

ASHBURNHAM & PENHURST



ACTION PLAN

2010-2015

What is an Action Plan?

- Local Action Plans identify community priorities through consultation
- They cover the issues that affect the daily lives of the community
- The Actions within the Plan detail what is required to address community needs
- Delivering the Actions will mean improvements to the quality of life of local people
- The Action Plan will help guide Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council's decision making
- Copies of the Plan will be presented to Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, Sussex Police, The Safer Rother Partnership and other service providers and agencies
- The Ashburnham and Penhurst Action Plan will be reviewed annually and updated every 5 years to ensure that it continues to be relevant to local people and that the actions within it are reasonable, feasible and achievable

Who did we consult?

At the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010 'Have Your Say' questionnaires were delivered to the 181 households in Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish. Collection boxes were made available at the Chapel, Pontoons Green and at Great Sprays Farm for the return of completed questionnaires. A total of 45 questionnaires were returned to be analysed which means that approximately 25% of households in the Parish participated in the consultation process and their responses are informing the actions within this plan to help shape the future of the Parish.

Get Involved!

To make this Action Plan and the Parish as successful as we can and for it to continue to be a great place to live we would like members of the community to get involved. If you have a particular interest, skill, knowledge or expertise and would like to support these actions going forward, contribute to the development of community projects or just find out a little bit more about being involved, please contact:

Richard White 01424 892481

Or

Gill Ratcliffe 01424 892674

ASHBURNHAM & PENHURST

A brief history

Ashburnham & Penhurst are situated in the heart of the Sussex Weald within a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Both villages pre-date the Norman Conquest but, according to records, were almost totally destroyed following the Battle. Ashburnham was given to one of King William's dukes who, subsequently, took the name of the village. The Ashburnham family bought the Manor House at Penhurst in 1702 and both villages remained within the estate until 1953, when parts of the estate were sold off to pay death duties following the death of Lady Catherine, the last of the Ashburnhams.



Agriculture was the main employment within both villages for many centuries but, at its most prosperous, the estate provided jobs at the Ironworks and Brickyard, both of which closed in 1813 and 1968 respectively.

The 2001 Census shows the two villages had a combined population of 353 (52 in Penhurst and 303 in Ashburnham). This is in stark contrast to the Census of 1871 which gives the population of Ashburnham alone, as being 867.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Ashburnham had several shops, a school and a public house, but following a decline in population, the last shop closed in 2000 and today only the pub remains. However, both villages continue to thrive. Penhurst now has the Retreat Centre and, in recent years, several new clubs have been formed.



ACTION PLAN FOR ASHBURNHAM AND PENHURST PARISH

The overwhelming view of the majority of those responding to the questionnaire was that they are generally happy with the environment they live in. The data showed that local people think that the Parish is clean and litter free (91%) with the communal open spaces being well cared for. Ashburnham and Penhurst are also very safe places to live (91% feel safe to go out at night in the Parish). Access to medical and health services and prescriptions and medication is also thought to be excellent. There does not appear to be a major problem with speeding motorists and there is general satisfaction with the condition of the roads.

The actions below show how aspirations can be met, which things should be preserved or where further investigation is needed to find solutions to make improvement to the daily life of members of the community.

The lead organisation is written in **bold** other named stakeholders will have an interest in the following actions.

ACTION 1

CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THE PLANS FOR BUILDING A NEW AND RESITED ASHBURNHAM AND PENHURST VILLAGE HALL

The village hall is an important part of the community and the existing building is reasonably well used but the current facilities are dated and inadequate for modern day needs. To ensure that the Village Hall meets the needs and existing and future users we are planning to build a new Village Hall with recreational space around that is designed to both increase and improve community facilities for all ages. We hope that a new Village Hall will become the 'heart' of our Parish and provide a warm and welcoming place and encourage social interaction across the generations

Stakeholders: **Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council**, Village Hall Appeal Committee, Village Hall Management Committee, Rother District Council, Trustees of Ashburnham Thanksgiving Trust, East Sussex County Council

Timeframe: 2-3 years

ACTION 2

CONSULT WITH YOUNGER PEOPLE TO ESTABLISH THEIR NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND SPACES

To ensure that the design for a new Village Hall adequately caters for the recreational needs of younger people and that the outside space is planned to accommodate appropriate play equipment and be viable as an informal recreation area

Stakeholders: **Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council**, Youth Development Service, Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council

Timeframe: 1 year

ACTION 3

DEVELOP A PARISH WEBSITE AND INVESTIGATE THE PROVISION OF A LOCAL INFORMATION POINT WITHIN A NEW VILLAGE HALL

To effectively communicate with local people and to provide a central point where information can be accessed. To ensure that the community is kept informed of services, events, clubs and societies, leisure activities, classes and training opportunities. Local employers and other businesses will be encouraged to advertise job vacancies here so that the community are kept informed of employment opportunities

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, Village Hall Management Committee, Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, Sussex Police, Age Concern, Action in Rural Sussex, Rother Voluntary Action

Timeframe: 2-3 years

ACTION 4

PROVIDE COMMUNAL RECYCLING FACILITIES WITHIN THE GROUNDS OF THE NEW OR EXISTING VILLAGE HALL

The questionnaire evidenced a need for increasing the range of local recycling opportunities. There is currently no provision for the recycling of glass or cardboard within the parish. By working closely with Rother District Council during the planning and design stages for the new Village Hall the Parish Council can determine the most appropriate position for the siting of bottle banks so that local people do not have to drive outside the Parish to recycle glass

Stakeholders: Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, Village Hall Management Committee, Trustees of Ashburnham Thanksgiving Trust

Timeframe: 2-3 years

ACTION 5

CONSULT FURTHER TO ESTABLISH THE DEMAND FOR A WIDER OFFER OF KEEP FIT AND EXERCISE CLASSES

To promote the health and wellbeing of local people and so that all ages and abilities within the community have access to varied forms of exercise. 56% of those responding to the questionnaire felt there was a need for greater provision of exercise classes within the Parish.

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, Rother District Council, Village Hall Management Committee

Timeframe: 1 year

ACTION 6

PUBLISH A LOCAL PRODUCE DIRECTORY FOR THE PARISH

87% of those responding to the questionnaire said they would like to buy more local produce. A directory detailing the current availability of local produce could be the first step to developing either growers and producers 'swop clubs', delivery of local produce boxes or even a small weekly farmers market in the Parish. This would promote sustainability and help to reduce food miles

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, local farmers and producers

Timeframe: 1 year

ACTION 7

EXPLORE THE NEED FOR AN IMPROVED COMMUNITY BUS SERVICE

The Parish does not have the benefit of public transport, evidence from those responding to the questionnaire showed great support for a more frequent bus service (84%). The young and old, particularly, have difficulty in travelling to access services, and entertainment. Those without a car would also be disadvantaged in reaching training or employment opportunities

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council,
Battle Area Community Transport

Timeframe: 1-2 years

ACTION 8

INVESTIGATE THE NEED FOR A SUPERMARKET SHOPPING BUS

91% of those responding to the questionnaire currently drive to a nearby town to do their weekly shopping, with the current lack of public transport further consultation would establish if a weekly bus to a supermarket would be well used and serve the needs of the community and also help to reduce the Parish's carbon footprint

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, local supermarkets

Timeframe: 1 year

ACTION 9

EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMISSIONING OF A HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY FOR THE PARISH

The responses from the questionnaire suggests that the community feels there should be some provision of both affordable and sheltered or assisted housing within the Parish. A Housing Needs Survey would establish if there are local families in housing need and how best to provide for them.

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, Action in rural Sussex, Rother District Council, housing associations

Timeframe: 1-2 years

ACTION 10

DEVELOP A PARISH PLANNING DESIGN STATEMENT

Liaise with Rother District Council Planning department to encourage any new housing development and alterations/extensions to existing dwellings to be in materials appropriate to the area and 'in keeping'

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, Rother District Council

Timeframe: Ongoing

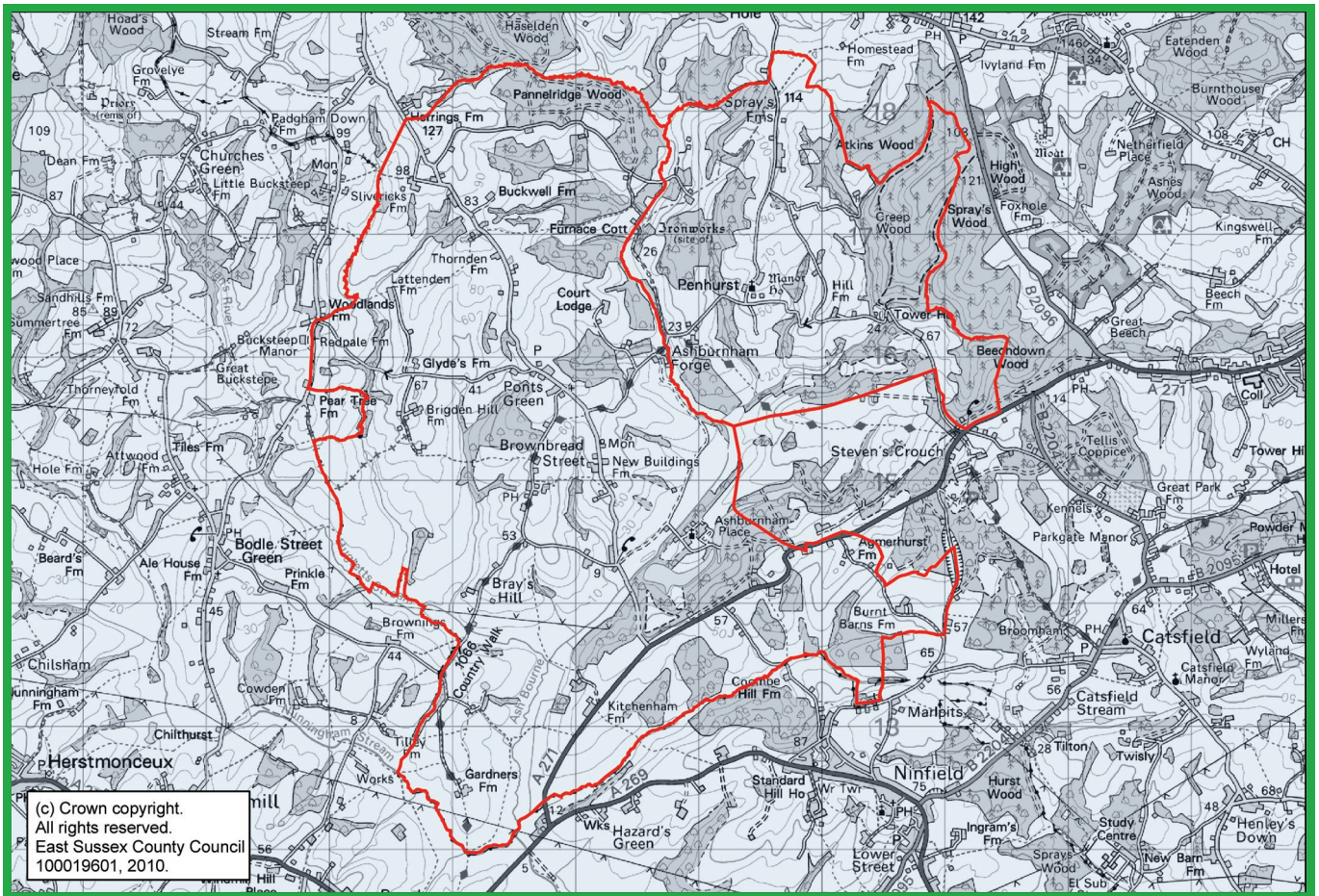
ACTION 11

ENSURE THAT STREET LIGHTING IS *NOT* INTRODUCED INTO AHSBURNHAM AND PENHURST PARISH

To conserve the environment and avoid light pollution and to preserve the rural character of the Parish.

Stakeholders: Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, East Sussex County Council

Timeframe: Ongoing



Ordnance survey map of Ashburnham and Penhurst supplied by ESIF—www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk
(Parish boundaries outlined in red)

Acknowledgments

This Action Plan was made possible by

Richard White, Gill Ratcliffe, Jay Ashworth

and the residents of Ashburnham and Penhurst who completed the questionnaire

Angela Alexander—Action Plan Coordinator and brochure design

Printed by Rother Reprographics March 2010

Financial support was provided by Rother District Council
and the Rother Local Strategic Partnership



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