

# **DORMINGTON AND MORDIFORD GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**

## **NEWSLETTER MAY 2010**

Welcome to the 4th edition of your newsletter. This edition contains an Annual Report from the Parish Council, which provides an overview of the activities and achievements of the Parish Council over the last 12 months. There is a lot of information contained in this booklet but we hope you will find it of interest.

The next Parish Council meetings are scheduled on 6th July and 7th September, both at 8.00pm in Mordiford School Hall. We welcome public participation and a slot is always on the agenda for residents to raise any concerns, air their views or just come and watch.

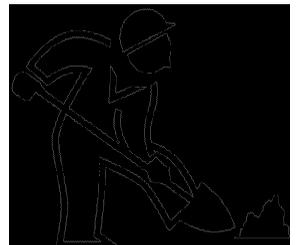
We are hoping to organise a Parish Walk with Amey representatives to highlight the poor state of many of our roads. There is still time to log on to [www.myherefordshire.com](http://www.myherefordshire.com) to calculate your carbon footprint. Parish Councils with the most entries will win £6500 worth of energy efficiency improvements to their Village Hall (The Iron Room).

Thank you for those residents who attended the Parish Meetings in both Dormington and Mordiford. Minutes can be found on the Parish Council's website.

### **Jobs for the Lengthsman**

If you know of anything which requires the lengthsman's attention please let the Clerk know. The lengthsman can clear out drains, grips and culverts, cut back overgrown hedges and trim back overgrown verges.

Also if you spot any broken stiles or problems with the footpaths please let the Clerk or John Litchfield know. The Parish Council now has a grant to improve and maintain the parish footpaths.



# You Decide

This year the Parish Council have decided to take part in a new scheme which allows the community to directly influence how their money is spent. £500 has been allocated for this project, which is called Participatory Budgeting.

We want as many suggestions as possible for what the £500 could be spent on. This may be a single item, several smaller items, a contribution towards a more expensive item or a contribution to an enhanced service. The only criteria are that it is legal, feasible and must benefit you the residents.

We have had a few suggestions already including a bench near the Spout, improvements made to the area opposite the Forge and a water supply to the burial ground.

The deadline for suggestions is 1st July. All eligible ideas will be printed in the next newsletter for residents to prioritise, spending will then be approved at the next Parish Council meeting.

Please fill in the slip below and return to any Parish Councillor or the Clerk by 1st July.

My suggestion is:

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## **Youth Club**

The Iron Room is open and looking for new members. If you know of any youngsters which would like to join the youth club or would be interested in joining in a specific activity please let Gemma know on 07981693220 or Mel on 769480

The Youth Club would also welcome donations of furniture, games and kitchen equipment.  
Volunteers to help supervise and lock up the youth club are also required.

## **Logo Competition**

**Are you arty or creative?** The Parish Council are looking for a logo they can use on all their correspondence. Please send entries to the Parish Clerk by 1st July. A winner will be announced at the Parish Council meeting on the 6th . There will be a small prize for the winner.

## **Contact details**

**Please address all correspondence to the Parish Clerk:**

**Parish Clerk:** Mrs Melanie Preedy, 6 Cherry Orchard, Tillington, Hereford, HR4 8LE, 01432 769480. clerk@dormingtonmordifordgroup-pc.gov.uk

**Chairman:** Mr Barry Durkin, Sleepy Hollow, Broadmoor Common, Woolhope, Hereford. HR1 4QU. Telephone 01432 860 890

**Vice Chairman:** Mr Nick Brewin, 18 The Maltings, Dormington, Hereford. HR1 4FA Telephone 01432 850 456

**Member:** Mr Peter Davies, 3 Sufton Lane, Mordiford, Hereford. HR1 4HE Telephone 01432 850 957

**Member:** Mrs Frances Dees, 10 Pentaloe Close, Mordiford, Hereford. HR1 4LS Telephone 01432 870 360

**Member:** Mr Brian Dukes, 4 Pentaloe Close, Mordiford, Hereford. HR1 4LS Telephone 01432 870 308

**Member:** Mr John Harris, Waltham, The Clouds, Checkley, Hereford. HR1 4NA Telephone 01432 850 331

**Member:** Mr Edgar Moss, Rannoch, Church Road, Dinedor, Hereford. HR2 6LQ Telephone 01432 870 629

**Member:** Mrs Cheryl Shearer, Dormington Court, Dormington, Hereford. HR1 4FA Telephone 01432 851 590

**Footpath Officer and Member:** Mr John Litchfield, Old Rectory Barn, Mordiford, Hereford. HR1 Telephone 01432 870 802

**District Councillor:** Mrs Josie Pemberton, 5 The Pines, Wormelow, Herefordshire. HR2 8JN Telephone 01981 540 088

## **Analysis of results from the Sustainability Survey**

A total of 38 parishioners completed and returned their survey sheets. Of these, 14 parishioners believe they have a good knowledge of climate change.

28 parishioners are ready to offer lifts in their car to other parishioners and 28 are prepared to ask for a lift if a journey is necessary. Twelve parishioners gave reasons as to why they didn't want to share a car. There were concerns about insurance cover and the feeling that they didn't want to impose upon other people. Other reasons given were those of disability and age. Sometimes people felt that their journeys would not be relevant to others, they did not have a regular pattern of journeys or they used the car too infrequently. Occasionally parishioners admitted that their car was already full or it was in use by another member of the household

A number of parishioners described the existing public transport services as poor. Others suggested that more publicity should be given to the existing bus service which they considered adequate.

Ten households use public transport up to five times a week.

Twenty-five parishioners offered suggestions for the improvement of public transport. They felt it was desirable for the Hereford/Mordiford service to operate hourly throughout the day without breaks at lunchtime and teatime and also a late bus from Hereford should be provided. Some felt that a service should operate along the Dormington Road linking parts of the Parish more effectively. It was suggested that this could tie in with the Hereford/Ledbury service. The reinstatement of the Ross on Wye service would be welcomed by a number of parishioners if for only once or twice a week. A second service through Checkley was also suggested, perhaps operating on Saturdays as well as Wednesdays.

Comments were also made about the need for safe footpaths to reach bus stops and that bus stops should be more strategically placed.

20 parishioners thought that more land in the parish should be devoted to growing biomass eg Willow to fuel wood chip boilers. 31 parishioners like the idea of natural woodland in the parish being coppiced and 30 parishioners thought that more parish land should be devoted to growing fruit and vegetables for local consumption.

Just eleven parishioners believe that aquaculture should be developed in the parish.

Other sustainable uses suggested were : -

Community allotments, limited low cost housing, solar panels and wind turbines on public buildings, and a wind farm on higher ground

29 parishioners grow fruit and vegetables for their own consumption. Eight parishioners are hoping to rent a community allotment should they become available.

Thirty-five families would like to purchase fresh local produce from a community shop rather than visit a local supermarket and sixteen parishioners have offered to help with the running of any future community shop.

Further advice on how to make homes more sustainable was requested by a number of parishioners. Parishioners were particularly interested in solar panels, wind turbines and ground source heat pumps. Loft insulation, draft excluders and double glazing was also included on the list.

Other information requested included the economics of home improvements, the obligation of landlords with regard to rented accommodation, updating windows in older buildings, photo voltaic cells and wood burners.

Parishioners outlined some of the problems they have in implementing home improvements. They included tenancy agreements, affordability, planning office requirements, visual effects, and the time required to consider options.

A number of parishioners wished to help make the Parish sustainable. Nine are ready to take individual action, 14 wish to join working groups and eleven wish to join groups involved with further investigation.

Seventeen parishioners were sufficiently interested to provide contact details.

Many other suggestions were made as to how to make the Parish more sustainable.

One individual pointed out that hardship encourages people to become more self-sufficient! It was also suggested that parishioners who are no longer able to care for their garden might like to share it with more active members of the community. The development of a community shop selling locally produced items was a very popular suggestion. The idea that Mordiford mill should be adapted to generate electricity was also put forward. Seed and plant exchange and resource and tool sharing were also important suggestions

**Survey analysed by B. C.Dukes.**

# The secret of achieving sustainability lies with us!

The solution lies in ‘living locally’.

Our main problem has evolved through the transport and energy situation. We’re at what’s called ‘**Peak Oil**’ – which means we’re at the peak of the Earth’s oil production capacity – and its downhill from here. Oil will become more and more expensive as its supply is curtailed.

The **cost of transport** will increase in line with rising oil prices. Soon we will hesitate before we get into the car. Can we really afford to get it out of the garage?

**With this in mind it makes sense for food, jobs and services to be provided locally.**

We must recognise that if something isn’t done to enhance the sustainability of individual villages, they will be lost forever – or become occupied only by those sufficiently wealthy to afford the cost of transport.

With numerous closures of pubs, shops, schools and post offices, it is becoming difficult to find settlements which are truly sustainable. In many cases residents are obliged to use some sort of transport to reach the nearest shop, the post office, their work place, their school, their church or their pub. Transport is becoming increasingly costly as the price of fuel rises. Soon it will become too costly to make those journeys. So what will happen then? The family will have to relocate to a settlement where services can be reached on foot! Unsustainable villages will die and centres with thriving local services will enlarge.

Small settlements can become self-sufficient and sustainable. But what actions are required?

**The houses themselves** must be adapted to make them sustainable. To reduce fuel costs, adequate draught proofing and insulation are required and heating and cooking appliances must be highly efficient. Sustainable energy sources are essential. Some of the fuel can be produced locally and further local employment will be created.

**Local food production** is one of the principles of sustainability. Food grown locally does not carry the high cost of transport. A ‘grow-your-own’ lifestyle is ideal. Land must be made available to produce food locally. Allotments may be required where gardens are too small or non-existent. Gardens which have become unmanageable due to the owner’s age or infirmity should be shared by neighbours who have little land of their own.

**A local shop is essential** for a community to remain sustainable. It will supply locally produced food to residents. A number of residents may be employed in providing a regular supply of foodstuffs to the shop.

It is likely that local residents will continue to purchase many items from a supermarket in the local market town. Taking advantage of the supermarket’s delivery service will reduce the need to use the car for the weekly shopping trip. The use of public transport to

visit other shops becomes more feasible when villagers are not hampered with numerous bags of shopping.

**Public transport** is always the first choice when a journey is to be made. When a car is to be used, consideration is given to sharing the journey with a neighbour. **Car sharing** is another feature of a sustainable community. Drivers are ready to offer lifts and both drivers and non-drivers will request lifts from drivers obliged to make the journey.

The provision of **adequate broadband services** is another essential in a sustainable community. Work can be done at home and the number of journeys to the work place reduced. Video conferencing reduces the need to travel across the globe.

**Broadband** allows shopping to be done at home. Goods can be delivered to the doorstep. Visits to the Bank are no longer necessary. Home Banking is available to everyone with an internet connection. Bills can be paid without leaving the house. Further education becomes available for all.

There are a number of steps to be taken to make our parish sustainable. Some of these require your individual action. Others require a joint, community reaction. What are you going to do to help yourself and your family? What contribution are you able to make to the community? When shall we start?

The analysis of the results from the recent survey conducted throughout the Dormington and Mordiford Group of Parishes demonstrates that a number of residents are aware of the problems facing us. Many suggestions have been made as to the steps needed to tackle the issues. A number of individuals have indicated that they wish to join working parties (or research groups) to discuss the issues further, and agree on actions needed. Others appreciate that solutions to many of the issues occur through individuals making correct decisions and acting appropriately.

Unfortunately too many of us do not appreciate that we have a problem with sustainability. It is difficult to appreciate what must happen for the problem to become apparent to all. Must we wait for the price of fuel to reach £50 per litre before we cut down on the use of our private car? What price are we prepared to pay for gas and electricity before we appreciate that our homes need more economical cooking and heating systems and further insulation and draught proofing?

When will we stop buying imported food from the supermarket? Prices will continue to rise, reflecting the increase in costs of transportation. Why not buy locally produced food at our own village shop? Why not attempt to grow some of the food ourselves? Over the next few weeks, working groups will be invited to start their deliberations.

An analysis of the full findings of the survey are published on the Parish Council's website [www.dormingtonmordifordgroup-pc.gov.uk](http://www.dormingtonmordifordgroup-pc.gov.uk) You are invited to contact the Parish Council if you have comments or contributions to make about sustainability. Reports on developments towards sustainability will be published as they happen.

# DORMINGTON AND MORDIFORD GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT

### APRIL 2009 - MARCH 2010

This has been a progressive year for the Parish Council for and on behalf of the community.

We have achieved a lot for the safety around the school with the introduction of a flashing speed sign which you have all probably encountered. This was truly a parish initiative with money being raised by the PTFA, School Governors and the Parish Council with a grant from Herefordshire Council's Community Project Grant raising the total sum of around £4300 pounds. It is an initiative which we believe will go a long way towards ensuring safety within the village, but there is still more to be done. The current traffic flow through Mordiford is high and at Dormington presents a congestion problem. Although traffic is something over which we have no direct control, we are seeking to introduce ways of slowing vehicles down and enabling overall road safety; indeed we recently consulted with our parishioners and other interested parties, concerning the extension of double yellow lines at the Dormington Road. It was the consensus that the lines should not be extended, so the extension of the lines did not occur; just one example of how your Parish Council is listening and continues to listen.

The burial ground has benefitted from an additional grass cut per year and this has meant a tidier and more respectful environment for those who have loved ones and friends there.

Additionally, we have been reviewing the introduction affordable housing in the parish. The concept is in the early stages but should it come to fruition the project has the ability of providing affordable housing for **local people** and the potential of keeping young people in the county.

At the beginning of the year the parish was chosen to become involved in an energy reduction/sustainability project. Working together with the school, and interested residents the Parish Council have sent out a survey inviting answers on a range of topics from allotments, community shops and shared transport, the results of which will be sent out in the next newsletter.

As I said at the outset of this report there is a lot that your Parish Council have been doing and there are plans to do more. Let me close by saying that your local parish councillor is working for you and we are available should you have any concerns or wish to discuss a parish topic; or you could look at our website, which is regularly updated and

where you may leave feedback [www.dormingtonmordifordgroup-pc.gov.uk](http://www.dormingtonmordifordgroup-pc.gov.uk)



## Parish Plan

Once again the Action Plan, derived from the original Parish Plan, has been the driving force behind most of the Parish Council's decisions and achievements throughout the year. The Action Plan is a 'living' document, regularly updated to record successes, some failures, completed items and new topics as they are raised. The latest edition is always available to the public via the Parish Council website, at Parish Council meetings and by request to the Clerk.

Achievements of note in 2009 include:

- ◆ **Affordable Housing** - Housing Needs survey conducted and confirmed requirement for affordable housing within the Group Parish. The policy was officially adopted by the PC to further investigate the identified site in Dormington. The owner is willing to consider the sale of the land and architects are preparing draft proposal.
- ◆ **Post Office and Shopping Facilities** - PC investigating feasibility of running community-owned shop.
- ◆ **Transport** - PC proposed changes to bus routes to better serve local population, but our proposals were not adopted at this stage.
- ◆ **Road Safety and Parking Provision** - Joint initiative with Mordiford School PTFA, Governors and Herefordshire Council enabled the PC to fund a flashing speed sign outside the school. The PC continues to push for double white lines at Sufton Rise, and reduced speed limits throughout the parish. Red warning lines have been painted on the road at Larport cross-roads and new reflective posts erected in Dormington.
- ◆ **Tourism, Leisure and Social Amenities** - Initiatives implemented include the provision of new notice boards, maintenance of foot-paths, local walk-guides produced and the maintenance of Swardon Quarry and Checkley Barn picnic sites.
- ◆ In addition, the Iron Room at Priors Frome has been taken over by the PC, the site cleared, the room refurbished and a youth club established which won a Pride of Herefordshire award.

**A great deal has been achieved and more will follow, with the support of local residents, in the months and years ahead.**

## **Lengthsman**

Under the lengthsman scheme money is made available to engage a contractor to carry out work alongside the highway. Herefordshire Council calculate the amount of grant allocated on the basis of the length of approved roads in the parish; we are allocated £2145 per year.

The lengthsman has been able to respond to requests from parishioners and as well use his own initiative to clear any problems he sees on his rounds. The lengthsman's first job was to cut back the footpath between the School and Sufton Rise, which he will continue to do each year. Mr Dyer regularly cuts back Larport Lane crossroads, the bus stops throughout the parish, the Greens near Pentaloe Close and along Pentaloe Stream. Many drains and culverts have been dug out, which hopefully should stop some localised flooding. Several footpaths throughout the parish have been cleared including the footpath at Sufton Rise and through to Sufton Lane and along Woolhope Road.

The Parish Council would like to express their appreciation to Mr Dyer for doing such sterling and professional work for the parish.

## **Planning**

Over the past year the Parish Council have received 14 planning applications for comment. All applications are placed on the Parish Council's website and parishioners are given the opportunity to comment.

The Parish Council is given 3 weeks to provide comments to Herefordshire Council who take their opinion into consideration when deciding the outcome of an application. Where there is a scheduled Parish Council meeting any applications received will be discussed there, if not a small group of councillors will visit the site and provide comments.

## Footpaths

This year has seen a few developments to our network of paths. Herefordshire Council has “upgraded” the Mordiford Loop Walk to a Circular Walk, with fresh waymarker signs and a short section of new route to avoid the worst of the mud along the Pentaloë valley. A smart Walker’s notice board adjacent to Pentaloë Close displays the map of the circular walk and other local information of interest. The PC is intending to replace the rotting bench alongside the notice board for the use of walkers and locals in the near future. Also the Checkley Barn Picnic site and the Swardon Quarry viewpoint, both of which are easily accessible from the Circular Walk, are being maintained by your Parish Council. The grass has been cut regularly, litter removed, and we have plans to install picnic benches at both sites during the next few months.

The Parish Paths officer has continued to walk our entire network of paths, and is now on the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of this cycle. Minor repairs are done to signs and stiles whenever possible, undergrowth cut back from signposts and waymarker posts, and fresh plastic marker discs put up where necessary.

Two of our local landowners have agreed to replace rotting stiles with self closing gates, and it is hoped that more landowners will contact the Parish Council with a view to replacing their stiles with gates soon. Some of the Checkley stiles are at the end of their life, so hopefully we will be able to help, if approached. The gates are provided free of charge and it may be possible to help with their installation too. Fewer stiles means easier access to the countryside for people who find stiles challenging, and dog walkers benefit too. A year ago all significant problems found on Rights of Way were reported to the R.O.W. officer at Herefordshire Council for their attention. This usually resulted in a long wait for any action that could not be sorted at local level by the Parish Paths officer. As a result we have decided to apply for the P3 scheme (Parish Paths Partnership) which will provide us with funds to prioritise action on local Rights of Way and thus sort out problems sooner. With luck we will hear very soon that we have been accepted onto the scheme and will start to make improvements. Meanwhile, enjoy your walks and viewpoints, and savour those “miles without stiles”!

## How your money is spent

Each year the Parish Council sets the precept; this is the money Herefordshire Council collects as part of the Council Tax. The precept for the financial year 2009/2010 was £6650, which equates to £20.96 per band D property in the parish. The Parish Council successfully applied for funding from Herefordshire Council to help towards the cost of the flashing speed sign. The Parish Council strives to achieve value for money by obtaining competitive quotes for works undertaken. Full details of the Annual Audit and year-end accounts are available on request from the clerk.

### End of year – income and expenditure summary

1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010

<b>Income 2008/2009</b>	<b>Budget heading 2009/2010</b>	<b>Income</b>
5750.00	Precept	6650.00
24.45	Wayleaves	25.07
758.00	Burial ground	440.00
84.79	Interest	0.76
505.42	VAT	1,364.60
-	Grants/donations	4590.00
29.90	Other -	
	Lengthsman	2145.00
<b>Total income for 2009/2010 -</b>		<b>£15,215.43</b>

<b>Actual spend 2008/2009</b>	<b>Budget heading 2009/2010</b>	<b>Original budget</b>	<b>End of year 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</b>
1004.73	Burial ground	1500.00	979.62
329.00	Commons and picnic	350.00	630.00
704.48	Notice boards	-	-
10.00	Playing field	10.00	10.00
463.87	General Admin.	360.00	5732.49*
2565.00	Clerks salary	2640.00	2979.54
185.00	Hall rental	200.00	165.00
441.32	Insurance	450.00	375.12
340.95	Subscriptions	320.00	252.17
90.00	Training	100.00	220.00
191.00	Audit	400.00	188.00
637.20	Website	400.00	390.80
50.00	Donations	200.00	240.00
-	Parish freighter	220.00	80.00
33.48	Parish Plan	50.00	-
-	Quality Parish	200.00	138.86
	Repairs	50.00	-
	Lengthsman	2145.00	1634.50
	VAT	237.90	

\*includes £4945 on speed sign

<b>Total spend for 2009/2010</b>	-	<b>£14,254</b>
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