



Rockbeare Parish Plan

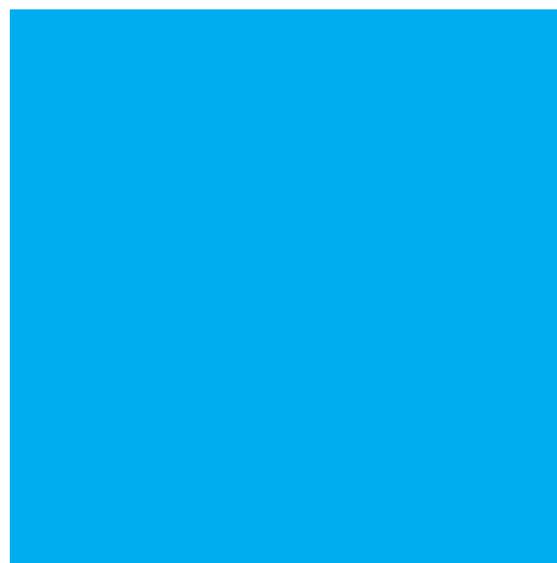


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Formats

This document has been sent to all residences and businesses in the parish. In addition copies have been sent to our Parish Councillors, Ward Members, our MP, principle officers of East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and also major service providers. The Parish Clerk has a limited supply of spare copies.



1. The background to our Parish Plan

The Government's November 2000 Rural White Paper stated that Parish Plans should "identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved". They should set out a vision for the community in the future and identify the action needed to tackle issues of concern in addition to including everything that is relevant to the people who live and work in the community, from employment needs to playgrounds. A Parish Plan should consult everyone and give them a chance to say what they think about the social, economic and environmental issues affecting them and how they'd like to see their community improved during the next 5, 10 or even 15 years. The whole community has to be involved, not just those who come along to Parish Council meetings. Many parishes in Devon have produced a Parish Plan and found it a valuable experience to the extent that a number of the older plans are being updated.

During 2008 I was asked by the Parish Council to set up a Steering Committee to collect the views and ideas of everyone in our parish as the first stage in developing a document called 'THE PARISH PLAN'.

The purpose of this document, which will be presented to East Devon District Council and other major service providers, is to provide a blueprint for how we see the parish developing over the next 20 years. It is particularly important to do this work given the impending arrival the Cranbrook new community on the other side of the old A30 and will enable the Parish Council to respond to planning issues from a sound basis of knowing what people actually want and need.

On the 3rd Of March 2009 a group of 9 met at Rockbeare Vicarage to discuss how to take this work forward.

Roles were agreed as follows :

- Ivan Randall - Chair
- David Hooper - Treasurer
- Dave Miller - Secretary
- Shaun Forsyth - Website
- John Trigger
- Sally Derry
- Richard Lambirth
- The Rev James Grier
- Jaquie Muscat

Our aim was to listen and take on board your constructive ideas, views, thoughts and concerns for the future of our parish. Working together we can build a better community which will benefit our lives and those of the next generation.

Ivan Randall
January 2012

2. How we prepared the Parish Plan

The objective of this Parish Plan is to set out how, in 2012, we would like our parish to develop over the next 20 years. It is based on 3 main sources of information –

One Parish meeting was held to discuss the preparation of a parish plan and to give residents the opportunity to say what issues they would like the plan to address. Next, a one page questionnaire was distributed to all households in the Parish seeking to confirm that these were correct. About 60 more people responded.

From these consultations a much longer Parish Questionnaire, covering a range of local issues that Rockbeare parishioners regard as important was compiled, circulated throughout the parish early in 2009 and completed by over 70% of households.

A number of published sources relating to proposed changes to Rockbeare's hinterland were referenced. The most significant of these is East Devon District Council's (EDDC) Preferred Strategy for the Local Development Framework which was issued for consultation between September and November 2010. This brings together all the intended developments and initiatives within our area which the planners call "East Devon's West End".

Another important document is Exeter International Airport's Master Plan which covers the period to 2030.

3. A fundamental change

Most communities see gradual changes in their social and economic characteristics that can be absorbed and adapted to, but Rockbeare parish faces a sudden and dramatic change to its rurality. East Devon District Council and Exeter City Council are aiming to attract over £1 billion worth of investment into their areas via their jointly managed "Growth Point Strategy" and are working very closely with Exeter International Airport a major private sector consortium to achieve radical changes.

East Devon's Draft Local Development Framework specifies the following developments within a few minutes' drive of Rockbeare Parish –

- 7400 new dwellings
6000 at Cranbrook, 600 at Blackhorse and 800 at Pinhoe
- 2 new business parks : one north one south of the Airport
- An expanding airport : flight volumes are planned to rise by 50% by 2015 and 100% by 2030 although it is clear that these targets are beyond heroic!
- A multi-modal freight terminal – initially a Sainsbury's Regional Distribution Depot
- A Science Park – which is essentially a business park to exploit Exeter University's scientific prowess



Any one of these would be significant on their own. Together they represent a massive expansion of Exeter's economic capability attracting equally massive inward investment. Seen in overview they represent an ambitious vision geared to improving employment and prosperity in the area.

However from the other end of the telescope, i.e. in the parishes in the immediate vicinity, they represent a fundamental change to the environment of those presently living in East Devon's West End. These developments will proceed at pace and it is absolutely vital that the parishes involved each have a seat at the table where the type and pace of development is determined, where changes to plans are agreed and where funds emanating from the developments are allocated.



Rockbeare Parish wants to be kept physically separate from the proposed developments in East Devon's West End and any perceived detrimental impact (e.g. urbanisation) that they may bring with them. This is particularly true of the Cranbrook development. In this context it is vital for the parish that EDDC maintains the Green Wedge between Rockbeare and the new settlement as specified in the 2006 EDDC adopted Plan, and carried forward in the 2011LDF draft. Those who own land in the

Green Wedge may well disagree with this position because of the very significant benefits they would derive from obtaining planning permission to develop the land. However it is clear that the Green Wedge is meant to stop the coalescence of Rockbeare and Cranbrook and the vast majority of parishioners want to see the wedge maintained.

Our Parish Plan, attempts to balance parishioners' views and needs with the substantial and potentially character changing developments on our doorstep. This plan states the case for the people of Rockbeare Parish to be able to influence pending developments in order to retain the parish's rural characteristics and not be incorporated into Cranbrook or even an emerging "Greater Exeter".

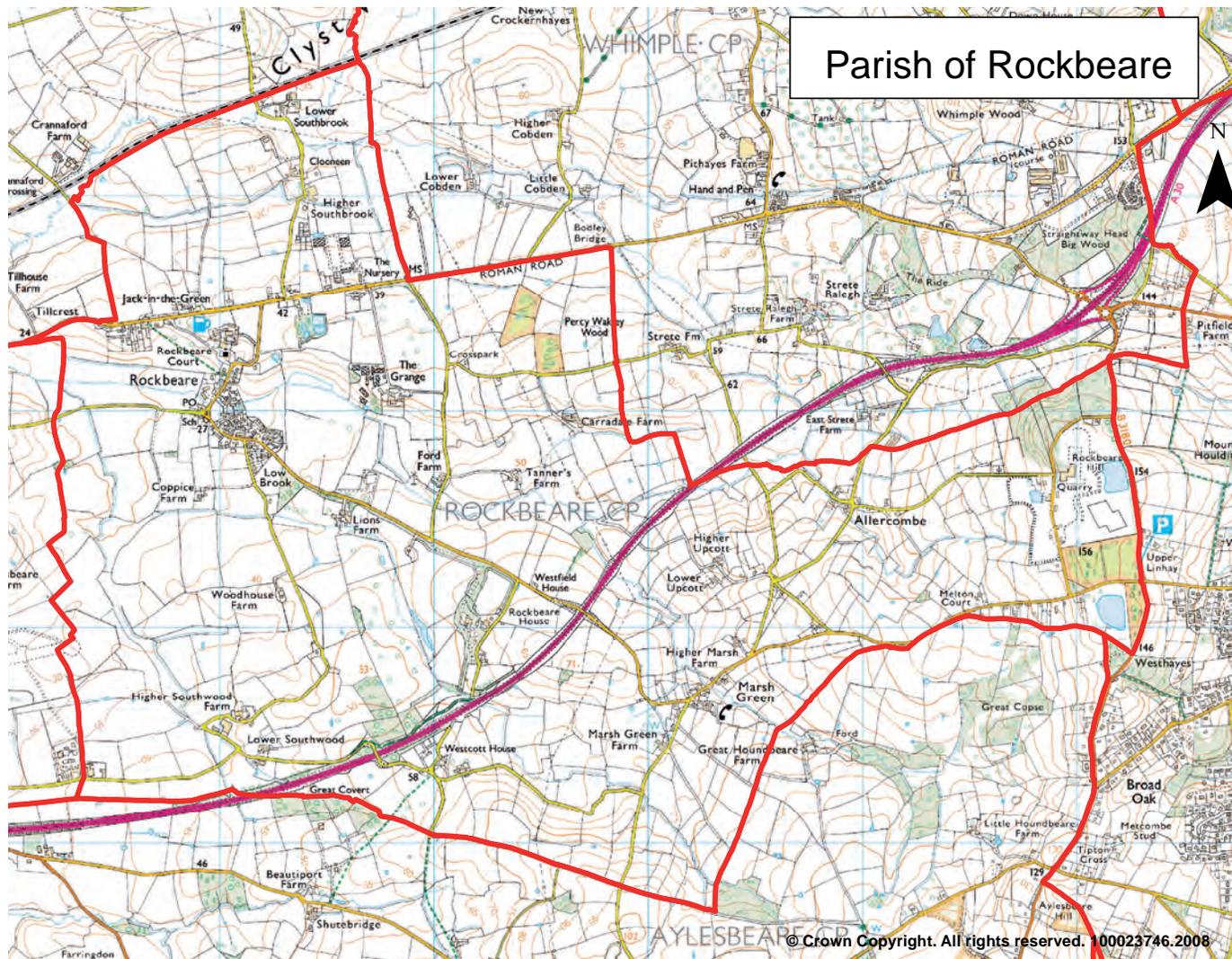


4. Rockbeare today

Rockbeare Parish is situated 7 miles to the east of Exeter centre and is home to 850 people in 350 dwellings in an area roughly 3 miles east to west and 2 miles north to south. Over 60% of the population live in and around Rockbeare village in the west of the parish. Marsh Green, Westcott, Rockbeare Hill, Allercombe and Southbrook are hamlets in the parish.

Rockbeare is bordered to the east by West Hill which is part of Ottery Town Council area, and by the parishes of Whimble, Aylesbeare, Clyst Honiton and Broadclyst.

Apart from Southbrook, to the north of the old A30, and which will be absorbed into Cranbrook, the rest of the parish is to the south of this important route. The new A30 dual carriageway cuts the parish in half between Rockbeare and Marsh Green. The parish adjoins Exeter International Airport to the west and the easterly flight paths approach over most of the parish. A proposed runway extension would be in Rockbeare parish.



Rockbeare Households are 40% two person and 16% one person occupied. There are very few second homes in the parish – 96% are first homes. 76% are owner occupiers and 13% rent from the local authority. 50% have lived in the parish for less than 10 years; 9% have lived there over 50 years. 75% of residents see the parish as their long-term home.

The age profile of residents is close to the average profile for England:

0-4 years	6%	5-15	15%
16-24	8%	25-44	26%
45-64	28%	65-74	10%
75+	7%		

The facilities that the parish enjoys are listed below (all are in Rockbeare Village unless otherwise indicated) –

- A church(C of E)
- A telephone kiosk(red)
- Allotments in Rockbeare
- A Parish Field in Marsh Green
- 2 war memorials
- A primary school with 80 pupils
- A new pre-school with 15 pupils but with ambitions to expand numbers and the amount of time covered during the day.
- A veterinary practice incorporating a post office
- 2 village halls - one near Marsh Green and one in Rockbeare village
- A playing field next to Rockbeare Village Hall comprising a football pitch, a children’s playground, an adventure playground in a bad state of repair, and a half sized outdoor basketball court.
- 1 petrol station incorporating car sales and a workshop.
- A pub/restaurant – attracting clientele from a wide area
- A Chinese restaurant which doubles as a casual bar in the evenings
- A number of other businesses ranging from engineering support for the airport, to caravan sales, to quarrying and building supplies
- National Trust owned woodland at Prickly Pear Park on Rockbeare Hill
- A spine lane running east to west in the parish which carries a bus route and is well maintained and gritted by the SW Roads depot on Rockbeare Hill
- A number of parish groups and voluntary organisations which focus on the needs of specific groups of parishioners.
- A number of farms
- A village magazine with a delivery network
- Permissive footpaths

There is no village shop, no library, no surgery, no pharmacy.

Most people use and are dependent on cars but a significant minority (30+) regularly use the east – west bus services which either go via the old A30 or via Rockbeare Village, Marsh Green and Rockbeare Hill.



5. What you told us

The questionnaire revealed that there is much about the parish that its residents would like to improve:

- Better parking control in Rockbeare. Traffic calming at appropriate points and some one way circulation where this would improve safety.
- Better footways between the village hall, the school and from the church up Clay Hill to the old A30.
- There is a dearth of public footpaths and bridleways in the parish for walking, with or without dogs, and for horse riding.
- Lower speed restrictions particularly on Rockbeare Hill.
- A marked interest in the possibility of setting up a community shop.
- There is a measured demand, from a housing needs survey, for 8-10 social houses.
- Rockbeare Village by the stream and parts of Marsh Green are liable to flood and did so very seriously in late October 2008 and whilst work is underway with the help of a £96 k grant from DEFRA to provide protection for both individual houses which are vulnerable and the whole community, further work is required at the community level particularly to establish a method to achieve an early warning of a flood threat.
- The recent improvements to Rockbeare Village hall need to be maintained and further enhanced to keep abreast of the needs of the community.
- More facilities need to be provided on Rockbeare Playing Field.
- Better facilities for young people particularly in Rockbeare village.

However the issue that emerges over all others is that the vast majority of people like living in a rural area, albeit one that is relatively close to Exeter. They were either born to it, or actively chose it – 50% made that choice in the last decade. As a consequence they want the parish to retain its identity separate from Cranbrook with its projected 12,000 inhabitants, even though many recognise the potential advantages of having the new facilities at Cranbrook conveniently close by.

What is clear from the Questionnaire together with comments at a number of public meetings over the past 2 years is that there is a strong preference for Rockbeare Parish to retain or even acquire the facilities to be as self-sustaining as possible. Given the emerging presence of Cranbrook and the probability that the west end of the parish will use the new facilities this sustainability will be difficult to achieve and is not in line with the LDF Preferred Strategy which doesn't list Rockbeare as a hub village. There is a debate to be had as to whether this designation which is in effect to be static will provide the necessary support for key facilities like the school and pre-school in the future. The question must be put as to whether greater flexibility is required to allow Rockbeare to continue as a distinct and dynamic community.

Cranbrook was given the formal go ahead with the signing of the 106 and planning consent at the end of October 2010 and work started on Phase 1 in March 2011. The pace of the work depends on the future availability of funding which is in great part a function on how the UK economy performs. Whatever the planning intentions, in reality the pace and eventual scope is unclear.

Rockbeare is a rural parish that wants to stay rural and retain as much self sufficiency as possible. This desire will be severely tested over the coming years by developments in its immediate vicinity.

6. The Action Plan

From the information that was gathered at the public events and from the community survey an Action plan has been prepared. This plan identifies the issues, how the community should address them, which organisations we might need help from, who will take responsibility for the task and the priority attached to each action point. Progress in implementing the Action Plan will be an agenda item at each Parish Council meeting and a formal review of the plan will be undertaken by the Parish Council, in conjunction with any interested and relevant persons, annually.

Rockbeare Action Plan - Development

ACTION	Partnership	Leadership	Priority
1. Maintain dialogue with local authorities, developers and adjacent parishes over 'West End' developments.	East Devon District Council (EDDC)	Parish Council (PC)	Immediate
2. Establish the sustainability of the 'green wedge'.	Legal Advisors	PC	Immediate
3. Set up a robust communications Procedure for residents and businesses	Parish Magazine Parish Website	PC	Immediate
4. Check feasibility of extending the Cranbrook Country Park towards Rockbeare.		PC	Immediate
5. Review demand for social housing units	EDDC, Housing Association, Community Council of Devon	PC	Medium
6. Scrutinize rigorously any further demand for a traveller site in the parish	EDDC	D. Miller	Medium
7. Set up residential and business development study group	EDDC	D. Mason	Long term
8. Support self-building projects		Volunteer required	Long term
9. Monitor The Grange site use proposals.	EDDC	PC	Long term

Rockbeare Action Plan - Traffic

ACTION	Partnership	Leadership	Priority
10. Improve parking control in Rockbeare	Devon County Council (DCC)	County Councillor	Medium
11. Improve safety by traffic calming and one-way systems	DCC	County Councillor	Medium
12. Improve footways: Village Hall – School Church – former A30	DCC	County Councillor	Medium
13. Reduce speed limit on Rockbeare Hill	DCC	County Councillor	Medium

Rockbeare Action Plan - Environment

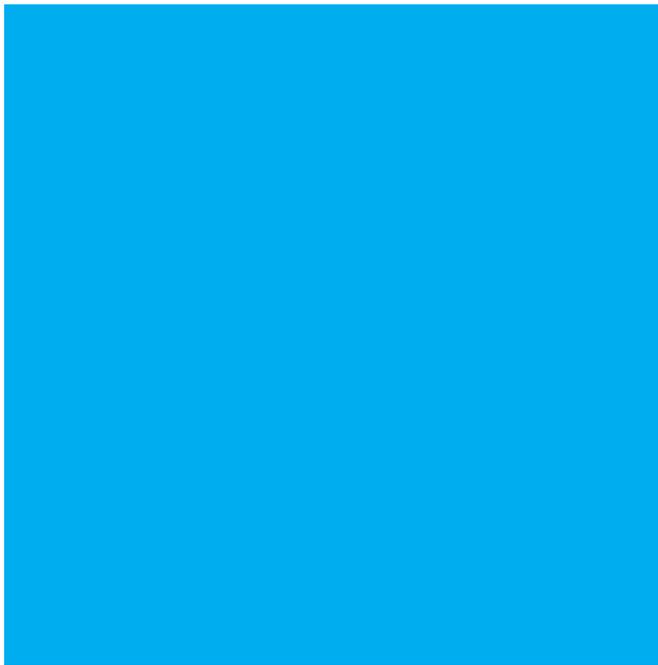
ACTION	Partnership	Leadership	Priority
14. Flooding: Set up early warning protocol and risk reduction plan.	Environment Agency	Parish Council	High
15. Establish a parish emergency plan	Statutory and emergency services	PC	Medium
16. Increase network of footpaths and bridleways	Devon County Council	PC	Medium
17. Establish a working group to investigate Sustainable energy options	Energy Action Devon Bicton Earth Project	PC	Medium
18. Establish 'Litter Wardens'		R. Walker / J. Ward-Wyatt	Medium
19. Improve the management of road verges and public spaces		PC	Medium
20. Monitor demand for allotments		B. Wollen	Long term
21. Undertake a biodiversity audit and develop a management plan	EDDC, DCC, CCD, Natural England	Steering Group to be formed	Long term
22. Future development of quarries and potential for amenity use.		D. Miller	Long term

Rockbeare Action Plan - Facilities

ACTION	Partnership	Leadership	Priority
23. Improve facilities for young people.	Devon County Council	Steering Group to be formed	High
24. Investigate setting up a community shop.	Community Council of Devon	Steering Group to be formed	Medium
25. Improvements to playing field.	Devon Playing Fields Association (DPFA) Parish Council (PC)	N. Spiller	Medium
26. Produce a long term vision for Rockbeare School.		Chair of Governors	Medium
27. Produce a Development Plan for Rockbeare Village Hall.	Devon Association of Community Buildings (DACB) PC	Village Hall Committee	Long term
28. Produce a Development Plan for Marsh Green Village Hall	DACB PC	D. Mason	Long term
29. Security of tenure of playing field.	DPFA PC	N. Spiller	Long term
30. Develop and maintain facilities to retain 'sustainable community' status.	East Devon District Council	PC	Long term

Rockbeare Action Plan - Miscellaneous

ACTION	Partnership	Leadership	Priority
31. Improve methods of communication with the Parish Council		PC	Short term
32. Set up a directory of local businesses and a business development forum		Volunteer required	Medium
33. Set up a voluntary sector funding information source	Devon Community Foundation	Volunteer required	Medium
34. Identify listed buildings	EDDC	DC member	Medium
35. Undertake an assessment of public transport needs		D. Mason	Medium



**Produced by
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helping communities help themselves