



Thatcham Vision

Press Release

15th January 2007

Launch of Thatcham's First Parish Plan

Thatcham's first parish plan has been issued by Thatcham Vision. This has been produced by people living in Thatcham and aims to identify measures that will improve the town and its surrounding countryside.

Thatcham's first parish plan is the result of over a year's work involving over 80 residents and others with an interest in the town. Thousands of residents, from children at primary school to senior citizens, were asked about what improvements they would like to see in Thatcham.

Small groups of people formed teams to look at eight different topics, from transport to youth provision, and identified 100 actions and projects they would like to see happen. People in the community have already started to work on some of these; several, such as Thatcham Film Club and a Welcome Pack for new residents have already been implemented. Topics covered so far are: anti-social behaviour and crime, environment, lifelong learning, senior citizens, social and community development, Thatcham town centre, transport and travel, and youth provision. Resources permitting, other topics, including education and housing will be covered in 2007 if sufficient funding is available to employ a project manager.

Project: Thatcham Film Club Status: Done
Funding received: £10,000 from Awards for All for projection equipment

Mel Alexander is a good example of someone who decided to do something to improve facilities in the town. A film club was one of the ideas suggested at one of Thatcham Vision's meetings – so Mel went ahead and set one up. See <http://www.thatchamfilmclub.co.uk> or call 07795 112 047

What's in the plan?

100 actions and projects have been identified, ranging from improving buses to building a new library in Thatcham Town Centre. It's a long list, and a lot of work is needed to talk to agencies and find resources so project can be implemented. Funding will be obtained from a range of sources, including grant awarding bodies. Some activities will be quicker, and easier, to achieve than others. Here are just a few:

- **A new, bigger and better, library**
- **Improvements to the town centre**

continued

- **Addressing the Kennet School catchment**
- **A community website**
- **A path and cycleway up Crookham Hill**
- **Make Thatcham Green: a project to help residents save energy and help the environment**
- **Buses to Hambridge Road and direct to Newbury College**
- **Green travel plans for businesses**
- **A young people's forum**
- **A double-decker bus where young people can safely meet**
- **Senior citizens support workers**
- **A senior citizens centre**
- **More Neighbourhood Watch schemes**
- **Involving the community in Neighbourhood Action Groups**
- **Improving adult education opportunities (lifelong learning)**
- **A survey of ancient trees**

From the work undertaken so far, it is clear that Thatcham is a good place to live. It is surrounded by wonderful countryside and has a friendly town centre that retains a "village" feel. Many residents are actively engaged in the community, and there are many clubs and activities for people to join. However, the town has grown rapidly in recent years and its infrastructure has not kept pace. There are also substantial challenges related to transport and water resources. Achieving all the improvements in Thatcham Vision's shopping list won't be easy but everyone living in Thatcham, as well as local agencies (like the police) and councils will need to play a part. Improving Thatcham is not just up to someone else – it is up to us all.

Thatcham Vision's First Action Plan is available online now via www.thatchamshapethefuture.org.uk After 1 February, printed copies can be seen at Thatcham Town Council, local libraries. In late February, a newsletter about the plan will also be delivered with The Advertiser, to households in Thatcham and surrounding parishes. Anyone interested in helping with Thatcham Vision, or who doesn't receive The Advertiser, can contact Thatcham Vision via 01635 863592 or email thatchamvision@gmail.com to make sure they receive a copy. Residents and anyone else are also invited to a meeting to discuss the plan, and to meet Thatcham Vision's teams, on **Tuesday 13th March (7.30pm) at Thatcham Town Football Club. This event will enable residents to find out about projects and ideas put forward in Thatcham Vision's First Action Plan. New volunteers to help Thatcham Vision are particularly welcome.**

Public meeting: Thatcham Vision

Tuesday 13 March, 7.30 pm
 Thatcham Football Club, Thatcham

A buffet and a cash bar will be available.

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