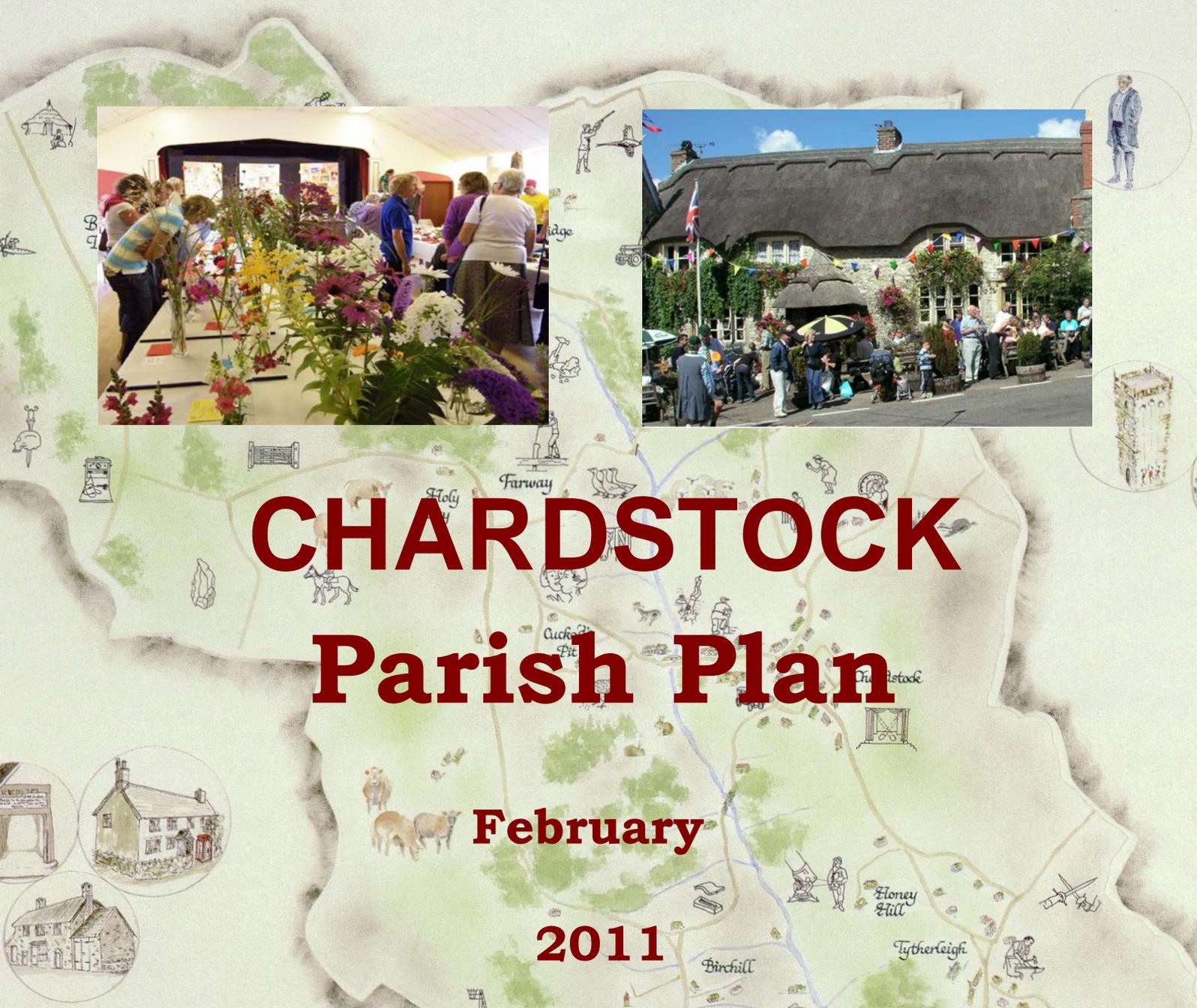


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The Parish of CHARDSTOCK



CHARDSTOCK Parish Plan

February

2011



...ring Dumnonii and Dyrotriges
...er the region when the Romans
... and settled a section of the
... important supply route passed through
... influence declined. About the Celtic



... kingdom was re-established until West Saxon
... kings assumed power and, by c.700 A.D. much land
... had passed to the Church. Chardstock Manor was
... granted to the Bishopric of Sherborne in the C.9th
... and later passed to Salisbury; through successive



... tenants it became the property of the Henleys and
... was sold in 1916. The Church, an C.8th foundation
... most recently reconstructed in 1867 - is now
... in the Diocese of Exeter. Local education is recorded
... from c.1580; the present School dates from 1839. In



... 1918 and 1940 a weekly market and fair were granted.
... Ale-houses are traced from the C16th. The Post Office
... was established in 1839. Diverse local industries and
... trades included weaving, paper-making, milling, lime-
... burning, metal and wood-working, tile and brick, basket



... and clock-making although es
... community for 2,000 years
... have taken part in uprisings
... War and Monmouth Rebellion, t
... two World Wars in which 28 local

The publication of this plan has been made possible by the generosity of Devon County Council, the organisers of Chardstock Street Fayre and Chardstock Parish Council.

At a public meeting of 12th. January 2011, Chardstock Parish Council adopted the Chardstock Parish Plan, pledged support for its aims and agreed to play its part in implementing the actions it defines.

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(chardstockpc@btinternet.com)

Chardstock Parish Plan 2011



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SECTION 1: Background and Methodology

1.1 Objectives

1.1.1 The Chardstock Parish Plan (2011) builds on work done in 2001, when a group of parishioners produced a Parish Appraisal containing useful statistical and factual information about the Parish and signposting the key concerns and wishes of local people.

1.1.2 In line with the current national trend to producing more detailed parish plans, the present document contains more, and more up-to-date, statistical data, more descriptive material and an Action Plan, which reflects a properly inclusive view of what local needs and priorities are, developed at grass-roots level.

1.1.3 The objectives of the plan are:-

- to influence planning and other decisions normally taken at a District or County level
- to make it much simpler to develop submissions for financial and other assistance needed to achieve the objectives outlined in the Action Plan
- to provide a firm, factual foundation for developing future plans and provide a useful historical insight into what our parish and its surrounding communities were like at this stage of their development. The Plan will embody a “snapshot” of the parish as it is at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st. century.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 In February 2009, a small group of Chardstock parishioners (the Parish Plan Team) set about producing a Parish Plan. The aim was to produce a Plan to which the community as a whole had contributed and which it would, therefore, value. When complete, the Plan would be published widely within the parish and offered to the Parish Council (which was kept informed and involved at all stages) for formal adoption.

1.2.2 A guiding principle has been that the Plan would not merely reflect the opinions (and prejudices) of the Parish Plan Team, but would contain the most up-to-date and reliable statistical and narrative data available and reflect the opinions and wishes of as wide a cross-section of the overall community as it was practical to reach.

1.2.3 There were five main approaches to data-collection. Together they ensured an open and inclusive approach to gathering factual information and informed opinion. A prime objective has been to afford every individual and interest group in the Parish an opportunity to contribute to and to comment upon the Plan. Regular updates and invitations to contribute have been placed in the monthly parish Newsletter. The five approaches were:-

1.3 Questionnaires

1.3.1 The Team decided to publish a series of seven, themed questionnaires. Each was enclosed (one per month) with the monthly parish newsletter and delivered to every household in the parish. The purpose and process of the plan had already been publicised earlier. Each questionnaire dealt with only one subject area at a time.

1.3.2 Q1 – Research into which subjects should appear on the remaining questionnaires

The first questionnaire explained what a Parish Plan is and asked (by means of a tick list and other general questions) what were the main areas of concern and interest for residents.

Chardstock Parish Plan
Please help to decide what information to collect for the Parish Plan.

What subject areas should be addressed? Please tick boxes:

<input type="checkbox"/> Transport & roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities for the young
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation & leisure	<input type="checkbox"/> Work / work at home
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing (including affordable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Flooding
<input type="checkbox"/> Services (eg health, care of elderly, shop, community hall, pubs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication (eg phone, post, broadband)

Is there anything particular that you would like to be covered in the subjects above?

Anything else? What have we forgotten? What is important to you about your parish?

Do you want to help with the plan?
If yes, please give Name _____
Tel _____ E-mail _____

Please return this to the Village Shop & Post Office or hand to any member of the Working Group or any Parish Councillor. You can also e-mail: chardstockplan@btinternet.com

The Chardstock Parish Plan – What is it?
A Parish Plan is a statement of some key statistics about the Parish (e.g. the number of people who live there) along with a description of how those people would like the Parish to be in the future (in the next 5 – 10 years).
A small Working Group has been established to produce a plan for Chardstock, building on the work done in the 2001 Parish Appraisal.
One of the main measures of the quality of a Parish Plan is whether the community as a whole has had a hand in shaping its content. For this reason, a series of short questionnaires (probably about 8 in all) will be included with the monthly Newsletter over the next year. The Working Group will also be contacting individuals, groups, clubs and societies to discuss their views with them.
The first Questionnaire deals with what issues you would like to see addressed by the plan. It is printed on the reverse side of this sheet. Please do complete it (it's only a few minutes work) and either return it to the Village Shop and Post Office or hand it to any member of the Working Group or to any Parish Councillor.
The Working Group is currently comprised of:-
Chris Bartlett (220413), Barry and Penny Coveney (220478), John Cloke (220519) and Roger Abbott. Please contact any of these if you wish to help (in no matter how small a way).
So, what can you do to help?
- Complete the questionnaire in this issue of the Newsletter and also the ones to come.
- Contact the Working Group if you would like to help - either by contacting a member or by email to chardstockplan@btinternet.com
- Offer your knowledge and expertise in any of the areas listed overleaf.
Thank you for reading this and we look forward to receiving your contribution to the Chardstock Parish Plan.

Questionnaire 1 in a series of 7

There were 35 responses, being just under 10% of households.

32 respondents said Transport and Roads was an area to be addressed,

20 respondents identified Services, Housing and Flooding

17-18 respondents cited Facilities for the Young, Communications and Recreation/Leisure as important

7 respondents felt that Work (self-employed and employed) was important.

There were over 25 other areas raised, including hedge-maintenance (11 responses), pubs, schools, planning, care for the elderly, the Community Hall, social behaviour and footpaths.

Most subjects were raised by only one or two respondents.

1.3.3 As well as being an input into the final Plan, information gained in the first questionnaire helped shape the rest of the series, which covered:-

Q2 – Transport

Q5 – Leisure

Q3 – Housing

Q6 – Environment

Q4 – Employment

Q7 – Services and Facilities

1.3.4 A further, separate questionnaire covered the opinions, wishes and needs of the young people of the parish. It was developed in association with members of the *Chardstock Youth Club*.

1.3.5 Responses to each questionnaire were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The questionnaires were (necessarily) anonymous, so a detailed cross analysis has not been an option. With around 370 households in Chardstock Parish, the response rate ranged from 9% -15%. This is quite usual for this type of questionnaire and, in the context of five separate approaches to getting information, has provided a useful level of input.

1.4 Interviews with Organisations

1.4.1 Believing that the questionnaires alone were unlikely to provide the depth of information needed, the team also either interviewed or received written submissions from representatives of 23 organisations, interest groups and businesses within the Parish. Interviews were structured, with questions including *What does the group do now? How many people are involved? What are the main advantages and difficulties at present? What developments and issues are anticipated for the future?.* Interviewees were also encouraged to cover any other matters that were important to them personally.

1.4.2 Encouragingly, no group declined an invitation to participate and several volunteered.

1.5 Public Consultations

1.5.1 The Plan Team attended a number of parish events, including the September 2009 and 2010 Street Fayres and the November 2009 St. Andrews Day Sale, with a fully manned stall, consisting of a small exhibition and material explaining the purpose and timescale of the plan's development. Parishioners (and people from outside the parish) were able to discuss the plan with team members and make known their views on any topic. There were also opportunities for "anonymous comment" and to collect/complete questionnaires.

1.5.2 A further public consultation took place in the Community Hall in November 2010, at which anyone could drop in to discuss the Plan (by now at first draft stage) and contribute to its final form.

1.6 Information provided externally

Some of the basic information that has been incorporated into the plan (e.g. parish demographics) has been obtained from Devon County Council.

1.7 Individual interviews

1.7.1 A number of individual interviews took place with parishioners who wished to be involved in this way. This involved a range of people from different backgrounds and ages.

1.7.2 These discussions represent only individual views, but provided a useful depth of knowledge (particularly from older residents) and helped to ensure a communal sense of ownership of the Plan.

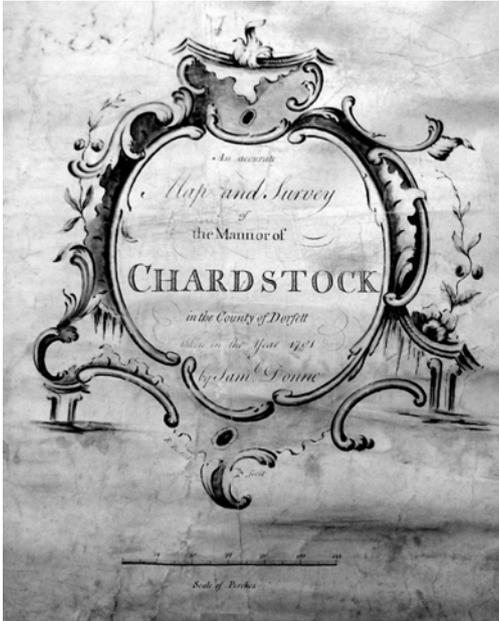
1.7.3 There was an interestingly high degree of commonality of views and concerns among all those interviewed.

1.8 All major contributors were invited to review the plan while it was in draft form before final publication, as were East Devon District Council and the Community Council of Devon.

SECTION 2: Information about the Parish

2.1 Location

2.1.1 Chardstock Parish lies 4 miles north west of Axminster in a predominantly rural area to the west of the main A358 trunk road (OS Grid Reference: ST310 045). Most of the parish lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The centre of the old village (roughly the area to the west of Green Lane to the River Kit) is a designated Conservation Area.



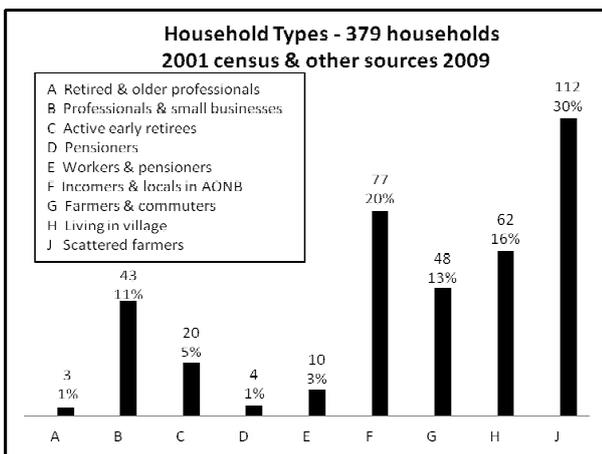
1701 Manor Survey of Chardstock - Title Page

2.1.2 The main centre of population is Chardstock village which lies 1 mile west of the A358 junction at Tytherleigh with about half of the housing stock. This area contains many of the parish’s main facilities, including St. Andrews Church, the Community Hall, the children’s play area, St. Andrews Primary School, the George Inn and Chardstock Stores and Post Office. Tytherleigh, including the top of Broom Lane, provides a second, smaller centre with a mix of houses, an antiques centre and the Tytherleigh Arms Hotel and Restaurant and a restaurant at Fordwater. The parish has a number of out-lying rural hamlets within its boundaries, including Birchill, Burridge, Cotley Wash, Holy City and Hook. The remainder of the Parish consists of scattered farms and settlements, many on very old sites.

2.2 History

2.2.1 Chardstock is an old English parish with evidence of human settlement from the Stone Age. It is noted in the Domesday Book as *Cherdestoche*. A history of the parish is to be found in ‘*A History of the Parish of Chardstock*’, by P J Wood and R W Carter (1999, reprinted in 2005 – ISBN 0 9535341 0 3).

2.2.2 Chardstock Civil Parish was originally in Dorset but transferred to Devon in 1896. In 1978, the ecclesiastical parish moved to the Exeter Diocese. A separate ecclesiastical parish was formed at All Saints in 1840 and the related Civil Parish in 1996. Much of the land in Chardstock was part of Chardstock Manor, centred on Court Farm, and even today the central part of the estate is owned by the current Lord of the Manor. Some historical information has survived. There are 4 Manor Court record books, covering the period 1585 to 1787 and the earliest Steward’s Account book dates back to 1422/23. Various sub-manors were associated with Chardstock and their names still survive – e.g. Bowditch or Burridge, Cotley, Coaxden and Tytherleigh.



2.3 Some Statistics

2.3.1 The last national population census took place in 2001 and is, therefore, an imperfect measure of the parish’s current population. However, much of the following information has been amended and updated by various agencies since 2001 and much of it will have been slow to change anyway. It provides a good insight into some aspects of the make-up of our community.

Note: Around 54% of the data is from the 2001 Census, other sources include lifestyle surveys, House Price and Council Tax Information. See:

2.3.2 In 2009, the population of Chardstock was estimated by the Family Health Services Authority (FHSA) to be 833 people. Of these:-

	Chardstock Parish	East Devon
a) Under 20 years of age	18%	20%
b) Aged between 20 and 59 years	42%	45%
c) Aged 60 years or over	40%	35%

2.3.3 There are slightly more older people in the parish than in East Devon as a whole. This may be because older people choose to retire to an area which is tranquil, friendly and largely unspoiled.

2.3.4 The second questionnaire asked about the number of people in the household, grouped by age (0-17 and 18+). 10 households had children under 18. 12 households were single person. The remainder having 2 or more adults. Below is data from the last census return, compared with responses to Parish Plan questionnaire.

The type of households:

2001 Census:

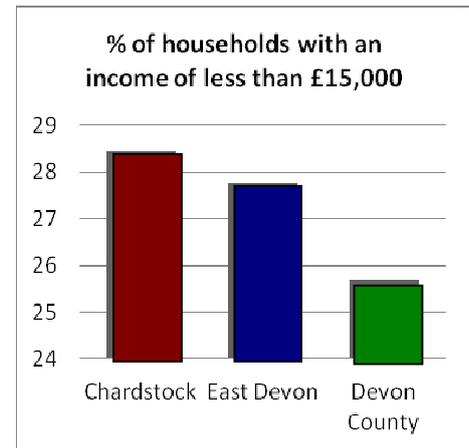
Total households 344 of which:

One Person	Two person	Three persons or more
77 22%	158 46%	109 32%

2009 questionnaire

Total household returns 66 of which:

One Person	Two person	Three persons or more
13 20%	39 59%	14 21%



2.3.5 The last published measurement of households in the area, by Devon County Council in 2008, showed around 369 households in Chardstock. Just under 29% had an income under £15,000 (similar to East Devon as a whole, but more than in the whole of Devon, which is nearer 26%).

2.3.6 Crime has historically been (and remains) very low. Most of the few crimes that are reported are break-ins to domestic outbuildings and farm-buildings. There has been an increase in thefts of domestic heating and commercial fuel oil in recent years.

2.3.7 House price data only reflects those properties that have been sold recently. While this has no statistical significance, it is interesting to note that the average house price was over £420K in 2009 compared with an average for East Devon of around £260K and an average for Devon as a whole of £237K. This may help support the view expressed later in this Plan that there is a shortage of low cost, affordable housing available in the Parish.

2.4 The Natural Environment

2.4.1 Much of the parish landscape is characterised by an intricate patchwork of pasture, hedgerows, copses and woods. Running the length of the parish is the attractive River Kit which supports spawning sea trout, salmon and lampreys. There are also wet alder woods in low lying areas of the valley, similar to those that are classified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest in other, nearby valleys within the AONB.



2.4.2 Among the appealing species that are frequent in the parish are dormouse and glow-worm. There are several county wildlife sites in the parish (including Burridge Common, The Parks and parts of Bewley Down). These private, non-statutory sites are accessible by public footpaths, which makes them especially valuable to the parish (EDDC Policy Planning Statement 9:

Biodiversity and Geological Conservation states that local wildlife sites contribute to the quality of life and the well-being of the community). There are almost certain to be other areas of similar interest

within the parish (including the long untouched land immediately surrounding the derelict factory at Hook Mills).

2.4.3 A biodiversity audit of wildlife and landscape features would add to our knowledge of the parish.

2.4.4 This audit, which would be conducted by volunteers under the guidance of a local expert body like the Axe Vale and District Conservation Society should inform decisions about development and agri-environment schemes and encourage landowners wanting to improve the landscape for wildlife.

SECTION 3: Built Environment and Design Statement

3.1 General Appraisal

3.1.1 Chardstock Parish is in the Blackdown Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Its built, environmental and geographical features are typical of this area, and residents believe that this character should be retained.

3.1.2 Chardstock village retains much of its old street pattern and has a number of old buildings, some listed. The exceptions are mainly to the east of the village, including the “Redrow” development, the Community Hall, and the new school. Most of the remaining village area is a Conservation Area.

3.1.3 This Conservation Area is valuable and should be retained. There is a case for extending it westward, to include the area around *Mill House* and *Mill Cottage*, an important pair of buildings, which act as a gateway to the village from that direction. If a review is carried out, it should also consider why the area of the old Methodist chapel (now *Parrocks*) is excluded.

3.1.4 The built-up area boundary shown on the 2002 East Devon Local Plan should be reviewed. The overall size should not change, since there is no case for increasing the total size of the village. But there are a few small areas to consider. The north end of the old school site is already the subject of a planning application, as is the land at Sopers and Cook’s Field. Otherwise, there is very little land left within the village that is suitable for redevelopment.

3.1.5 East Devon District Council's *1999 Conservation Area Appraisal for Chardstock* sets out in detail the character of the area and highlights the features which give it this character. **This is a valuable document, and its comments should be taken into consideration for all new buildings and alterations in the village.** It emphasises the following characteristics:-



Victorian era porches in the Conservation Area



Traditional style housing in Burrige

- *A village of considerable individuality with an element of Victorian formality in the group of public buildings at the centre*
- *A wide range of traditional building materials with particularly good examples of 19th century craftsmanship in stone*
- *Some fine specimen trees, including the considerable tree cover surrounding Chardstock Court*

- *A considerable number of fine buildings of medieval origin not only within the conservation area but within the parish as a whole*
- *Several good examples of well preserved original architectural detail especially 19th century porches and roof and gable-end detail*
- *Extensive boundary walls almost all built of local chert rubble stone providing a cohesive quality to the built environment*
- *A widely varied alignment and juxtaposition of buildings and intervening spaces, in a scattered distribution, along roads of varying width and alignment. This gives visual interest and provides many vistas within a street scene that almost invariably provides a pleasing sense of enclosure*
- *The village is in an elevated situation that also provides occasional glimpses or more extensive views of the surrounding pastoral landscape and distant wooded ridges.*

3.1.6 The Tytherleigh and Broom Lane area is mostly more modern, with a few notable exceptions. It has no clear architectural character. The main A358 runs through it. There is a large retail site on the main road. Some residential development plans have already been rejected at the planning stage. Clearly, this site may one day be redeveloped. Any new housing or commercial development must take into account the residential nature of Broom Lane, which adjoins one of its boundaries, and various known problems, notably drainage and safe access, must be resolved first.

3.1.7 Some of the area that lies in the island between Tytherleigh Lane and Storridge Lane is currently undeveloped. Building in the Tytherleigh area has the advantage that it is near the main road with its communications and the area is not so sensitive architecturally, but development here would move the centre of the community further away from the village, its Post Office and Stores and school. It currently has no “built-up area” status, despite its density.

3.1.8 Chardstock village contains a number of small businesses (manufacturing, on a small industrial area in Chubb’s Yard, retail, hospitality and small – often service based – enterprises run from home), the rest of the parish is rural and mainly given over to agriculture and related services.

3.1.9 Outside of the village, the surrounding areas and hamlets are rural with a mix of older and more modern buildings, most of which are in permanent habitation. There is no major cluster of population, although there are identifiable, small communities in Burchill, Burridge, Cotley Wash, Holy City and Hook.

3.1.10 These all have their roots in the farming industry and there are many examples of older and vernacular design still in existence. There has been some new build and some more or less radical conversions of older (but not listed) housing stock. These are living communities and buildings have to change with the times. However, when development or refurbishment is contemplated within an area where older style buildings predominate, the design of any new structure should be complementary to its surrounding buildings.



The parish has many examples of more modern housing

3.1.11 The one exception to agricultural use is the, now disused, animal products processing factory at Hook Mills. This site is a wound that needs to be healed, rather than aggravated by attempts to reopen or redevelop the two or so acres that it once occupied. It should be allowed to return to nature.

No new industrial, or other, new development should be permitted in this part of the Blackdown AONB.

3.2 Key Findings – Housing Questionnaire

“We must provide affordable housing for *local families*”

3.2.1 The Parish contains a mixed stock of housing, including owner-occupied, social housing and private premises to rent with the housing stock in the parish skewed in favour of owner-occupation. Over 80% of Parish Plan respondents live in detached houses or bungalows. Over 90% owned their

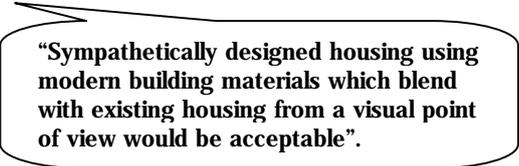
home, either outright or with a mortgage. Most properties have 3 or more bedrooms.

3.2.2 Chardstock has its share of under-used second homes and holiday lets. These have increased in recent years, but are not yet seen as quite the major problem that they are in some communities. Residents have a strong aversion to “second homes” and holiday lets. Proposed, future tax changes may help to address this problem.

3.2.3 8 respondents said they would like to move somewhere smaller. 43 respondents said that the provision of affordable housing was important with 8 saying it was important to them personally.

3.2.4 When asked about the kind of housing needed in the parish, housing for local people (43 responses), for young people, for low income families and sheltered accommodation (24-27 responses) were seen as the most important needs. 14 respondents wanted more rented properties. There was very little support for building flats, or for no further house-building at all, and no support at all for new second/holiday homes.

3.2.5 When asked how many more houses should be built in the parish in the next 10 years, 80% of respondents stated that the village needs between 0 and 20 new houses, with the clear majority believing that whilst some new houses are needed, there should be no more than 20 and the great majority of these should be built at the “affordable” end of the market. There was a clear preference for in-fill and conversions with little, if any, support for building on greenfield sites.



“Sympathetically designed housing using modern building materials which blend with existing housing from a visual point of view would be acceptable”.

3.2.6 Matters of importance to the community include the need for new houses to blend with the local styles, a ban on second or holiday homes (to avoid the “ghost town” effect visible in other small, rural communities) and the need for tight controls on expansion. There is a strong belief that priority for home building should be given to

affordable houses and that they should not be sold on at market rates. There were also parking and traffic management concerns if new houses are built.

3.2.7 It is felt that, where appropriate, new buildings should blend in with the traditional Devon style of building and be in line with neighbours’ buildings in terms of height and size.

3.2.8 There is a strong feeling that, in the village itself, new buildings should not be of modern design and materials as there is some concern that too many developments of modern appearance will gradually erode the essential character of the village.

3.2.9 It is important to protect Chardstock’s AONB and Conservation Area status.

3.2.10 There is real concern among residents that drainage and flooding, whether due to climate change or other factors, are becoming major issues. This must be both planned for generally and certainly taken as a serious matter when considering development proposals and planning applications (although some real progress has been made on this at one end of the village).

3.2.11 Maintaining the rural character of the parish is important. This means action on:- inappropriate development; extending the 20mph speed limit around the new school throughout the village; maintaining roads and ditches; noise nuisance; litter; overhead wires; and nuisance from pets.

3.2.12 Almost nobody wanted street lights left on all night and there is clear support for the new policy of switching off streetlights between 00.30 hrs. and 0530 hrs.

3.3 Planning Issues in Chardstock (ref: East Devon Local Development Framework – November 2010)

3.3.1 The population is skewed towards the over 50s with a quite high proportion of retired people, many of whom have come into the parish from elsewhere and thus pushed up local house prices.

3.3.2 The community is economically active, with a shop and some other businesses. But, although the self-employed sector is vibrant, there are few other employment opportunities.

3.3.3 Provision of public services is patchy:-

- Chardstock has no public transport. Buses run along the A358 between Chard and Axminster, but are of little value to the majority of residents, who do not live anywhere near this road. Lack of public transport means that there is a heavy reliance upon private cars.
- Mains gas is available to some houses in the village, but not to the majority of the parish.
- Mains drainage is available in some parts of the village. The majority of the parish must rely upon providing their own private drainage.
- Broadband telecommunications are available throughout the parish, but speeds are slow (usually below 1mb) and connections are unreliable.



The River Kit at Mill Bridge

- Most roads – including access roads from all directions - are single lane with a few passing places. Repairs and maintenance are minimal.
- Despite having a high percentage of elderly residents, there are no medical facilities in the parish.

3.3.4 For a small community, Chardstock has a reasonable range of facilities:-

- There is a Community Hall, which, although it will soon need refurbishment, is used and valued by the community for a wide range of local social activities.
- The village features an Anglican Church, a primary school, a Village Stores and Post

Office and a public house. A hotel and restaurant is situated in Tytherleigh.

3.3.5 Much of the parish is in an AONB and much of the village is a Conservation Area. Both these factors require the utmost sensitivity in planning terms, as there is strong local feeling that the parish's rural landscape is at risk from over-development and an unwelcome "urbanisation".

3.3.6 Development pressure is mainly on small and medium-sized sites and opts for the maximum number of expensive, modern houses permitted. On larger sites, development tends to be in lots of less than 5, with a time gap between them, to side-step the rules about 40% of larger developments being "affordable" housing. The main areas involved are *Cook's Field* (the one remaining green space in the village), the land that used to be *Sopers* garden, the (listed) buildings of the old school, its playground, and (possibly) the commercial site at Tytherleigh. Cook's field is already the subject of a successful planning application and developers' plans for Soper's and the School are well known.

3.3.7 There is a shortage of "affordable" housing for less well-off local families and there is also some concern that, since development land is so scarce in the parish, every time a new development of four or less large and expensive houses is approved, the opportunity to build "affordable" houses is reduced by the same amount. The fine rhetoric about needing "affordable" housing has to be matched by a strict approach to the kinds of houses that are given planning permission and an equally strict approach to ring-fencing any "affordable" houses that do come onto the market for sale or rent to local people. The harsh fact is that most of the land available for new build is already known to be earmarked for more expensive housing and the number planned is already dangerously close to the 20 houses that residents will accept.

"The roads cannot take more housing. Farmland housing schemes ruin the place"

3.3.8 There is very little other land in the parish which is not either in the Conservation area or the AONB (or both). So there is little room for significant future growth to the overall size of the parish.

3.3.9 Summary of planning issues

3.3.9.1 Great care is needed to preserve Chardstock's essential character by looking after what it has and by restraining development.

3.3.9.2 The services (e.g. medical, transport, gas, mains-drainage and broadband telecommunications) available to the parish as a whole are poor. Facilities (e.g. shop and public house) are adequate.

3.3.9.3 Chardstock would neither qualify nor wish to be designated as a “hub” for development purposes. Its geographical location, AONB and Conservation status, alongside its poor level of services and a real shortage of developable land make it unsuited for any significant growth.

3.3.9.4 The opinions expressed as part of the Parish Plan data-collection process, alongside the real constraints imposed by the parish's geography, suggest that development should be limited to below 20 new, sympathetically designed, houses, largely serving the “affordable” end of the market and within the current built-up area of the village. There is demand for more “affordable” houses.

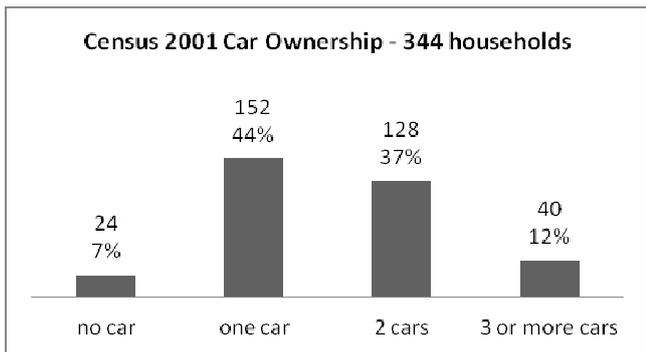
3.3.9.5 Any new housing that is approved must be well-designed and properly thought through with due attention paid to matters like drainage (both rainwater and foul-water), traffic management and parking. Issues of “creeping urbanisation” like street-lighting are also significant when considering any proposal to develop the village area.

3.3.9.6 The AONB and Conservation Area designations are highly valued and the historical design and built features they embody must be jealously guarded.

SECTION 4: Transport

4.1 Transport is a major issue in Chardstock and with 66 responses, the Transport questionnaire raised the most interest. There is a very low take-up of public transport because there is no public transport anywhere in the parish, other than the bus services that run on the A358 through Tytherleigh. This is at least a 1 mile walk for those living in Chardstock and twice as far for anyone living in the more distant hamlets.

“Not everyone can afford to run a car. Our quality of life could be substantially improved with more local public transport.”



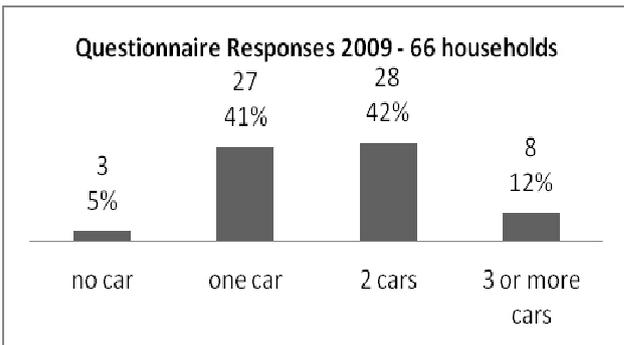
4.2 Residents need their own car or help from friends and family. Most roads are single track lanes with passing places and receive limited maintenance. This affects travel to and from work, shopping and the use of leisure and essential health facilities in local towns. Many roads in the parish are impassable after snowfall or heavy icing, leaving residents trapped in their houses. Other than the access road into the village from the A358, there is no scheduled gritting of Chardstock’s roads in bad weather. The number of grit-bins provided and serviced by DCC Highways needs to be increased in line with the findings of the Emergency Planning Group.

4.3 On the plus side, there is limited traffic and most roads are quiet enough to be used regularly by horse riders. Incomers quickly get used to learning how to reverse on a narrow country lane and many residents cited the quiet and peaceful environment as a good reason for living in Chardstock.

Once a week bus service would be useful to many in the parish that do not have own transport

4.4 The village is cut off from the west and south at times of flood or heavy snow (all crossings being impassable) and, for the same reason, the outlying areas can be cut off from ambulance and other services.

4.5 Most respondents owned one or more cars and over 80% travelled outside the parish every day or 3-4 times a week. Just over 50% said they would use public transport if it were available – mostly a bus. This point was raised by a number of later respondents in detailed discussions. The most general wish was for a bus 1-3 times a week so residents could get into Chard or Axminster to do their shopping. It would have to arrive early enough and leave late enough to make trips for shopping (or other purposes) a practical proposition. This issue was also raised by the Youth Club (Section 8.3 below).



4.6 A regular service might be well used and reduce car use. Historically, a daily service was not viable (mainly attributable to timetabling problems). Some interviewees said that a “village” bus, maybe shared with other local villages, might give greater flexibility and be economic. Another possibility would be to institute a voluntary, local service (like the current Helpline Drivers).

4.7 The two school bus services serve Axminster Community College and Colyton Grammar School.

4.8 The general state of the local roads also raised a lot of concerns. 50 respondents said the local roads were of poor or very poor quality, and the quality and speed of road maintenance was also poor or very poor. Nearly 75% of respondents used the local footpaths, mostly for recreation, but also to get between home and the pub, shop or school. There was a range of other points about potholes, the amount and speed of traffic and the general difficulties of using the Fare Car service and taxis.

SECTION 5: Local Facilities and Services

5.1 The parish enjoys many local services, provided on a commercial, voluntary or mixed basis. These services make a real contribution to the identity and social cohesion of the parish.

5.2 Like many communities, Chardstock relies upon a relatively small group of local volunteers to provide many of the services, particularly services (like the Helpline Drivers) which are most valued by those who need them. Numbers of volunteers have dropped in the last few years. Were this pool of volunteer workers to dry up, the social fabric of the parish would be greatly impoverished.

5.3 This was the last Questionnaire to be published with 37 residents (approx. 10% of households) responding. The questionnaire covered a broad range of services so responses were varied. A majority (69%) felt that their doctor was easy to get to, although comments about the need for a car to access the service in either Chard or Axminster were made by a third of the respondents.

5.4 28% of respondents had experience of the emergency services and they all spoke highly of them. Being on the Devon/Dorset/Somerset borders can pose difficulties over who provides which service. 4 people raised difficulties with contacting the Police – possibly the service where one is most likely to be put through to a call centre, whose staff may not be clear which force to call on.

5.5 The local phone exchange is in Somerset, so Chardstock residents are listed in one of two directories. Knowing whether to register with a Chard or Axminster doctor can also be a problem.

5.6 Over half of respondents used either the Chard or Axminster libraries or the mobile library. Few had problems with these services although some commented on the limited range of books available.

5.7 Contact with EDDC and DCC was variable. Most contact arose from problems with rubbish collection and roads – mentioned by nearly half of the respondents. But of those who did mention this, the majority felt that responses were usually good and helpful.

5.8 Nearly half of respondents used broadband. The service is thought generally satisfactory, so far as it goes, but there were criticisms of slow speeds and unreliable connections by national standards.

5.9 Respondents shopped in a range of places. 75% used the Chardstock Stores and Post Office for up to 50% of their shopping for food and household items. Axminster was used by 78%, Chard by 69%. Less than 20% shopped on-line. Chardstock is centrally placed for a number of towns, so other shopping was done in Honiton, Crewkerne, Exeter, Yeovil and Taunton as well as smaller centres.

5.10 All respondents used the Community Hall regularly or occasionally and they were generally satisfied with the facilities. The plastic seats came in for one heartfelt criticism.

5.11 56% of respondents knew they lived in a Neighbourhood Watch area, although only half of these knew they were members. Over 60% felt Neighbourhood Watch was useful.

5.12 Other comments about local services and facilities were varied and included a wish for a village bus, problems with mobile phone signals, lack of facilities for children, and some positive comments about being happy and fortunate to live in Chardstock. Some of the facilities in Chardstock are:

5.13 Chardstock Community Hall:

5.13.1 Built in 1976 and extended in 1994, the Hall is a registered Charity, which is managed by the Community Hall Trust.

- 5.13.2 It has a large hall with stage, a committee room, a kitchen and bar, another room (used by the Youth Club and the local drama group), plus two toilet areas and a disabled toilet.
- 5.13.3 The Trust charges for use with discounts for local organisations and frequent regular users.
- 5.13.4 The Hall is well maintained, often by volunteers and has signed up to The Hallmark scheme.
- 5.13.5 The Hall is the Parish's biggest physical asset and is highly valued locally. Major renovations will be needed in the near future and the Hall will be unable to generate all the funding itself. The Parish Council makes an annual grant towards running costs, but additional funding will be needed.



Chardstock Community Hall

- 5.13.6 The hall is used for the annual Flower and Vegetable Show, amateur dramatics, the Plant Sale, the annual Parish Meeting, regular events like the Youth Club, Parish Council Meetings and Scottish country dancing. Street Fayre uses it, as does anyone needing to accommodate large numbers.
- 5.13.7 A schedule of work, including replacing doors and windows, proper insulation, a more efficient heating system, upgrades to the kitchen and toilet areas, rewiring and re-plumbing will be needed within 5-10 years. Proper planning to fund this is required. Much work in the past was carried out by volunteer labour and often funded by voluntary contributions. These sources of labour and funds are now very limited and voluntary labour often cannot meet current regulatory requirements. A broad estimate suggests that upwards of £250,000 will be needed to effect these improvements.
- 5.13.8 The Trustees see identifying and costing a programme of works for the next 5-10 years, finding and applying for external sources of funding and ensuring that all work complies with known and expected regulatory standards and is thus future-proofed for at least another 30 years, as priorities.

5.14 St. Andrews Primary and Pre-School

“A Christian school at the heart of the community, which recognizes and values the uniqueness of every child, helping all to achieve their best within a happy, secure and creative environment”

5.14.1 There has been a school in the village since 1837. St. Andrews School recently moved to state of the art facilities next to the Community Hall, where it provides a good education for children from in and around the parish.

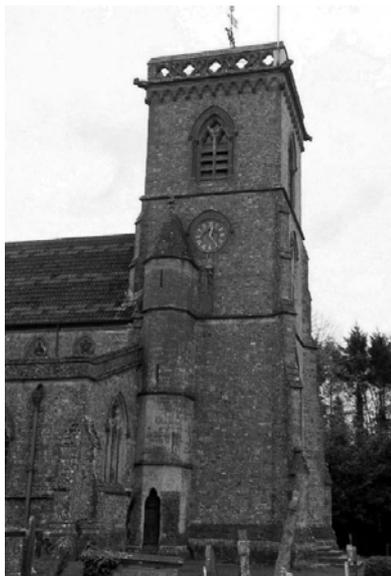


St. Andrews Primary and Pre-School in Chardstock

5.14.2 Being a small school means there is a family ethos - with older children looking after younger. The addition of the Pre-School has been a positive move for children, staff and parents.

5.14.3 The new school has many desirable features. In the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, its grounds overlook beautiful, local countryside. It has a football pitch, netball pitch, garden areas and a play equipment area with a fitness trim trail. There are facilities for outdoor learning, both close to the classrooms and nearer the bottom of the site. The latest ICT equipment means children have access to laptop/desktop computers. Learning is done interactively with SMART boards in each classroom.

5.14.4 Being a church school, the school has ties with St Andrew's Church, attending main services there. Clergy come twice a month to take assembly. The school is grateful for the support from the parish, from many patrons – in particular in raising its 10% contribution to the cost of the new school. It has received support from patrons and Street Fayre as well as from those who supported fund-raising events. There is still much money to be raised and the school needs continued support. St Andrew's School is a school at the heart of the parish and its many facilities are available for parish use.



5.15 St. Andrews Church

5.15.1 Chardstock has its own Anglican church, St. Andrews, which is served by the Axminster Team Ministry and is an important part of the parish's social fabric. It engages in normal church activities (organised worship, weddings and funerals) and also provides more personalised services relating to major life events and opportunities for spiritual development. There has been a place of Christian worship in Chardstock for many centuries and St. Andrews "holds" much of the parish's own history. The modern-day church - above all - sets out to be welcoming and inclusive.

5.15.2 St. Andrews provides home communions for those unable to attend church services and conducts the annual Service of Remembrance each November.

5.15.3 The church is popular in the community, as shown by the extent to which non-church-goers participate in church activities (e.g. flower arranging, tending graves and the churchyard, music making on Easter Sunday and bell ringing).

5.15.4 The Parish does not have its own designated Vicar. It is part of the Axminster Team of six churches, with a full time Rector and a part time Associate Priest who both work throughout the Team.

5.15.5 The church also has a much-valued role within the community as a source of spiritual comfort at times of individual need. At present, this (too frequently) finds expression in visiting the dying and bereaved as well as ministering to others at times of personal crisis.

5.15.6 Like many churches, St. Andrews' regular congregation has diminished over the years, but it still attracts active participation from church-goers and non-church-goers, Christians and others. This is a major strength. St. Andrews has important links with the local Church of England Primary School.

5.15.7 Several retired priests help with services, making it possible to hold a service each week in the village, and lay people play an increasing part in the pastoral care of the parish.

5.15.8 The Church building is larger than is needed and costly to maintain. The main challenge at present is to find alternative uses for all or part of the building, uses that will add to the facilities available to the community in Chardstock. The Parochial Church Council has undertaken a local consultation exercise and both published its results and put forward a range of options for future use. A reordering of the Church's interior seems a likely outcome.



An Easter Concert at St. Andrews Church

5.16 Chardstock Parish Newsletter

5.16.1 The Chardstock Newsletter has been produced for 23 years by one editor. It covers local events and news (e.g. in the Church – including full details of services, the School or the Parish Council and other local activities and groups). It is produced monthly and 400 copies are delivered, free, to local residents by a group of local volunteers.

5.16.2 Any event of significance in the parish will be advertised in the Newsletter, which is the prime means of communication between the different groups and communities that make up Chardstock. It is an invaluable part of the “social glue” that binds us together.

5.16.3 The newsletter is A5 in size, with around 8 pages. It details the Church calendar, with a message from the vicar. The School uses the newsletter to communicate with local residents who do not have children there. There are often inserts (e.g. questionnaires to provide information and feedback for the Parish Plan, the Church Council, the new playground group, etc.) and the Parish Council provides a summary of the main points from their monthly meetings. It is also a vital means of advertising for Street Fayre, the Annual Flower and Vegetable Show, the Plant Sale and other local events such as the annual carols round the tree at one of the local pubs.

5.16.4 The Newsletter is funded from various sources. The Parish Council usually makes an annual grant and smaller donations are received from other groups who regularly use it as a means of advertising their activities and from some residents, who give donations in appreciation. The funds help with costs. The work of publishing and delivering the newsletter is done by volunteers. It is vital that the Newsletter be secured for the long-term.



The Newsletter is delivered each month to every household in the Parish

5.17 Chardstock Park Trust

5.17.1 Chardstock Park Trust is an independent body of parish volunteers. It is dedicated to the development and maintenance of the play area in Chardstock.

5.17.2 The Trust is properly constituted and has 14 committee members of differing ages, backgrounds and experience. Many committee members have children who use the play area. The trust has a longer-term plan, with timescales, and has already achieved the extensive clearing and maintenance required to pass a safety inspection and obtain insurance.

5.17.3 The Trust keeps the parish regularly updated on its progress. It is also in touch with (e.g.) Devon Playing Fields Association, Fields in Trust, The Play Inspection Company, East Devon Volunteer Support Agency, ROSPA and Play England etc. over matters of regulation and funding. It is currently registering as a charity and acquiring the lease for the land the play area occupies.



The Children's' Play Area in Chardstock

5.17.4 The Play Area re-opened in 2010 and the Trust is now concentrating on how best to develop the facility. It is doing this with the active help of St. Andrews School, Chardstock Youth Club and other interested bodies.

5.17.5 The focus is on 3 key areas:-

- 1) recreational activities
- 2) social space
- 3) informative and educational elements

5.17.6 Work has started on funding applications. The people of Chardstock have a long record of supporting good causes, but the Trust knows that all the needed funding cannot come from this source. However, it intends to organise essential

fundraising activities to encourage community participation.

5.17.7 The final development bill may well run to tens of thousands of pounds. Some fixed costs are already known. They include:-

- a) Public liability insurance b) Litter bin(s) c) Inspection fees d) Statutory signage

5.17.8 There are also legal fees arising from seeking charitable status for the Trust and transferring the lease on the land. Plans are in place to meet annual costs (e.g. annual insurance and inspections) - probably via local fundraising methods (and by making application to the Parish Council at grant allocation time!). There will also be village based fundraising activities and other grant applications.

5.17.9 The Trust has received financial and commercial support from local businesses and charitable organisations. All the Trust's day to day management and fundraising activities are carried out by volunteers, some of whom have received specialist training (e.g. Health and Safety) where necessary.

5.18 Helpline Drivers Group

"Helpline is a useful resource for the elderly and those without transport"

5.18.1 The Helpline Drivers group was set up in 1991 and currently has 20 drivers. It is a voluntary group within Chardstock Parish which, every month, has at least 3 drivers on call to help local residents who cannot easily get to doctors' and dentists' surgeries for appointments or to pick up prescriptions and/or to hospital appointments.

5.18.2 The Group is a self-funded, voluntary group and does not currently need to apply to other bodies for financial support. Users of the group usually give voluntary contributions towards the cost of fuel. Drivers may reclaim the cost of fuel used. Any surplus is collected by the Treasurer and regular donations are made to charities each year. Over the last 21 years, some substantial sums have been donated to a range of charities. At least 6 telephone numbers for the drivers for the current and the next month are printed in the monthly newsletter that is distributed to every household in the Parish. The number of callouts varies from around 5 – 15 a month.

5.18.3 The long term aims of the group are to survive and continue to provide a much appreciated service to residents of Chardstock. One need that has been identified in the community is for a service that includes taking residents shopping and/or doing shopping for such residents. Organisations like the Red Cross will sometimes undertake this service, but many residents prefer to go with people that they already know. It may be necessary to try to form a separate group for this purpose. Future financial needs will need to be funded by those using the service for the most part.

5.18.4 As the price of fuel continues to increase, recruiting drivers may become more difficult. If more money is needed from the voluntary donations and this begins to exclude potential users who are on low, fixed, incomes, then alternative sources of funding will need to be sought.

5.19 P3 Footpaths Walkers Group

5.19.1 Chardstock joined the Devon County Parish Paths Partnership, as a means to ensure maintenance of the Public Rights of Way, about 20 years ago. The county makes a grant based on footpath mileage. Footpaths and Bridleways are inspected at least annually by the parish and a report sent to the county, highlighting problems and expenditure.

5.19.2 In 1998 a monthly walking group was established to heighten awareness of the paths and ensure that they were used and monitored on a regular basis. The group has around 25 walkers, 12-15 of whom participate in the regular monthly walks. Many of the walks are around the footpaths and bridleways of Chardstock although occasional walks are outside the Parish.

5.19.3 Such regular walking around Chardstock helps keep the paths (totalling about 20 miles) open and checked for any maintenance needs. Once a year, walkers officially check every footpath and bridleway to help create a maintenance schedule for the following year. Basic funding is a grant from Devon County Council, through the Parish Paths Partnership (P3), and was around £1000 for 2008/9.



5.19.4 This will be changing shortly and will probably be based on a set amount (maybe around £30 a mile) for each actively participating parish. This would give around £600 for Chardstock i.e. a significant reduction in funding. Any major projects e.g. replacement of bridges, would have to be bid for separately and in competition with other parishes. The P3 co-ordinator attends County Council workshops and plays an active role in any consultations on strategies carried out by the County Council.

5.19.5 The local group believes the following will need financing.

- a) Publication of an up-to-date Chardstock Parish footpath and bridleway map
- b) Publication of an up-to-date and fully revised footpath booklet – the previous one was produced in 1998
- c) Funding for the provision of seats along some of the more scenic paths and on those paths that skirt the river, assuming that the landowner's permission can be gained.
- d) Possible funding for the provision of a dog walkers' field. Currently, many dog walkers will go into any local field, often without permission of the landowner, and will not stay on legal pathways. If a field could be leased or rented from a local landowner and officially declared open for dog walkers, this might reduce problems from this source.
- e) Funding may be needed to put local footpaths and bridleways information onto the parish website.
- f) Funding may be needed because of the shortfall in county council funding currently being proposed.

5.20 Tree Warden

5.20.1 Trees play a major role in defining the landscape of Chardstock parish, which has a number of important heritage trees including the Lebanon and Deodar cedars in the churchyard and a hedgerow beech recorded by East Devon District Council as one of the Great Trees of East Devon. Most trees have no legal protection and are at risk of destruction. The Parish Tree Warden advises on tree preservation orders and how to maintain and manage trees and hedgerows and seeks to work with land and property owners and developers to raise awareness of the community value of these features.



Trees and hedges are an important component of our landscape

5.20.2 Robust hedges are vital for the control of stock. Maintenance of field hedges is an on-going task and it is good to see traditional hedge-laying techniques in use around the village. Because modern machine hedge-cutting makes the retention of hedgerow trees more difficult, farmers are encouraged to plant and nurture this important element of the local environment.

5.20.3 All parishioners are encouraged to retain bramble, rose and hazel hedges and to maintain Devon banks, because hedges are an important habitat for Britain's only native dormouse, the hazel dormouse (which uses them as a "corridor" for moving between woodlands). Additionally, significant populations of these small creatures live in hedges throughout the year.

5.20.4 There is need for a more conservationist mindset about some aspects of the parish's landscape and history. For example, Chardstock was once a major cider producing area, but many of the remaining orchards are in decline and some have been grubbed out by new residents, perhaps unaware of their significance for both heritage and biodiversity. There is a real need to increase conservation-mindedness and to catalogue the features like trees and hedges which are most at risk.

SECTION 6: Business and Employment in Chardstock

6.1 Chardstock is a small community, yet it supports a surprising variety of business activity. As in many rural communities, a relatively high proportion of the population is retired, so the Business and Employment Questionnaire elicited a relatively low response. What did emerge, however, is that of those who are working, one third work locally from home

"Danger of [Chardstock] becoming just a dormitory area – need to support local businesses"

or within the parish and two thirds work outside the parish. There is a fairly even split between part-time and full-time work. There is also evidence that those who do work elsewhere often do so for lack of more local work opportunities.

6.2 Whilst only 6% of respondents work in the parish, some interesting facts about working in Chardstock have emerged - and the picture is broadly encouraging.

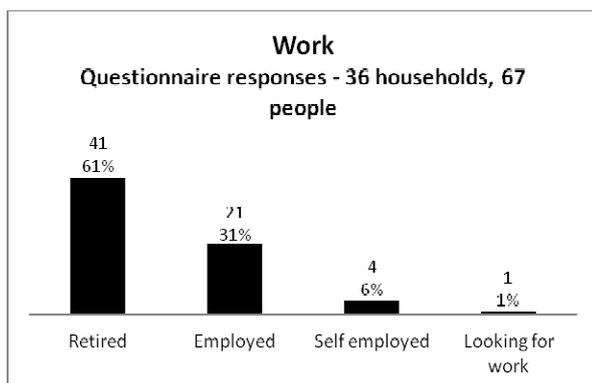
6.3 Until relatively recently, the main economic activity was farming, mainly dairy. This is still an important part of the parish's economic base with several active farms and smallholdings. Let us also not forget that it is due to our farming community that the parish still enjoys much of its unspoilt countryside.

6.4 The parish now supports agriculture and many other kinds of business as well. The Parish Council's Business Directory has revealed a rich mix of local small enterprise.

6.5 **Business sectors** currently operating in and from the parish include:-

- Agriculture
- Accountancy
- Agricultural Engineering
- Alpaca Farming
- Antiques Sales
- Arts and Crafts
- Bed and Breakfast
- Building Survey and Associated Services
- Business and IT Consulting
- Commercial and Domestic Cleaning Services
- Computer Design Services
- Computer Repair and Consultancy
- Drama and Stage Training for the Young
- Education Consultancy
- Electrical Contracting
- Entomological Consultancy
- Graphic Design and Sign Production Services
- Health and Beauty Services
- Health Product Supplies
- Holiday Letting
- Hospitality (Pubs, Hotel and Restaurants)
- Joinery
- Kennels
- Land Management and Leasing
- Landscape and Gardening Services
- Music Tuition
- Pilates
- Post Office Services
- Property Development and Building
- Retail
- Timber Building Construction
- Window Blind Manufacture

"I have a lovely view from my office window! (but) ...there are no office support services (e.g. photocopying, fax) in the parish - I have to go to Axminster"



6.6 Some of these enterprises are quite small operations, but each contributes to the services available to the community and provides a gainful and local occupation for people who have chosen to live here. They also bring trade to the parish (e.g. to the pubs and shop).

6.7 A significant number of these businesses are in the service sector and rely upon good communications. This underscores the need to bring about an improvement to the quality of the mobile phone and broadband services available in the area, both of which are well below the national average.

6.8 In addition to the questionnaire about working in the parish, a number of local business owners offered commentary of their own. The main themes arising were the need to create a business friendly climate and encouraging local residents to support local businesses.

6.9 Chardstock Stores and Post Office

6.9.1 The parish's one shop, Chardstock Stores and Post Office, is in Westcombes, near the Community Hall. The present proprietors acquired the by then somewhat run-down shop in 2005. Five years later they have built up both the Post Office and retail elements to create a

"Excellent to have amenity of store and PO and pubs"

successful business and a much needed local service. The Post Office offers a wide range of services, from general postage, Bureau de Change and pension distribution to banking facilities.



Chardstock Stores and Post Office

6.9.2 The shop stocks a wide range of essential and luxury items. Prices are competitive with supermarkets' normal pricing and often undercut those of convenience stores. For some items the shop is a local "preferred supplier" (e.g. bread sales are currently running at nearly 150 loaves a week).

6.9.3 The continuing success of the business is dependent upon two main factors. Firstly, the balance of trade between the Post Office and the general retail business is crucial. Any reduction to either business (as in a renewed closure programme by Royal Mail) would reduce the viability of the service. Secondly, the continued support of the community is essential. The shop is now well established and carries most of the things that most people want most of the time at affordable prices.

6.9.4 At present, a large number of parish households use the shop for some part of their weekly shopping

needs and a smaller, but significant, number do their major weekly shop there. During bad weather, the shop is a lifeline to residents, who can obtain essential provisions.

6.9.5 The shop contributes more than just commercial activities to the parish as a whole. The owners are both active as members of the community and allow the shop to offer non-commercial services, like selling tickets for local amateur dramatic performances, keeping stocks of entry forms (blanks and when completed) for the Flower and Vegetable Show and acting as an informal message-centre, as well as providing a free notice board for local advertisers of events, goods and services.

6.9.6 The shop is a centre of community life and its owners tend to notice when more vulnerable parishioners may need help in one form or another. They also pride themselves on being a "trusted supplier" (especially for the elderly) and provide a free delivery service for more valuable orders. Otherwise, a small delivery charge is made.

6.9.7 The main factor affecting the shop is usage and this will be affected by future social demographics. The owners wish to see a vibrant, healthy community, which presupposes a proper social mix of people with younger families and young adults as well as the middle aged and retired. This is about life-choices and also about work and housing opportunities. Therefore, a limited amount of good quality development in selected places might well be of benefit to the community as a whole.

6.10 Laurel Farm Alpacas

6.10.1 The owners of Laurel Farm obtained temporary planning permission to establish an alpaca farm on what had become a derelict site in 2005. They then had 5 years in which to demonstrate that an alpaca farm could be a successful and sustainable business. Alpaca farming is one of the modern faces of agriculture and, after an extensive clearance and reconstruction programme, the 14½ acres of the smallholding has been turned over to rearing a herd of around 50 animals.



The Alpaca Farm at Tytherleigh

6.10.2 The business, which is situated on the A358 at Tytherleigh, is concerned with breeding alpacas and selling on both the wool and cloth and garments made from it. The farm already has a small farm shop and has established an on-line marketing business as well. The proprietors are planning to diversify into a similar operation based on breeding angora goats.

6.10.3 The business has been beneficial to the community because it has brought new economic activity to the area, because modern animal farming is consistent with Chardstock's agricultural

heritage and because the land, which had long lain idle and neglected, was bought back into productive use. The farm is now much tidier and better managed than it was and, importantly, it provides a living for its owners.

6.10.4 The plan now is to apply for permanent planning permission and to continue to consolidate and grow the business, including the quality and stock of its farm buildings, and to continue to play an important part in Chardstock's economic life.

6.11 John Williamson Joinery

6.11.1 Founded in 1979, John Williamson Joinery (JWJ) has been based in Chardstock village since 1986. The premises are in a small factory in an industrial area situated off Chard Street.

6.11.2 The family-owned company is engaged in a wide range of woodworking activities, from the manufacture and fitting of timber house frames and roofs, doors, windows and staircases for the construction and residential markets, to bespoke conservatories, shop-fitting, industrial pattern-making and the design and manufacture of customised kitchens and furniture. The company can produce, in the words of the proprietor, "... anything made of wood". The aim is to achieve an optimal mix of quality work and affordability.

6.11.3 The premises occupies 500 sq.m. and employs 7 local people, who all live within easy reach of the factory. From time to time it offers craft apprenticeships to local young people. This small industrial area has been in existence in Chardstock for many years and helps to ensure that the parish does not become just another retirement settlement. It is one of the parish's centres of economic activity.

6.11.4 The company's customers are mainly in the South West of England (Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset), with some residual work still being done in London (its original home). Many customers are from Chardstock and its immediate surroundings. The village is seen as a good place to live and work. The proprietor and many employees are very active socially and the company has a long history of supporting local events (like Street Fayre). This relatively high profile has been good for business.

6.11.5 At the time of writing, the order book is sufficiently strong and has not suffered unduly as a result of the recession. This is, in part, because the company serves a broad market, including customers from the public, commercial and private sectors.

6.11.6 Like any industry, JWJ is subject to regulation (mainly by the local authorities in East Devon and Devon County). The proprietor's experience, in areas like Health and Safety and environmental matters, has been that the relevant authorities understand that businesses have to meet minimum standards in a practical and competitive way. This is not seen as a problem.

6.11.7 The unified business rate (business Council Tax), however, seems to be administered with neither understanding of nor concern for, the effects of arbitrary tax increases (up 20% in 2009) on businesses of this size.

6.12 Stage 4 Kidz

6.12.1 Since November 2008, Stage 4 Kidz has sought to promote all aspects of the stage and theatre; e.g. acting, singing, dancing, choreography, make-up, lighting, costume and prop design. Membership is for children aged 4 and above.

6.12.2 The organisation provides opportunities to discover and learn about stage craft and integrate the skills involved into their own social and physical development. Over 50% of the members come from Chardstock or have attended Chardstock St Andrew's Primary School and many others have come from personal recommendations which has been the best form of advertising.

6.12.3 By gaining an early insight into the skills and processes of theatrical production, Stage 4 Kidz can act as an early training ground for other local drama groups, including Chardstock Amateur Dramatic Society.

6.12.4 A small group of volunteer helpers run these sessions. At present all funding comes from fees paid by parents of children attending the courses.

6.12.5 Sessions are on Saturdays and lead to a 'Showcase' for families, friends and residents. There are 3 'terms' per year each with its own showcase at the Community Hall. From 2011 there will also be an annual Showcase at the Octagon Theatre, Yeovil.

SECTION 7: Parish Council

7.1 The Parish Council is the most local form of administrative democracy. It is a non-executive body, consists of 6 volunteer councillors and is not party political. It operates without paid staff. Its main role is to influence executive agencies (e.g. the District and County Councils). The council is elected every four years with provision to co-opt unelected members when necessary.

7.2 Council meetings are monthly and the public is encouraged to attend. Attendance levels vary according to the perceived importance of items on the agenda.

7.3 Funding is raised by a small addition to the Council Tax. The Council aims to break even each year.



7.4 The Parish Council's principle functions are:-

7.4.1 A monthly meeting to review matters raised by parishioners and other government or administrative bodies. The Parish's District and County Councillors usually attend these meetings.

7.4.2 To be a point of contact for Chardstock residents when dealing with the maze of local government. Where a project requires a temporary representative (e.g. the recent development of a Parish Emergency Planning System), a Parish Councillor will usually volunteer for the duration.

7.4.3 To offer an informed, local opinion on a range of issues, especially planning applications. Planning decisions are taken by East Devon District Council, who sometimes listen to advice.

7.4.4 To offer small grants to local organisations, (e.g. fuel for grass care in the churchyard, the children's play area and the Community Hall) and to provide limited, one-off starter funding for new community ventures. The Council also provides a limited range of local services (e.g. sandbags for residents threatened by flooding, skips for garden-waste and a pet waste receptacle in the village).

7.4.5 To nominate members for representative or co-ordinating roles with local organisations (e.g. the Community Hall and Neighbourhood Watch).

7.4.6 To organise an Annual Parish Meeting, where parishioners discuss issues of their own choosing like building development, creeping urbanisation and other environmental concerns.

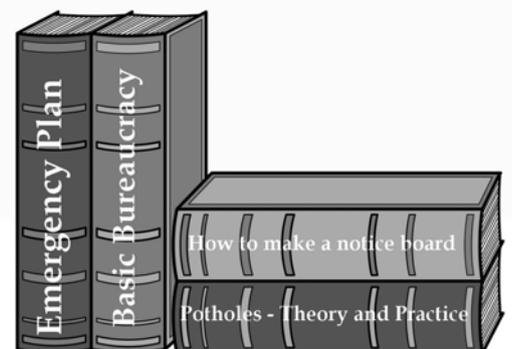
7.4.7 Between council meetings, individual councillors are available for consultation on specific issues.

7.5 Council Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on notice boards and the parish website and, in digest form, in the Parish Newsletter.

7.6 The Council also sponsors the Parish Website, which will need an upgrade in the near future.

7.7 What is valuable about the Council now

The Council is a point of communication with other administrative bodies, helps residents to deal with local authorities and related bodies, gives informed local opinion to decision takers from outside the parish and allocates small amounts of grant-aid to some local organisations. It also offers a small range of local services. It is difficult to know where else all these functions could be placed. Its role in holding external service providers to account is important.



7.8 Hopes for the Future

7.8.1 That the adoption of this Plan will enable a rational, coherent and justifiable approach to contentious planning and environmental issues, enjoying the support of the local communities affected.

7.8.2 That Chardstock will remain a pleasant, economically and environmentally sustainable, rural community that accepts beneficial change when it is properly thought through.

7.8.3 That the Emergency Planning system will be implemented, involving the community as a whole.

7.8.4 That interest in using the Parish Council as a point of referral and self-organisation among the local community will continue to grow and be justified.

7.9 Fears for the Future

7.9.1 Insufficient attention will be paid to local concerns on important issues. Inappropriate decisions will be taken elsewhere on cost grounds, one-size-fits-all policy or a narrow reading of the law.

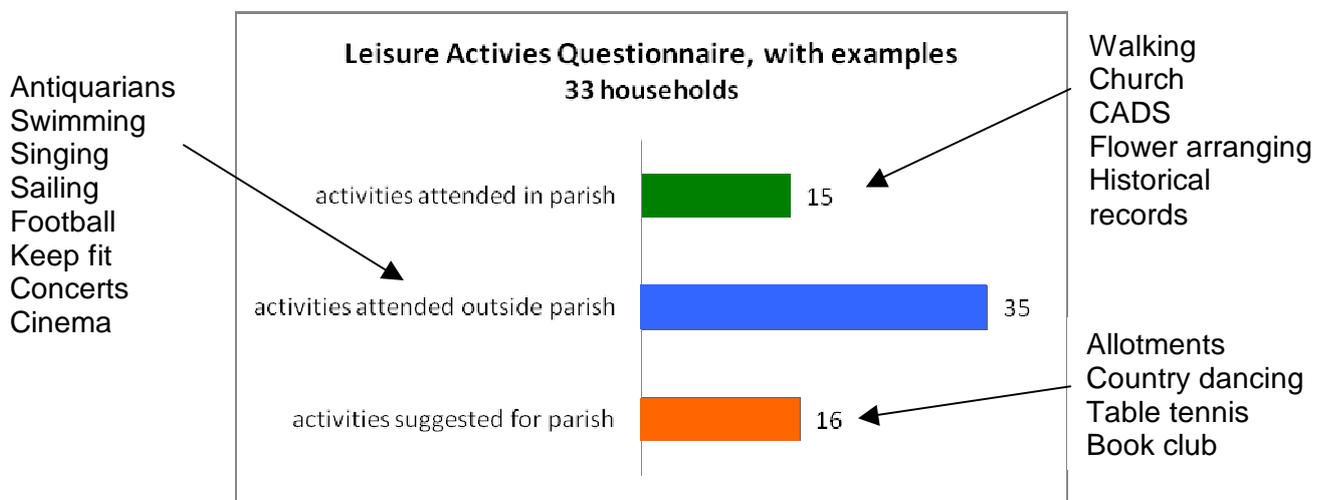
7.9.2 Further erosion of local services provided by District and County councils, attributed to the deteriorating economic climate, spiralling costs and imposed tax increases.

7.9.3 Creeping urbanisation and development in the village itself.

7.9.4 Environmental hazards (e.g. arising from climate change – e.g. flood risk).

7.10 The Parish Council must be, and be seen as, the servant and the mouthpiece of the residents of Chardstock Parish. Otherwise it has little scope to add value to community life.

SECTION 8: Leisure



Chardstock has a wide variety of local leisure activities, some (e.g. the Bowling and Cricket Clubs) of long standing. This Questionnaire collected 33 responses – just under 10%.

Chardstock people enjoy a wide range of leisure activities, including walking and gardening, golf, swimming and DIY. There is also a good range of organised activities like bowling, cricket, skittles, ballroom dancing and keep fit activities. The local hunt, the Cotley Hunt, has many supporters and has been in the parish for very many years. The kennels are also local.

Perceived gaps include allotments, a tennis court, a film club and computer classes. The lack of facilities for children was also raised by a few respondents, although a new group, the Parks Trust, has been set up to manage a revitalised play area.

Several local organisations have provided details of their activities, which are summarised below:-

8.1 Gardening Club

8.1.1 The Gardening Club was set up in 1981 to run the annual Flower and Vegetable Show, raising funds by holding skittles evenings. The Show has always been held in the Community Hall. A winter lecture programme started in c.1986.

8.1.2 The Club now has around 55 members and holds events and/or meetings monthly. In the summer, the event is usually a garden visit.

8.1.3 An annual Plant Sale has been held in May for the last 10 years – this provides a chance for local residents to buy plants at discounted prices at the beginning of



A Flower and Vegetable Show is held each year in the Community Hall

the growing season. The Club has recently also started providing compost at discounted prices as well.

8.1.4 The Flower and Vegetable Show (entries from members and Parish residents only) is still held annually every August and attracts around 60 entrants with over 500 entries. The Club also supports the Street Fayre with a bring and buy stall for plants, vegetables and other local produce.

8.1.5 The Club is self-funding and contributes to organisations like the Newsletter and Street Fayre.

8.2 Street Fayre

8.2.1 Chardstock Street Fayre started in 1999 when a large number of new people moved into the parish. Street Fayre was established as a day for parish unity, built on the main street, with pub and hall as the two ends.

8.2.2 Approximately 18 people are involved in planning and organising Street Fayre during the year.

8.2.3 On the day over 50 helpers from the parish and some from outside (e.g. St. John's Ambulance and Rugby Club members, who marshal car parking) help with organising the event..

8.2.4 Many people help, though there is always need for more - and early - volunteers.



Street Fayre is an important community fund-raiser

8.2.5 The composition of the Committee varies each year to ensure fresh ideas. Volunteers are asked to fill in a feedback form to give ideas and local people are vocal about the Street Fayre, so comments do get back to the organisers.

8.2.6 The weather can be unpredictable, but there is always a contingency plan to take everything under cover without taking it out of the street. The street is what links all parts of the Fayre.

8.2.7 Street Fayre's objectives are to build community spirit by putting on an event for everyone to enjoy. Money raised is given to good causes and charities within the parish and locally.

8.2.8 Over 11 years around £31,000 in total has been given away to good causes and Street Fayre has become an annual event enjoyed by over 2,000 people. Each year the committee tries to make something new or different and each year local people make suggestions for what could be done next.

8.2.9 Other organisations help: The Community Hall and St. Andrews Primary School help a great deal - in 2009 Street Fayre used the new school for the first time. The George Inn raises money in the lead up to the Street Fayre and offers use of its facilities and many local organisations have stalls or make some other contribution (e.g. CADS always provides entertainment and the school runs the café). The Post Office and Stores helps with selling draw tickets and promoting events.

8.2.10 The layout works well and local farmers are generous with their support, e.g. supplying milk, straw bales, loan of cherry picker for putting up bunting, loan of fields for car parking and events. Local businesses offer practical help, adverts in the Street Fayre programme, and sponsorship.



8.2.11 Local residents co-operate with the road closure (and many tidy their front gardens before the Fayre). Parking is always a problem, but somehow gets resolved.

8.2.12 The organisers hope to build on existing strengths and to continue to innovate. They are particularly keen to improve the connection between what is happening at each end of the street. The use of the street is itself important, since it is one of the factors that differentiates this fayre from other, similar village events. The organisers always encourage participation by groups in the parish.

8.2.13 It may be possible to make the week leading up to Street Fayre Day more of a festival organised by other groups (e.g. quiz in pub, concert in church, CADS play night, coffee morning, flower festival) The Street Fayre committee would be happy to consider financial support for these events if possible from funds raised.

8.2.14 It would also be popular if there were to be more visitor participation attractions - especially for children - e.g. children's games, competition, rides, outdoor skittles etc.

8.2.15 There are some concerns about the future and among these are losing use of a local field for parking, the effects of growing bureaucracy and regulation with the inevitable concomitant fears of litigation (although all predictable risks are insured).

8.2.16 The loss of anything integral to the day (hall, pub, etc) would have a knock on effect on Street Fayre, which always depends on the generosity of others.

8.2.17 Some seating along the village street would be a great help, as well as providing a facility for residents during the year. This would help Street Fayre, although there would probably still need to be straw bales as well. An improved Play area could be a centre of activities for children on Street Fayre day.

8.2.18 Street Fayre is self-financing and aims to make a profit, which it distributes to local good causes. It also raises funds throughout the year (e.g. duck race, live music events, treasure hunt) to build community spirit. Companies are invited to sponsor parts of the Fayre (e.g. the live stage). Through fundraising and selling advertising space the committee has always been in a position to fund the Street Fayre day, whatever the weather.



8.3 Chardstock Youth Club

8.3.1 Established in 1985, Chardstock Youth Club has around 40 members. About half live in the Parish. Membership is for those aged 10-25.

8.3.2 Sessions are every Thursday evening throughout the year. There are 5 youth workers. Regular activities include games, sports and annual shelter making/survival in the woods. For the past 20 years there has been a 6 day camp under canvas plus pony trekking or canoeing once or twice a year.

Occasional activities have included canal boating and local activities like bowling.



8.3.3 Chardstock has the only purely *voluntary* youth club in the Axe Valley. Past members often come back as helpers and also drop in and continue to visit the youth worker. The Club contributes to the parish by helping young people to be involved with all sections of the community, through involvement in local activities (e.g. the committee that is seeking to regenerate the children's play area).

8.3.4 The Youth Club is a voluntary, committee-run organisation, and a member of Devon Youth Association (“Young Devon”). It is affiliated to the local Youth Forum (EDDC) which offers some support via a youth worker. It has a Trustee on the Chardstock Community Hall Committee.

8.3.5 The Club’s long term aim is to continue to be a meeting place for the young. Its activities and need for external funding are linked and therefore important. It raises funds from entrance fees. The Tuck Shop subsidises activities like bowling. Fundraising, donations and grants subsidise the camp, etc. There have also been grants for youth work and for equipment.

8.3.6 Grants are gradually disappearing, thus prejudicing activities which provide valuable experiences for local young people. The other main concern for the future is having enough youth leaders, regular volunteers and someone to take over the main leadership role.

“If people don’t want you on the road or in the forest, where can you go?”

8.3.7 For the future, in addition to needing a new leader and some new ideas, it will be very important to keep the Youth Club active in the parish, so that interaction and communication continues between young people and other sections of the community. Local people are always welcome to visit.

8.3.8 The Youth Questionnaire

8.3.8.1 As part of the work of the Parish Plan, Youth Club members helped to devise and distribute special questionnaires for young people and their parents. The issues highlighted by club members, who met to compile the questionnaire, were:

- a) Places to go with bikes
- b) Somewhere to meet / hang out that is safe and sheltered (suggest a semi-circular shelter, with seats in the play area)
- c) Transport: bikes, buses, train.

Young people answered the question - How do you get around:						
	Walk	Bike	Bus	Lift / car	Train	Other
Village?	6	5		1		
Parish?	4	4		4		
To Axminster?				6		1
To Chard?				6		1
Further?				6	2	1

8.3.8.2 A small wish-list emerged from this exercise:

- Help getting to Axminster or Chard – a bus from village would be welcomed.
- Getting play area and football field back (preferably improved) after the school building is finished
- Having somewhere to leave bikes (maybe racks at Community Hall for use while in village and also at Tytherleigh to use while going by bus).
- Having access to the facilities at the school.

8.3.8.3 13 questionnaires were distributed to young people living in the parish and 7 (over 50%) were returned. 15 were distributed to young people living outside parish and 3 (20%) were returned and 39 were distributed to parents of children & young people living in the parish and 11(28%) were returned.

8.3.8.4 There was great concern about the Play Area being closed – ideas and offers of help to raise funds and/or be part of the committee were given. After the closure of the Play Area in 2009, there were limited places left for young people to meet and nothing much to do: Some comments:

Adults	Young People
<i>For all ages to play, and (somewhere) for parents, whilst children play - with plenty of rubbish bins!!</i>	<i>A shelter and somewhere for my younger sister!</i>
<i>Only youth club on Thursday night.</i>	<i>Football pitch, monkey bars, swings and slide.</i>
<i>It used to be the children's play area when open now it's the streets.</i>	<i>Youth club or the park</i>
	<i>Community hall car park</i>

8.3.9 The Youth Club is one of few remaining in the area and is a much valued facility for younger members of the community. It shares the same anxieties about future funding as many other parish organisations, but continues to have a clear view of the advantages to the young of having a safe place to go and constructive ways to occupy their spare time.

8.4 Chardstock Bowling Club

8.4.1 Established in 1957, Chardstock Bowling Club had 44 members in October 2009. Of these, about 25% come from within Chardstock Parish.

8.4.2 The Club plays around 80 games between April and September every year and around 12 games during the winter. The Club has a bowling green and club house within the parish. Games are open to everyone in the parish and the Club always welcomes new members.

8.4.3 The Club is a registered charity. The long term aims of the Club are to provide a leisure facility to local people. Like many other local organisations, the Bowling Club is concerned about increasingly burdensome insurance and Health and Safety legislative requirements, which affect the use of volunteer organisers.

8.4.4 The Club raises funds by membership fees, by taking part in Chardstock Street Fayre and by other occasional fund raising activities. At present the Club is attracting members and therefore is able to keep going but this situation could change quickly and any extraordinary additional expenditure can be very difficult to meet.

8.4.5 The Club is concerned about the lack of public transport and the increased difficulty of getting to and from away games - a growing problem in rural areas. Because older members are not always happy to drive long distances and travel costs are increasing, arranging games with other clubs is not always easy. Car sharing is not easy because of restrictions imposed by insurance companies.

8.4.6 The Bowling Club expects to continue in Chardstock into the foreseeable future. It has weathered many storms in the past 52 years. But there are concerns that if younger families are forced to move away from rural areas by increased property prices, limited work opportunities and reduced facilities for children, then replacement membership of similar clubs will become a problem. Making sure that the local community has a range of facilities and property suitable for all age groups is therefore seen as a necessary requirement for a healthy long term future for Chardstock Parish.

8.5 Chardstock Allotment Association

8.5.1 In 2009, a group of gardening enthusiasts decided the parish needed allotments. The Chardstock Allotment Association was formed and mounted a campaign to find members and some suitable and affordable land.

8.5.2 The main objective of the Association is to give members an opportunity to grow their own produce with all the economic, social, environmental and health benefits this implies.

8.5.3 At present the Association has a committee of four people and an active membership of nine. This is expected to grow as the Association becomes established.

8.5.4 After some false starts, the Association has now leased some suitable land. Membership of the Association is a pre-condition of allotment rental. Membership costs £5 p.a., including a contribution to the Association's own membership of the South West Counties Allotment Association.

8.5.5 The Association is already considering potential sources of funding for the initial set up costs of this and other future developments and improvements. In the longer term, the Association would like to erect polytunnels/greenhouses and/or plant a small orchard. The Association will also need to plan for necessary temporary structures (like a storage shed) and other horticulture-related expenditure.

8.5.6 The Association will contribute in tangible ways to the life of the parish *via* the Gardening Club's annual Plant Sale, and Street Fayre's vegetable stall and, of course, by its members participating in the annual Parish Flower and Vegetable Show. The Association hopes to build a close relationship with the Gardening Club. The Association will not operate in isolation from the rest of the community and, in drawing up its rules for members, is already giving thought to "good neighbourliness" (e.g. not having bonfires at anti-social times). It is also giving thought to longer term issues like car parking. (sufficient, nearby parking space is regarded as a desirable component of the ideal site specification).

8.6 Chardstock Historical Record Group (CHRG)

8.6.1 CHRG was established in 2000 and researches, collects and preserves documentary evidence of life in Chardstock, from early times to the present in an accessible form for the interest and use of local residents and serious historians alike. Membership is voluntary and varies according to the projects in hand. There is usually a core member group of around twelve.



Chardstock Historical Record Group's Web Museum Homepage (www.chardstockwebmuseum.org)

8.6.2 CHRG activities cover a broad range of historical interests, including, the general history of the parish and that of nearby All Saints, the history of local education and the gathering, translation (where necessary) and cataloguing of documents and maps relating to the parish and land-ownership.

8.6.3 The organisation also collects, catalogues and publishes old photographs of Chardstock and its people, reconstructs the history of local field names, catalogues the history of the churchyard and researches the history of specific local places (e.g. important houses, mills and farms).

8.6.4 The group publishes properly researched and presented books and booklets about the parish, including an updated edition of the definitive history of the parish. CHRG has itself published material about public footpaths, a local mediæval mill, education and schooling and a book of memories and recollections of life in the parish from well before World War II to more recent times.

8.6.5 CHRG advertises its activities (and recruits new members) by running stalls at events like Street Fayre and the November Church Fayre, advertising in the parish newsletter and maintaining a well-designed and increasingly comprehensive website, which attracts interest from around the world.

8.6.6 The organisation is largely self-funding, raising much of its finance from book and photograph sales, as well as from donations from people living elsewhere who have made use of its databases and (informal) research capability.

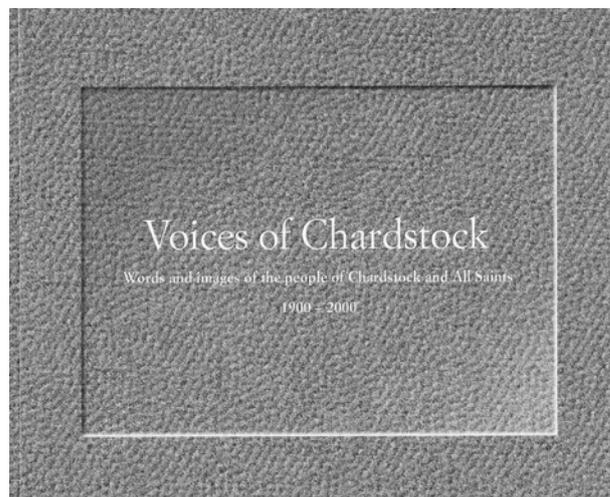
8.6.7 CHRG identifies 4 major future issues:

8.6.7.1 Maintaining funding for the work of collecting and saving historical information.

8.6.7.2 As older buildings change, so there is a major task to salvage historical information while it is still available. A further role is to act as the “holders” of the parish’s history. Old documents and photographs need to be copied and catalogued before collections are dispersed.

8.6.7.3 That an expansion of the “village envelope” may lead to ever more ill-judged development and consequent loss of fields and buildings of historical consequence.

8.6.7.4 The internet offers a resource to local history researchers around the world. CHRG must position itself to both contribute to and benefit from the application of technology in this area.



The Historical Record Group has an impressive list of publications

8.7 The George Inn Skittles League

8.7.1 This league has existed for at least 40 years. It currently has 11 teams each with 8 members and plays at the George Inn every Tuesday and Thursday evening from September through to May. One team comes from Chard – the other 10 are all teams of local residents.

8.7.2 The skittles room has 2 alleys. While it is in need of some major renovation, it is well used as teams outside Chardstock use the facility on Mondays and Wednesdays.

8.7.3 This leisure facility is therefore one of the oldest in Chardstock and certainly attracts most local involvement. The George Inn is privately owned and leased to the publican. This makes renovation of the skittles alley difficult although it is hoped that this will be possible one day.

8.8 Chardstock Amateur Dramatic Society

8.8.1 The Chardstock Amateur Dramatic Society (CADS) was formed in 1989 to produce a Pantomime for the village.

8.8.2 The society has flourished and now produces a panto, a play or series of one act plays and a variety night every year with additional performances for the Street Fayre. Young people, especially, are encouraged to contribute.

8.8.3 It is a fairly small society with a membership between 60 and 70; almost evenly split between the under and over 18s. The committee includes two youth representatives. About two thirds of members are from within the parish.

8.8.4 Membership starts at 8 years (with parents present) and at 10 when alone. Adult helpers are CRB checked and the appropriate insurance is in place. The society is a member of Somerset Fellowship of Drama, Axe Vale Youth Network and is affiliated to the South West Region of NODA.

8.8.5 As well as the annual productions, workshops and training sessions are given by professional actors.

8.8.6 CADS is funded by subscriptions, grants and fund raising events. Street Fayre is a major fund raiser. A donation to a local charity is given from the proceeds of the Variety night held in December.

8.8.7 A small society has difficulty finding people to fill all the jobs for a production (actors, direction, front of house, back-stage, music etc.), but productions are still mounted regularly and several local families take part in events together.

8.8.8 All productions and most rehearsals are held in the Community Hall. An excellent facility.



CADS stages a Pantomime in the village each year

8.8.9 Audiences are usually adequate but it is sometimes disappointing when the hall is not full.

8.8.10 The society's long term aims are:-

8.8.10.1 To encourage local families to become members and attend shows

8.8.10.2 To attract new blood into the society

8.8.10.3 To encourage more people to help off-stage (e.g. scenery, costumes etc.) and Front of House.

8.9 The Arts in Chardstock

8.9.1 The parish is rich in creative, individual and collaborative artistic and cultural activity.

8.9.2 St. Andrew's Church is regularly decorated with individually designed and made flower arrangements, especially at the major Church festivals and other important celebrations like weddings.

8.9.3 These arrangements are the work of an established group of local residents, who not only take responsibility for Church flowers, but also ensure that standards are maintained by arranging training

seminars for participants and new recruits. Members of this group are both church-goers and non-church-goers.

8.9.4 The group staged a Flower Festival in 2003 and plans to stage another in 2011.



A Group of artists at work in Chardstock Community Hall

8.9.5 A considerable number of parishioners are engaged in the creative arts like painting, design, sculpture, music and craft-work and they enrich the life of the community. For example, each year the Flower and Vegetable Show features the work of local artists and craft workers in a wide range of categories.

8.9.6 A small group of local artists have started regular meetings in the Community Hall to pursue their common interest and develop skills in a sociable and supportive environment.

8.9.7 The parish has two highly successful drama organisations. Chardstock Amateur Dramatic Society promotes a regular programme of events including plays, a pantomime and a variety evening, whilst Stage 4 Kidz is a small local organisation offering

stagecraft and related training and experience for local young people.

8.9.8 St. Andrews Church has a small choir and, from time to time, local residents also organise concerts of largely instrumental music in the church, often including an informal concert on Easter Sunday. Other concerts feature performances by local professional and amateur musicians of all ages.

8.9.9 The bells of St. Andrews Church are rung by an experienced team of bell ringers, both church-goers and non-church-goers, who meet regularly to practice and provide bell-ringing for services and other special occasions. The Church also owns a small set of hand-bells, which are used from time to time to provide entertainment at local events.

8.9.10 Among the large number of small and informal music groups, the Parish has (at least) one active rock group, which plays at functions and events around the year.

8.9.11 The 2010 Chardstock Arts and Crafts Festival featured a range of local work from both amateur and professional painters, sculptors and craftsmen and women.

8.9.12 All these activities are essentially local in nature and the contribution they make to the life of the community is a direct result of the enthusiasm and talent of each practitioner, whether professional or amateur.

8.9.13 Whilst actively supporting everything that has been achieved to date, many residents are also seeking to raise levels of ambition in the parish for participating in and enjoying the arts, in all their many forms.



Church Flowers

SECTION 9: Chardstock Maps

9.1 Extract from a relief map of the Parish of Chardstock and environs (made by Mr. John Wilson in the 1950s)



9.2 Maps of Chardstock Village

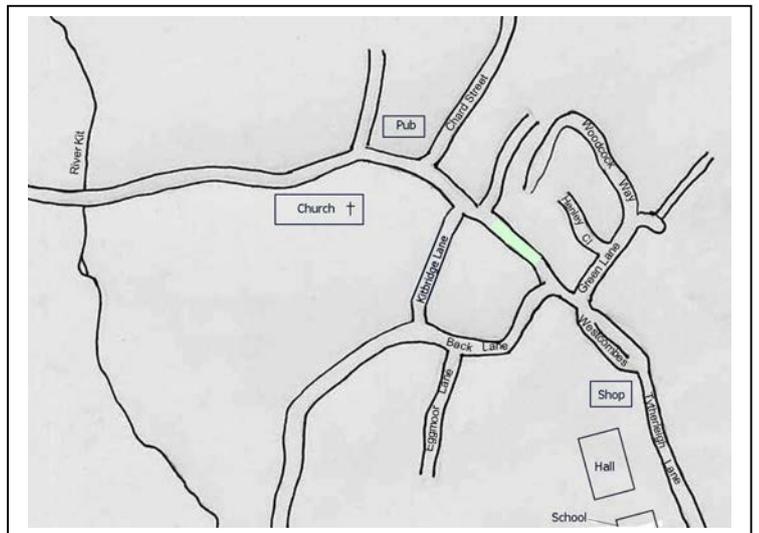
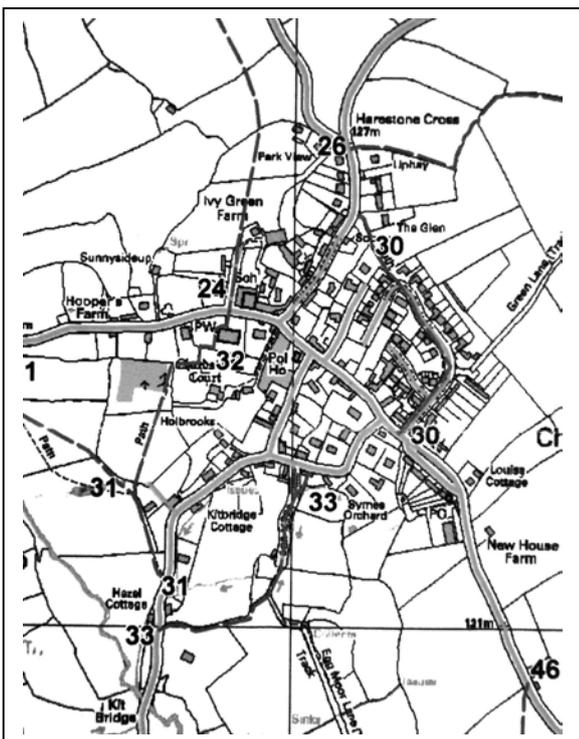


Diagram with main street names in the village

SECTION 10: Summary and Conclusions

10.1 The overall impression that shone through in the answers to questionnaires and in interviews, discussions and meetings is that Chardstock people are happy to be living in the parish and would like to retain the quiet, peaceful, rural and friendly atmosphere that typifies the parish.

10.2 However, some issues need to be addressed and these form the Action Plan on page 32.

10.2.1 Chief among these are the lack of public transport and the state of the roads in the parish, concerns about unpredictable planning outcomes, relentless pressure from developers and the possibility of developers building cheaply rather than sympathetically. Threats to the AONB and the Chardstock Conservation Area are also causing real concern.

10.2.2 Parishioners recognise that a small amount of new housing is needed, but they want it confined to the built-up area of the village, to be designed to “fit” with the design of surrounding buildings and, very importantly, to include a significant proportion of “affordable” housing for local people.

10.2.3 If space for building is limited, then it follows that permission to build must be rationed to favour the construction of lower cost housing *for local people*. No recent or projected development project has included any provision for any affordable houses - and this is an issue.

10.3 Some of the projects and priorities that are described in this plan do, inevitably, come with a price tag (in some cases a large one). The necessary funding is sometimes for capital expenditure (e.g. for buildings or equipment), but as often it is to cover normal running costs (e.g. the printing of the Parish Newsletter, one of whose strengths is that it is delivered to every household and is free). Funding is also sometimes needed to assist with the start-up phase of new projects (like fencing for the allotment site).

10.3.1 A summary of the main costs indicated by this plan includes the following (at the time of writing, there will be additions):-

a) Capital projects:

- 1) Community Hall refurbishment (paras. 5.13.7,8)
- 2) Regeneration of the Parish Play Area (para. 5.17.6 - 8)
- 3) Re-ordering of the interior of St. Andrews Church (para. 5.15.8)
- 4) Equipment for the Allotment Association (para. 8.5.5)

b) Ongoing projects with current or possible future revenue requirements:

- 1) Parish Newsletter (para. 5.16.4)
- 2) Helpline Drivers (para. 5.18.3,4)
- 3) Footpath Walkers Group (subject to continued availability of DCC funding) (para. 5.19.4 & 5)
- 4) Youth Club (para .8.3.6)

c) Projects with known start-up costs

- 1) Regeneration of the Parish Play Area (para. 5.17.6 - 8)
- 2) Allotment Association (para. 8.5.5)

10.3.2 *Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1991*, makes provision for property developers to be required to “put something back” into the community, from which they seek to profit, by means of “Planning Obligations”. These are enforceable conditions created during the planning application process, requiring the applicant to make financial provision for funding local community projects. For the larger and more valuable developments the sums in question can be substantial.

10.3.3 It is clear that many of the projects outlined in this plan are prime candidates for Section 106 funding, should it become available. There will be the usual reluctance to fund non-capital costs, but, for true sustainability, additional help with meeting running costs is sometimes justified.

10.4 Creeping urbanisation is a concern - Chardstock does not wish to be just another town on the A358 and the increase to flood risk in a few areas over the last few years has been a worry to those affected (although some real progress has been made in this respect). The temporary closure of the play area was a catalyst for a group to form with the sole purpose of reopening and improving it.

10.5 There are very many positive aspects to living in Chardstock. The plan comments, on more than one occasion, that some voluntary groups are having difficulty finding new volunteers. “Difficult” is not the same as “impossible” and the spirit of self-help is alive and well in the parish. Not only are the Community Hall and the new Play Area trusts run entirely voluntarily, but a range of other self-help initiatives operate this way as well - like the people who staff the Help Line Drivers, the Youth Club, the Tree Warden, P3 Walkers, the Newsletter and the many people who help out in the Church – be they Parochial Council Member, bell ringer or flower arranger. They all give their time and energy freely in the service of the parish. Even the Parish Council has moved to a new organisation where its administration is delivered and technical advice sourced by volunteers. There is the range of clubs and societies to consider as well.

10.6 One small surprise in collecting the data for this plan was the sheer range of business activities in the area. Chardstock may not offer many opportunities to “be employed”, but it is a wondrously busy place. Much of this activity is technology enabled, so action to improve the speed and quality of the broadband service (for example) would encourage this particular approach to self-sufficiency.

10.7 Overall, the community seems in good heart. True, there are concerns about (e.g.) the viability of the church building and a possible social vacuum if the general reduction of voluntary effort continues, but the fact is that a lot has been achieved historically and continues to be achieved today.

10.8 It continues to be a privilege to live and work in Chardstock Parish and its residents deserve help and encouragement in the task of looking after it.

SECTION 11: Notes on the Decentralisation and Localism Bill (December 2010)

11.1 The present government wishes to encourage a social ethic which it calls the “Big Society”. One salient feature of this is to give responsibility (and, therefore, presumably, also power and funding) for deciding how a community is to develop, and what are its local priorities, back to that community. Chardstock has a long history of democratic self-help and is able to accept its part in this.

11.2 There is a real feeling among many Chardstock residents that its way of life, which they value greatly, is under constant threat from government policies, from distant and unengaged officialdom and from commercial interests - none of whose advocates have any real stake in the community beyond their own short-term agendas. These are either political or administrative in nature, or are for quick, financial gain. None of them have to live with the consequences of their actions.

11.3 More than anything, the people of Chardstock need, through agencies like the Parish Council and local interest groups (be they permanent or “ad hoc”), to be able to exert meaningful control over important policies and plans affecting their future (like housing development, the size of the built-up area, protecting the conservation area and the rural environment, encouraging small business, and addressing concerns about flooding and other environmental issues).

11.4 In the past, centralised planning (whether at Whitehall, County or District level) has largely precluded this degree of local control, mainly by the simple device of predetermining overall policy and severely limiting which matters are “admissible” for local consideration as part of the planning process. Decisions are, therefore, taken at a corporate level in places and by people well removed from the communities themselves. If control of planning decisions really is going to be devolved, this process will have to change with the balance of power being tilted dramatically in favour of local opinion.

11.5 In its “*Decentralisation and Localism Bill*”, the government seeks to establish some of the principles upon which the “Big Society” will operate (some of which look a lot more like a developer’s charter than the much derided “NIMBY” manifesto) and there is talk of returning power to “local councils” - without defining what “local” means. One thing is certain - if the idea of true “localism” is to take root, then government and planners are going to have to (and be allowed to) build much better bridges to the communities they serve, bridges which incorporate a fully two-way thoroughfare.

11.6 One positive proposal in the Bill is that some or all of the money arising from Section 106 “Planning Obligations” (see para. 10.3.2 above), be remitted directly to the community where the development is planned, so that decisions about how the money should be spent (no doubt within guidelines) can be taken locally. This is welcome and points up the importance of imposing planning obligations wherever they are called for. Such a valuable source of community funding must not be lost for lack of organisational ownership, knowledge, visibility, vigilance or action. This Plan contains many examples of uses to which funds could be put for the benefit of the local community as a whole.

SECTION 12: Action Plan

The actions listed here reflect the opinions and priorities of the many people who contributed to the Parish Plan. Some lie within the Parish's own capability to deliver, others rely upon working with other bodies and authorities. All are seen as necessary for the continued health of this small community.

No.	(plan ref.) Action	Lead agency*
1	(Para. 2.4.3 & 4) Conduct a wildlife audit of interesting and valuable rural sites in the parish.	Local Interest Group
2	(Section 3) Ensure that new and refurbished properties blend with the current styles (e.g. Conservation Area Appraisal 1999 – para 3.1.5) and take full account of any relevant environmental issues.	EDDC ¹ , Parish Council
3	(Para. 3.1.3 & 3.3.9.6) Retain and protect the Conservation Area.	EDDC ¹ , Parish Council
4	(Para. 3.2.5) Limit future housing development within Chardstock to current built-up area. Restrict new properties to around 20 over the next 10 years. Prioritise affordable housing within the parish.	EDDC ¹ , Parish Council
5	(Sections 5&8, and Paras. 10.3.1-3 and 11.6) Identify funding shortfalls, resulting from reductions to government funding and uncontrollable cost escalation (e.g. fuel 5.18.4), and seek replacement funding. Find new sources of major project funding (e.g. s.106).	Any affected group. Parish Council.
6	(Paras. 3.2.8&11 3.3.5, 3.3.9.6) Oppose inappropriate development and urbanising of rural Chardstock and encourage measures to protect its landscape within the Blackdown Hills AONB.	Residents, Blackdown Hills Assoc., EDDC ¹ , Parish Council
7	(Para. 3.2.10) Devise and implement flood management measures.	DCC ² , EDDC ¹ , Parish Council, Landowners
8	(Para. 4.2) Maintain pressure to improve maintenance of the local roads. Improve the supply of serviced grit bins.	Parish Council, DCC ²
9	(Para. 4.5/6) Work with other agencies to provide a local bus service.	EDDC ¹ , DCC ² , Parish Council
10	(Para. 5.14.4) Support the school and encourage its participation within the local community.	School Governors
11	(Paras. 5.13.5,7,8) Seek funding to help in the maintenance and improvement of the Community Hall.	Community Hall Trust
12	(Para. 5.16.4) Secure the production of the Parish Newsletter.	Parish Council
13	(Paras. 5.17.6/7/8) Help provide facilities for young people within Chardstock, including the Park Trust (Chardstock Play Area).	Park Trust and Youth Club
14	(Para. 5.19.5) Publish updates to the footpath and bridleways map and booklet and seek funding for a range of footpath related projects.	CHRG ³ and P3 ⁴
15	(Para. 5.20.4) Identify, record and map the parish's heritage trees.	Tree Warden
16	(Paras. 5.8 and 6.7) Put pressure on service providers to improve mobile phone signals and broadband speeds within Chardstock.	Parish Council and telco ⁵ /isp ⁶ customers
17	(Para. 6.8) Encourage local businesses and their support by residents.	Parish Council
18	(Para. 7.4.2) Devise and implement an Emergency Planning System.	Parish Council
20	(Para.7.6) Upgrade the Parish Website	Parish Council
19	(Para. 8.5.4) Commission the recently leased land for allotments.	Allotment Association
21	(Para. 8.6.7) Collect and publish historical records about the parish.	CHRG ³
22	(Para. 8.9.13) Encourage the Arts among all age groups.	All parishioners
23	(Sections 5/7/8) Increase the number of volunteers in the Parish.	All parishioners

* Key to acronyms:

¹ EDDC: East Devon District Council

⁴ P3: Parish Paths Partnership

² DCC: Devon County Council

⁵ telco Telephone Company (e.g. BT)

³ CHRG: Chardstock Historical Record Group

⁶ isp Internet Service Provider

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Name	Page	Subject
Chris. Bartlett	2	Questionnaire design
Chris. Bartlett	4,5,10,17,21	Statistical diagrams
Chris. Bartlett	Front cover and 29	Chardstock – Aerial View and Street Diagram.
Denise Clarkson	14	Newsletter
John Cloke	1 and back cover	Landscape photograph
Barry Coveney	Covers,5,6,7,9,12,13,14,15,16,18,20,21, 22,23,27,28	Photographs
Chardstock Historical Record Group	Front Cover 26 29 Section 2	Parish Map Screenshot and book cover Relief Map of Chardstock Parish For historical information
Devon Records Office	4	101 Manor Survey – Title Page
Devon County Council	4,5,10	Statistical data
Devon County Council	29	Map Detail – Chardstock Village
East Devon District Council	6	Reference to “ <i>East Devon Conservation Area Appraisal for Chardstock - 1999</i> ”
Laurel Farm Alpacas	18	Photograph
Sarah Williamson	22,27	CADS and Street Fayre photographs
Sarah Williamson	23	Youth Club photograph

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