



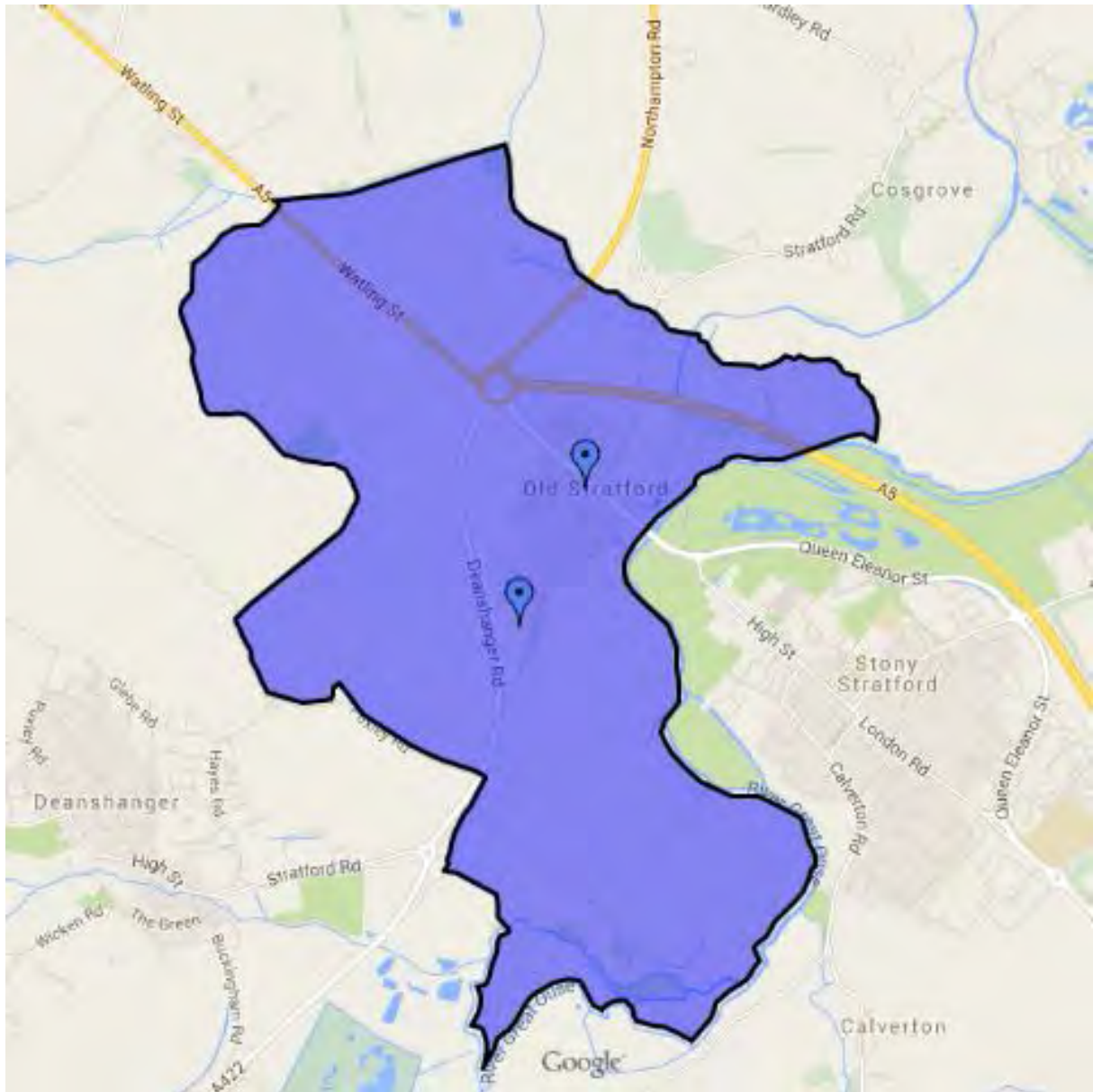
# Old Stratford Parish Plan

(Incorporating Old  
Stratford and  
Passenham Villages)

Adopted 2014



# Old Stratford Parish



Pins show location of Community Hall and Memorial Hall

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## Parish Vision

*To promote, maintain and improve the quality of life for those who live in the Villages of Old Stratford and Passenheim.*

*This will be achieved by efficient maintenance of services and through improving and developing the physical environment, developing an inclusive community and enhancing work and leisure opportunities whilst protecting the historic elements and maintaining the countryside idyll of the Parish.*

## Foreword by Chairman

With the introduction of the Governments Localism Bill in November 2011, the Parish Council of Old Stratford decided that the Villages of Old Stratford and Passenham needed to develop a Parish Plan (The Plan).

As the Plan will primarily be used to inform direction with regards to aspects of the Bill, for example with Neighbourhood Planning and Community Rights issues, it was felt that The Plan should be driven and controlled by the Parish Council.

Initially the Parish Council developed a Village Questionnaire to cover a range of Subject Areas. This Questionnaire was then distributed to every household in Old Stratford and Passenham.

The Communities were given several months to complete this questionnaire and follow up visits were made to encourage household participation. The questionnaires were distributed across the Parish and I would like to thank all those who took the time to respond.

The Plan has been developed in a way that reflects the wishes and aspirations of the Community, and highlights concerns of the respondents, some of which which were not specific to the Questionnaire.

The Plan highlights the way in which the Villages have developed through the years and defines open spaces within the confines.

The Parish has a Community Centre, Memorial Hall and an excellent Primary School. There are also children's play areas, a "Youth Hangout" building and playing fields at the Community Centre, all of which are valued by the community.

It was also evident from the Questionnaire responses that Residents of Old Stratford and Passenham value the semi-rural location, but equally it highlights the lack of open spaces, especially those belonging to the Parish that could be used for community purposes such as allotments.

The Plan has also highlighted that Residents are concerned by speeding traffic and the high volume of traffic passing through the Villages. Other concerns expressed include the ongoing litter and dog fouling problem in the Parish. All of these items are constantly reviewed by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council have considered and adopted this Parish Plan and will consult and consider The Plan when addressing Planning and Community issues to ensure any response is aligned with the views expressed by residents and other stakeholders connected with the Village.

**Richard Whittaker, Chair of OSPC**



# Background to the Parish Plan



This Plan has been developed in response to the Localism Act, which was enabled by Parliament in November 2011. The aim of the act was to devolve more decision making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals,

communities and councils. This presents an opportunity for developers to work with local community groups and town and parish councils.

The Parish Plan can identify where housing development can take place and can even specify the type of housing from affordable housing to executive homes. But a plan can be much more than this. It enables communities to specify which areas and buildings need to be preserved and protected and consider issues such as the highways and transport infrastructure, the schools and the retail facilities as well as community assets such as village halls and churches. But the one key message is that “no new development” is not an option.

In order to ensure that the needs and requirements of residents of Old Stratford and Passenheim are represented, the Parish Council resolved to develop a Parish Plan to document the wishes and aspirations of the Communities of the two Villages.

Work to develop The Plan commenced during November 2012 with the development of a Village Questionnaire, which was delivered to the 867 households in Old Stratford and Passenheim. Whilst no specific timescale was place for the return of the completed Questionnaires, those Parish Councillors who delivered them also made every effort to ensure they were completed and returned. The return rate was a commendable 41%.

**357 out of 867 households responded to Village Plan Questionnaire**

Our Parish Plan should be read in the context of the Local Rural Plan and should consider other policy documents such as the aspects of development as well as social and welfare issues. It is intended that The Plan is used when future planning issues arise in the Parish, not only for the development of homes, but also to be used in the context of light or heavy industry.

The document will assist Parish Councillors to act in alignment with the views expressed by residents and other stakeholders connected with the Village.

# Historical Background

Old Stratford and Passenham are Villages located one mile apart along the southern border of Northamptonshire. Together they are managed by the Parish Council of Old Stratford and are governed at District level by South Northants Council and at County level by Northamptonshire County Council. Old Stratford Parish consists of 879 homes (only 14 of which are located in Passenham) and a population of just less than 2000.

Historical records for Old Stratford can be traced back to the 1300's and records for Passenham can be found back as far as Saxon times. Passenham used to be much larger than Old Stratford, but in the 1700s the Enclosure Act meant the Crown sold much of its lands and Passenham shrunk to the size that it is today. Conversely, Old Stratford existed as some six or eight cottages strung on both sides of the old A5, the old Roman road known as Watling Street.



**Old Stratford's Roman Road**

Today Old Stratford lies along both sides of this historical road and, as the road crosses the river Great Ouse to the south of the village, it crosses the border from Northamptonshire into Buckinghamshire. The market town of Stony Stratford is due south of Old Stratford and Towcester is approximately eight miles to the north. Passenham lies one mile east of Stony Stratford across open flood plains. The whole of Passenham village is a designated conservation area and has not had any major development within or close to its village confines; conversely Old Stratford has doubled in size over the last fifteen years.

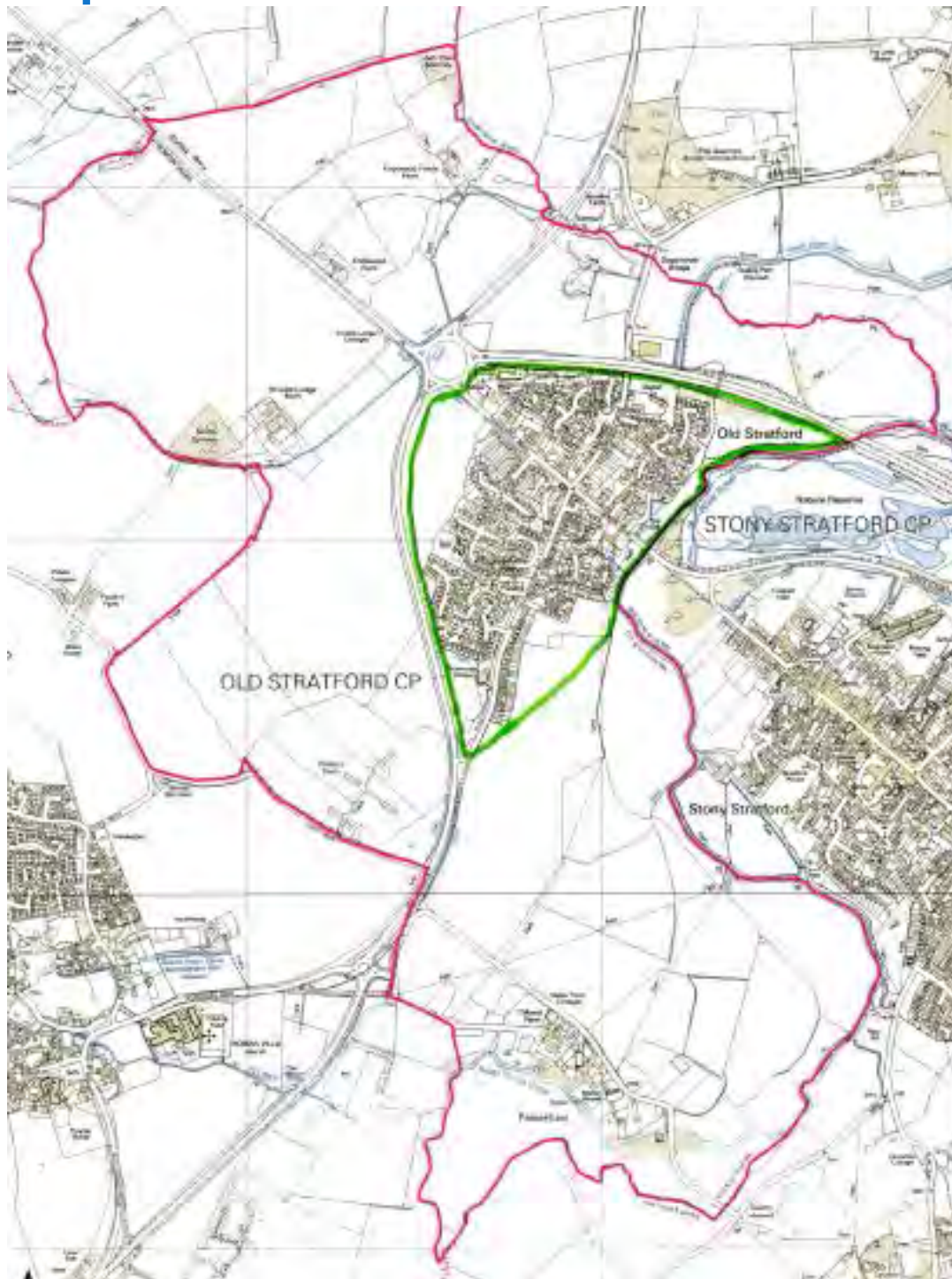


## Passenham

The Parish is well served by transport routes and is equidistant between London to the south and Birmingham to the north. The Parish is also within five miles of the West Coast Main Railway Line at Wolverton and the Railway carriage works at Wolverton, for many years the main Industry for employment of the Parishioners. Today Passenham has no industry, but does have gravel extraction works to the north and south east of its boundaries.

The main source of employment is agriculture in Passenham; Old Stratford has light engineering and a plant hire business as part of its employment; chiefly residents of both villages tend to commute away from both. Passenham has seen gravel extraction over the last ten years. Two miles to the east of Old Stratford is the Grand Union Canal at Cosgrove. There used to be a branch arm of this canal which ran from Cosgrove to Buckingham through Old Stratford and was known as the Buckingham Arm.

## Map of the Parish



### Key:

- Red Line Defines Parish Boundary.
- Green Line Defines Old Stratford's Proposed Village Confine.

Note: Passenham Village does not have Village Confines as it is a restraint village, it is also a conservation area.

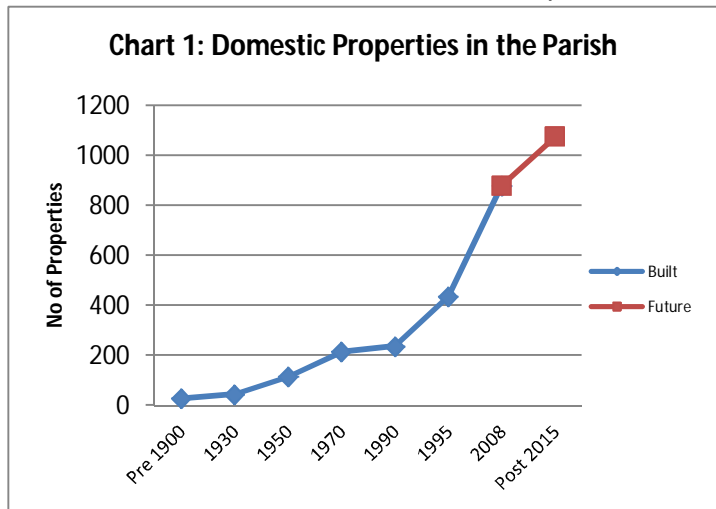
# Housing and Population

## Historic Development

Initially, the Parish consisted of just 14 residential properties in Passenheim and a further 13 dwellings in Old Stratford. Until 1950 Old Stratford experienced a steady growth of 71 homes, with 100 homes built over the next 20 years and a further 222 constructed between 1970 and 1995, bringing the Parish total to 436.

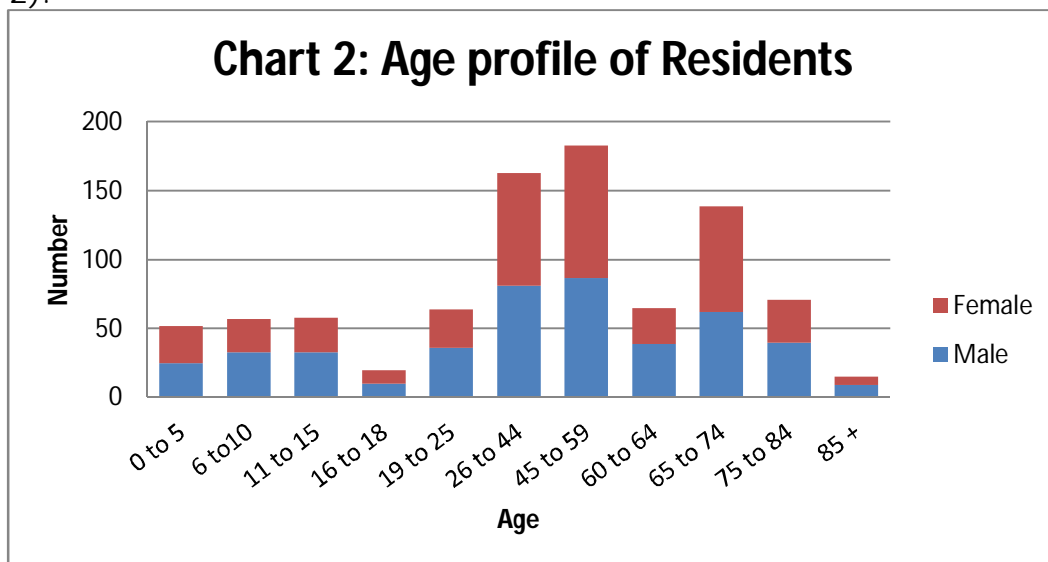
Between 1995 and 2008 the Parish housing stock doubled in size with the addition of 443 dwellings in Old Stratford.

Planning permission has also been granted on three sites in Old Stratford (Blackhorse Field, East of Deanshanger Rd and ACE Plant) and there are six outstanding windfall approvals, which will increase the number of homes by a further 196 post 2015. (see chart 1)



## Population and Demographics

The survey asked about the male and female age groups living in the villages (see chart 2).



The survey identified that the length of time the parish population had lived in the area broadly follows the development trends in the village, with new housing bringing new occupants into the area. Only 9% of respondents have lived in the area for 50 years or more. 28% of respondents have lived here between 16–25 years and 25% between 6–15 years. 15% had lived in the village between 1 and 5 years.



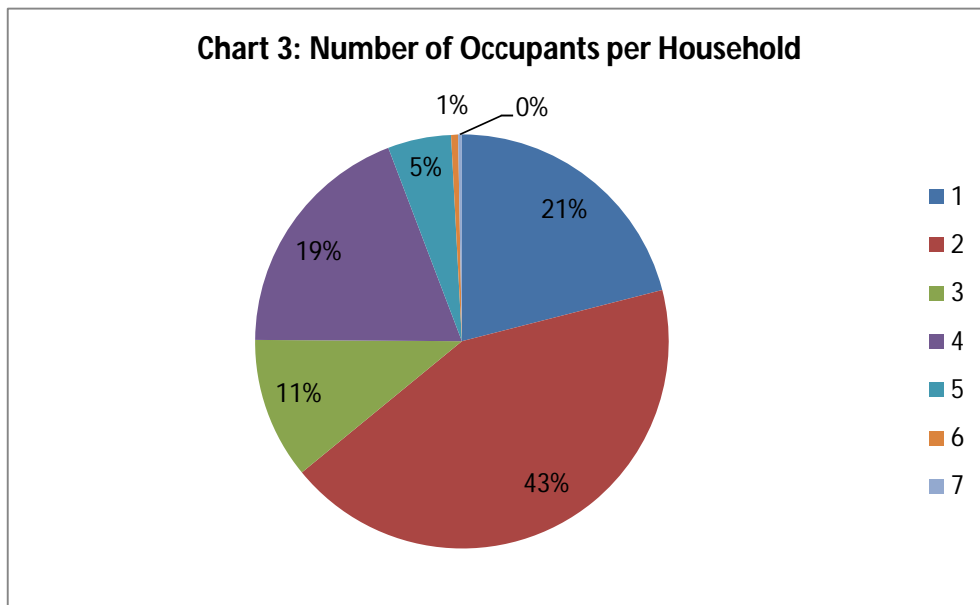
This was further demonstrated by the fact that only 6% of respondents indicated that they originated from the Parish. 56% came from within 10 miles of the parish, 15% had lived within 11-30 miles, 23% had lived over 30 miles away but within Great Britain and finally 1% had lived overseas.

On being asked what brought them to the Parish, responses indicated that 8% had come with their family, 25% had come to work in the area, 6% retired here, 11% had other family connections, 12% gave other reasons which we have been unable to group.

Some questionnaires did not provide a response to this part of the survey.

### Housing and Occupation

The survey also highlighted that 43% of homes were occupied by two people, 21% are of single occupancy with 38% of properties having three or more people occupying. The maximum reported by respondents was 7 in a household (see chart 3).



From the survey, approximately 91% of properties are owner occupied, 4.8% housing association rented, 3.9% privately rented and only 0.8% in shared ownership.

The styles of properties in the village indicate that 37% are semi-detached and 35% detached properties. 17% are bungalows, 3.5% as terraced homes with a further 5.8% as flats or maisonettes. This section also showed that 42.5% had three bedrooms, 34% having four bedrooms. The survey also showed that 15% of households had two bedrooms and 5% having one, homes having 5 bedrooms accounted for 2.8% and 0.8% of properties having 6 or more bedrooms.

### Future Development

**81% do not want further development**

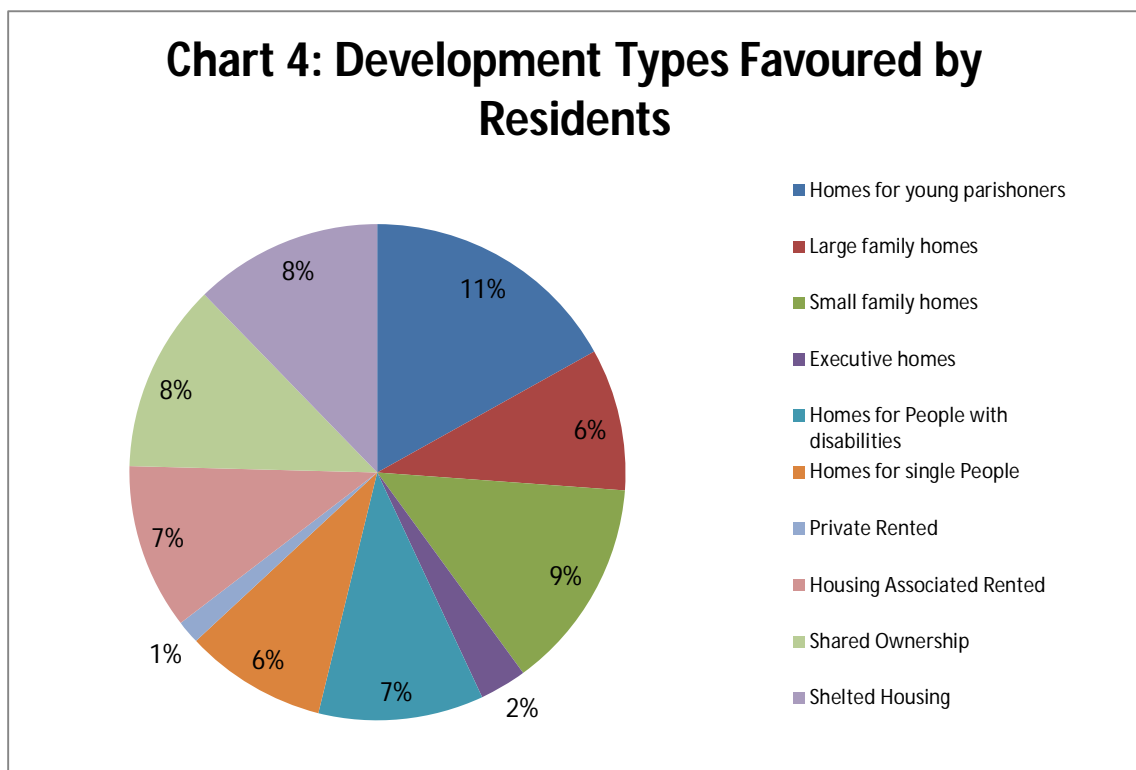
In respect of further development 81% of respondents thought that the Villages **could not** sustain further development and were adamant that they **did not** want further development; only 19% thought that new

development was sustainable and they would be in favour of new developments within the parish specifically for young people from either village (first time buyers).

In terms of styles of accommodation, 47% stated that they did not require any alternative accommodation to that which they live in. Of the remaining responses 18% wanted a house, 12% a bungalow and 7% wanted a flat or maisonette. 15% of respondents expressed a desire for sheltered accommodation (warden on site) and 2% required a specifically adapted home.

It could be assumed that those wishing to change from houses to bungalows are looking to downsize and those looking for sheltered accommodation are for elderly retired residents.

The survey then asked that, in the event of new housing developments taking place, what type of dwelling should be permitted (see chart 4).



One respondent expressed a view that they felt that further development was inevitable, however went on to state that if this is the case, then the Parish Council must ensure it secures the best outcome for the Village.

# Employment and Infrastructure

## Employment

Old Stratford Parish has a limited amount of employment within its confines, for example a plant hire company, two garages, shop, taxi, rank, tyre repair service, small warehousing facility and a few small office units. The Village Primary School also employs a number of residents.

The survey indicated that 55% of respondents work outside of the Parish, the majority of which commute within the Milton Keynes area. The survey also highlights the two villages are of an aging population, with 36% respondents advising they are retired.

9% of respondents work in Old Stratford and/or Passenheim, including a number of residents who work from home. The ability to work from home is assisted by access to modern technology, with 80% of respondents advising that they have access to computers and/or the internet.

**80% have access to computers and the internet**

## Transport – General Trends

Residents were asked about their main means of transport, to which 35% of respondents stated that they travel by car or van.

Bus	23%
Taxi	5%
Bicycle	8%
Motorbike / Scooter / Moped	3%
Private Bus	1%
Train	3%
Walking	22%

Other methods of transport used by respondents are listed in the table.

## Transport – Cars and Bicycle Use

The survey asked where residents normally park their motor vehicle(s). 34% parked in the garage on their own plot, 1% parked in a garage elsewhere, 50% parked off road, 9% on road outside their property and 6% stated that this part was not applicable as they did not have any motor vehicles.

When asked if residents had any experienced parking problems at their home, 19% responded stated that they did experience issues. The two main reasons given for parking problems were that parents taking children to the village primary school were parking across home gateways and blocking homeowners in and also that vehicles are being left parked on pavements in the parish (by non-residents) whilst the vehicle owner goes to work (elsewhere?).

**64% of households do not use a bicycle regularly**

When asked how many bicycles, (used at least once per week), are there in your household, 64% of respondents stated that they did not have any bicycles, 15% had one, 12% had 2, and 4% had 3, 3% had 4 and 0.5% had 5.

## Transport – Local Bus Service

The survey asked the community if residents used local Public Transport (buses); 32% said that they used it occasionally, 7% used the service often and 61% stated that they never used the service.

**7% residents use bus services regularly**

Of those residents who used the bus service, the main purpose of the journey was for shopping, either in Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, Towcester or Northampton (51%). A number of residents also used the service for social and leisure purposes (35%) and the remainder stated they used it for work purposes.

When asked how users rated the local bus service, 6% thought that it was good, 29% felt that it was reasonable, 15% thought the service was poor and 49% had no opinion.

Residents were asked if they experienced any difficulties with the bus service. 32% stated that they occasionally experienced difficulties, conversely 38% of respondents never experienced any difficulties and 7% stated that they never experienced any difficulties whatsoever. 23% of respondents to this question restated that they have never used the local bus service at any time.

The main improvement respondents would like is to the timetable, as they felt that the service was difficult to use for work connections. The next highest response was around reliability, followed by improvements in bus routes, improved access for those with disabilities and cost of service. A minority of responses cited issues with the bus stop locations.



Some of the other difficulties experienced were that the local bus service did not provide a direct route to the local Hospital in Milton Keynes or travelling to doctors or dentist appointments (timetable issues). Other problems advised were that the 90 service sometimes did not run at all and it did not always connect with the 89 route. Whilst respondents understand that subsidies have been cut, some stated that fare costs are high and it does not make it

affordable for travelling to work.

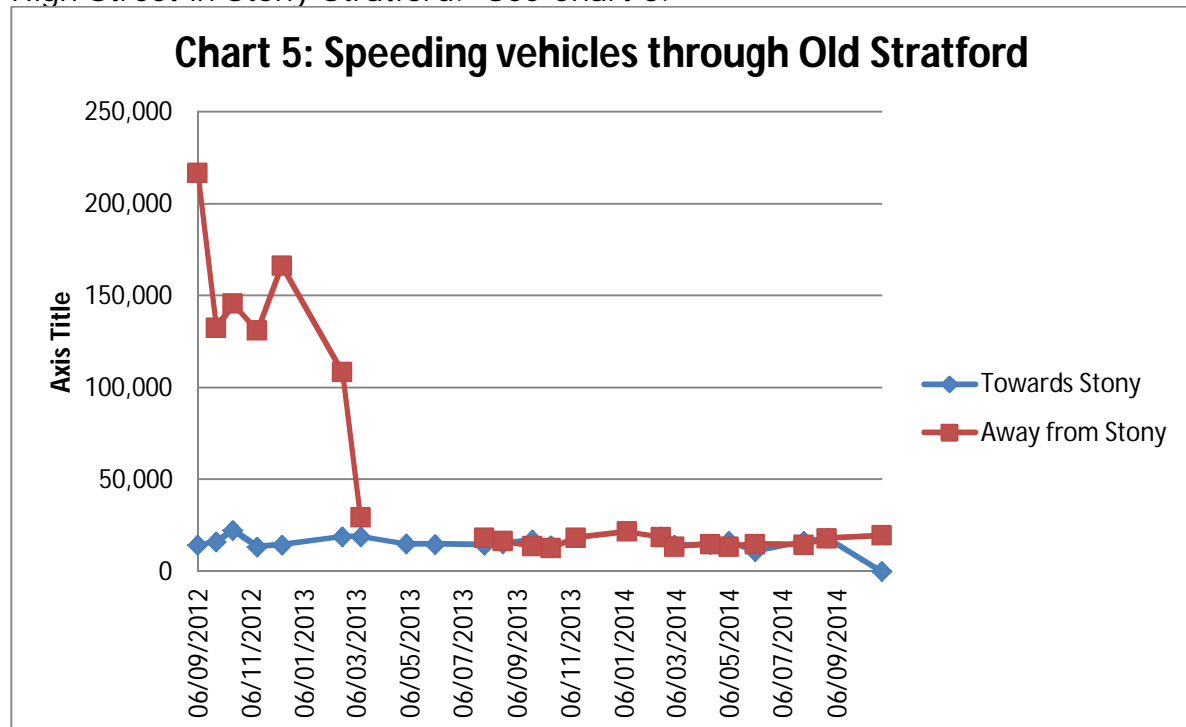
## Transport - Roads

The survey asked the community if they felt that there were any danger spots in Old Stratford and Passenham. Approximately 60% of respondents felt that the biggest danger spot in Old Stratford was the road that passes through the centre of the village (Towcester Road / London Road). A further danger spot highlighted by the residents of Passenham was the lane which passes through Passenham.

For Old Stratford, residents felt that something needs be done to reduce the volume of traffic passing through the village and more especially those vehicles travelling through at high speed. Historically the greater problem of speeding vehicles has been from those heading north through the village (ie travelling away from Stony Stratford) although this seems to have reduced significantly following



the addition of the roundabout at the junction of Queen Eleanor Street and the High Street in Stony Stratford. See Chart 5.



Respondents advised that a great number of articulated lorries pass through the village, especially during the night. These travel at high speed and, when passing over the larger potholes and manhole covers, generate both noise and vibration problems, which seem especially noticeable to older properties situated along the old A5 road.

With regards to Passenham lane, concerns from respondents have been the high speeds at which vehicles travel through the village and the associated dangers with blind corners and narrow lanes. These speeding vehicles put the lives of pedestrians, horse riders and themselves in great danger. The other problem highlighted is that there are no passing points or pedestrian step-in points, where pedestrians can step off the road out of the way of vehicles.

Other concerns highlighted included vehicles continuing to use the restricted /designated bus route along Deanshanger Road in Old Stratford to access the A442 and avoid the roundabout north of Old Stratford. Specific concerns centred around the speed with which these vehicles travel along this section of road as well as the potential for accident with residents accessing or egressing from the village Community Hall and preschool.

Another danger spot highlighted in the responses was vehicles parking on the pavement when people try to visit the village shop and highways having replaced the curb stones at this location with ones that are too high. The Parish Council has been involved with the County Council highways team, to investigate a number of options in the hope of resolving this matter. However it is proving very difficult to find a safe solution for pedestrians and other road users that also satisfies legal highways requirements and maintains access to the shop.

The survey also asked if residents felt that the centres of Old Stratford and Passenheim could be improved by specific traffic and pedestrian management measures, with respondents encouraged to answer as many as they thought appropriate. 42% thought that imposing a weight limit on the grade 2 listed bridge at Old Stratford would generate improvements through reduction of lorries, 39% felt that the installation of a pedestrian and cyclist bridge parallel to the existing bridge in Old Stratford would make it safer when crossing from Old Stratford to Stony Stratford.



27% felt that by improving the road surface of the A5 past Old Stratford would reduce the noise and vibration and 22% felt Passenheim Lane would benefit from a traffic calming system that would reduce speeding traffic through Passenheim. 3% of respondents felt that neither village required any improvements.

### ***Passenheim***

Finally 3% made other suggestions including resurfacing the A5 and A422 with low noise tarmac to reduce noise from these roads, installation of double yellow lines along the Deanshanger road just after the traffic lights to stop obstructive parking and getting the police to generally enforce speed limits and impose fines, as well as apprehending motorists responsible for using the bus route along Deanshanger road.

### **Transport – Pedal Cyclists**

30% of respondents felt that facilities for cyclists are excellent, 10% felt that they were good and 24% felt that the facilities were poor and a further 36% did not use a bicycle. Many respondents who use bicycles felt that it was too dangerous to ride on the road (Old A5) and gave this as justification why they use the foot paths instead; this they understand is unsafe for pedestrians.

### **Transport –Pedestrian Access**

Residents of Old Stratford have identified through the survey that the pedestrian path associated with the River Ouse bridge is very narrow and people cannot pass each other without stepping into the road. This is most evident when pedestrians are travelling in opposite directions with pushchairs or mobility scooters etc.



Pedestrians using this foot path have also raised the issue that they feel unsafe when crossing the bridge at the same time as any large articulated lorry, as there tends to be a suction

***Bridge over River Ouse, Old Stratford***

tow that seems to try and pull pedestrians off the pavement and into the road. One suggestion was that a separate cycle and foot bridge be built parallel with the existing bridge.

The survey asked residents opinions of the foot paths around Old Stratford and Passenheim. Approximately 15% of respondents thought that they were good, 49% felt that they were reasonable, 31% thought that they were poor and 5% expressed no opinion. Most concerns raised related to poor state of repair, for example the number of cracks and pot holes, as well as flooding on safe walks to school routes.

Residents of Passenheim commented on the fact that there are no foot paths or safe step in places in their village and that the grass verges are all overgrown.

### **Street Lighting**

The survey asked if residents felt that the standard of street lighting in Old Stratford and Passenheim is adequate.

42% felt that it was good, 38% thought it was reasonable, 15% felt that it was poor and 5% had no opinion.

Some respondents made specific comments regarding the recent move by the County Council to turn off some of the street lighting along the Old A5 though Old Stratford. It was felt that this generates very dark areas and that some elderly residents feel unsafe when passing through these areas at night and that at least one or two of the lights should be reinstated.

The Parish Council has been working to address this issue with the County Council highways team, who advise that the street lighting is due for replacement in 2015 and that the new equipment should provide better illumination levels.



***Street lighting, Old Stratford***

# Services

## Education

Old Stratford has a primary school which takes children from the villages of Old Stratford, Passenham and Deanshanger as well other villages within and outside of its catchment area. Currently there are 210 children attending the school. The 2013 summer term has seen a major refurbishment of the whole school site and the local Authority has stated that there is no need for a larger school in the Parish.

Residents were asked how important they felt that Old Stratford Primary School is to the community. 64% of respondents expressed that opinion that it was very important and only 2% felt it was not very important.

**Old Stratford  
Primary School is  
very important to  
64% respondents**

The survey asked if residents thought that the school was large enough to cope with the volume of children from its catchment area. 67% felt that the school was large enough to cope with the current levels of need, but the remaining 33% felt that a larger school was required. A concern expressed in the survey by residents was that all children who reside in the schools catchment area are given preference for places over those from outside.

The survey asked residents if Old Stratford and Passenham require provision of more childcare facilities. 23% of respondents felt there was no requirement for further facilities, but of those supporting provision of further childcare there was an obvious demand for holiday play schemes.

Facility	% support
Holiday play scheme	95%
Nursery	10%
Registered Child Minders	7%

Some residents felt that there was a need for other schemes not listed, such as a better organised play group or walking bus to school.

## Health and Care facilities

Residents were asked if they thought there was a need within Old Stratford or Passenham for a nursing home, residential provision for people with disabilities, doctor/dentist surgery, day care centre, retirement estate, more play groups for out of school time or a cemetery. Whilst 49% of those responding felt that there was no need for any of the listed facilities; 24% felt that there was a need for a nursing home, 19% residential provision for people with disabilities and 7% felt that there was a need for doctors/dentists surgery.

The survey continued by asking residents if they had difficulties in accessing medical services. The majority of respondents (78%) had no problem accessing any services, but of those that did, the main difficulties were with the doctors and hospital. A smaller number found difficulty accessing a dentist, chemist, chiropodist or optician and one resident stated that they had difficulty in seeing any of the listed medical facilities as they were house bound and found it difficult to get home visits.



Most comments explaining the difficulties experienced surrounded the removal of the No 14 bus service, as this used to be a direct service which passed the hospital in Milton Keynes. Other comments highlighted the difficulties in trying to get a doctor's appointment and that there was a shortage of National Health dentists close to the villages. Older residents commented on the expense required getting to hospital appointments.

### Crime and Policing



The survey asked residents opinions of the police coverage of Old Stratford and Passenheim; 6% felt that the coverage was good, 36% felt it was reasonable, 35% thought coverage was poor and 20% had no opinion. Comments to support the answers given included that respondents had not ever seen a police officer walking around the village and one resident commented that when their property had been burgled the police did not turn out to visit the crime scene; instead they just provided a crime number for their insurance.

The survey also asked if residents knew that the two villages run a neighbourhood watch group and if they would be interested in joining the scheme. 75% of respondents knew that the group existed with 25% say that they did not know. Of the respondents 33% would be interested in joining, conversely 67% felt that they could not commit time in joining the group.



### Local Amenities

Approximately five years ago the Old Stratford village Post Office was closed. Residents were asked if they felt that there was a need for the service to be reinstated, to which 90% responded in favour of a Post Office. Some residents commented that since the closure they have had to travel to find alternative Post Offices, such as in Stony Stratford, Potterspury or Deanshanger. This is not believed to be a problem for people with access to a car, but for those who walk or take a bus, it can mean a two minute transaction takes at least one hour. Other responses advised that the Post Office in Stony Stratford is not wheel chair or push chair friendly. A community Post Office in Old Stratford may be a way forward.

### Information in the Parish

The survey asked where residents of Old Stratford and Passenheim find information about events taking place in either village. The majority get their information from the parish magazine, with a large number also using the village notice boards. Over a quarter of respondents gain information from free papers and 19% of respondents use local papers. A smaller number of respondents use the village web site or library for information and a number of other sources were also stated including the community centre, school newsletter, leaflet drops, flyers and general fly posting. Residents were also asked if they thought the amount of information about events in either village is meeting their needs; 18% felt that it is good, 45% thought reasonable and 11% think it is poor.

The Parish Council of Old Stratford produce a quarterly village magazine, this is delivered to every household in Old Stratford and Passenham. The survey asked residents if they receive this magazine, 97% of respondents stated that they did. It could be assumed that some of the 3% who stated that they did not receive the parish magazine are new residents who have not seen an issue as magazines are hand delivered by the Parish Council to households in both villages.

The survey asked if any member of the household had attended a Parish Council meeting. 42% advised that they had attended a meeting at some-time during their residence of Old Stratford and/or Passenham. There was a fairly even distribution of people who advised they attended between 1-2 years ago, 2-4 years ago and over five years ago, with a noticeable decline in those saying they had attended in the last year.

When asked if residents had attended an Old Stratford Parish Council Annual Open Meeting, 17% replied that they had and 61% replied no. 22% did not respond to this question.

Additionally the survey asked how well the Parish Council publicises its decisions and activities. 14% felt that the information was publicised very well, 36% reasonably well and 13% felt that the Council publicised its information badly.

Comments in support of these opinions included:

- need more information more often,
- village web site is at least one month out of date,
- no information when meetings are held
- Parish Council should personally deliver minutes to every household.

The survey asked if sufficient publicity is given by the Parish Council with regards to planning applications affecting Old Stratford and Passenham. 52% felt that sufficient publicity is given and 47% thought not.

The Parish Council monitor such issues affecting Old Stratford and Passenham, including planning applications that are posted on the District Councils web site, and will discuss and lobby on behalf of the community at the earliest opportunity.



The minutes of all Parish Council meetings are available on the notice board outside the Old Stratford Memorial Hall and are available on the Parish Council's website once approved. The schedule of meetings for the year, contact details for Councillors and links to planning applications relevant to the area can also be found on the website <http://www.oldstratford.org.uk>



***Old Stratford Memorial Hall***

# Environment

## General

The survey asked what are the most important things about Old Stratford or Passenheim to you or your household, in which respondents were given the opportunity to answer as many as they felt necessary. The highest response was that the location is most important, with environment and community following closely behind. Other respondents stated cost of property, close local amenities of Stony Stratford, affordable houses close to workplace and close to the countryside and river walks as important to them.

The survey asked if residents of Old Stratford and Passenheim had any major concerns living in either village (more than one answer was possible); 17% had concerns with regards to the increase in the size and whether it would cope with the increase in size of Old Stratford, 36% felt that public transport was an issue and 41% had concerns with housing, especially with regards to new development in Old Stratford and insufficient affordable housing for young people.

In addition, 44% of respondents felt that policing, or lack of policing was a major issue. Other respondents highlighted concerns with speeding traffic, anti-social behaviour, dog fouling and village sustainability. One respondent also stated that they had serious concerns with regards to the emergency response times, in that they called for an ambulance and it took over one hour to reach them.

When asked about which of a list of issues the Parish suffers from, 47% feel that speeding traffic is a major issue, 34% of respondents felt that the villages suffer from traffic noise, 28% felt that the village(s) suffer from heavy goods vehicle vibration, 6% felt that poor air quality was an issue, 17% feel that low flying aircraft are a problem, 4% felt that skateboarding on pavements is an issue. Other issues cited by respondents were adults and children riding bicycles on pavements, pollution around the ACE Plant site, major concerns in respect of dog fouling on grass verges and pavements, bird scare units going off all day and foul smells from agriculture. 5% felt that the villages did not suffer from any problems.



## Countryside

Residents were asked how important the quality of the countryside around Old Stratford and Passenheim is to them. Only 26% of those who responded to this question, with 6% felt it was very important, 14% believe it was important and 4% think that the countryside is not important. 2% expressed no opinion.



However, when asked which elements of the countryside around Old Stratford and Passenheim that residents value, openness and tranquillity scored highly, and "a sense of place" and "local

***Countryside in Old Stratford***



identity" also scored well. Less than 1% of respondents felt that this was not applicable. Some respondents commented on loss of tranquillity, especially when bird scares are being used or from noise from low flying aircraft. During certain times of the year pungent smells from muck spreading are also felt to detract from the enjoyment of the countryside.

The survey asked residents how they thought the countryside around Old Stratford and Passenheim had changed in recent years. 12% felt that it had changed for the better, 28% felt that it had changed for the worse, 22% felt that there was no change and 13% did not know.

### **The Built Environment**

The survey asked residents for their opinion with regard to the aesthetic appearance of the buildings in Old Stratford and Passenheim. 4% felt that they were totally satisfied, 50% were reasonably satisfied, 4% were quite dissatisfied, 1% were totally dissatisfied and 19% had no opinion. Some comments received included that the Memorial hall looks drab and tired, is cold in winter and the floor is frequently dirty and also that the village pub looks an eyesore.



***The Swan, Old Stratford***

With regards to any future development, 16% respondents would support the building of light industry, 19% support development of workshops, 12% were in favour of sheltered workshops and 44% felt that they could not support any future development of this type. A comment made at this point was that the village needs more shops.

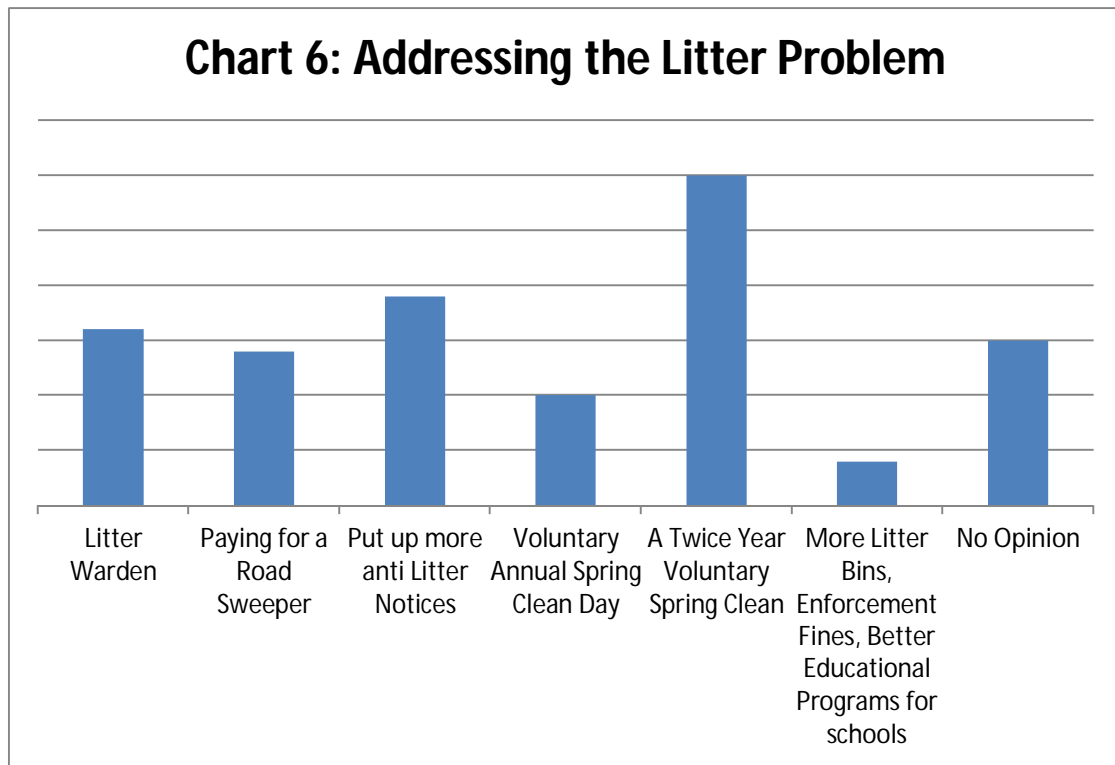
### **Litter**

The survey asked residents if they thought that there was a problem with litter in the villages of Old Stratford and Passenheim. 49% of residents felt that there was a problem and 51% thought that there was not. Residents of Passenheim commented that there are problems with fly tipping along Passenheim Lane and in farm gateways.

The biggest problem with litter is considered to be along the cycle track that runs parallel with the A442 between Old Stratford and the fly over to Deanshanger. As well as passing traffic, it is believed that people using this route to school are contributing to the problem.

Other areas where littering is problematic is around the rubbish bin near the Old Stratford shop and in the vicinity of the car parking area and the public walkway in Falcon Drive. The most popular method of addressing this issue was that the village should hold two spring cleans annually that would be conducted by volunteers and organised by the Parish Council.

The survey asked residents if they think Old Stratford and Passenheim should be kept clean and tidy by paying for a general street cleaner. Comments included the need to enforce fines for litter dropping and better educational programs in schools regarding litter issues.

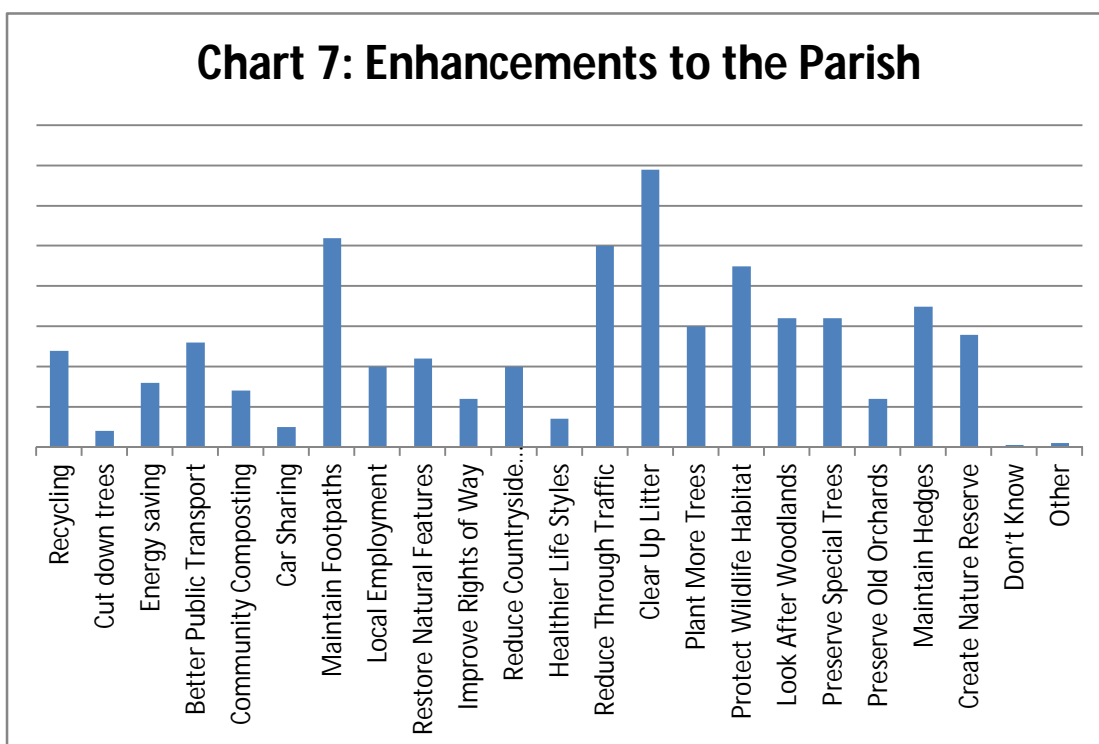


### Enhancement of the Villages

Residents were asked what could be done with local roads and footpaths to make the countryside more attractive. The highest scoring response from over 50% of respondents was that preventing vehicles from damaging roadside verges would improve the appearance of the villages.

This was closely followed in importance by removal of litter, maintaining gates, styles and bridges, ensuring footpaths are accessible to those with disabilities and keeping roadside verges mown and tidy. One third of respondents felt that signpost improvements would help and a few supported not allowing roadside verges to become overgrown.

The survey asked what residents thought should be done to enhance the local environment of Old Stratford and Passenheim. The results are displayed in Chart 7.



Respondents also had further suggestions for activities which could contribute to the enhancement of both or either village, such as a village Christmas tree in the centre of Old Stratford, the ability to prevent home owners from removing boundary hedges and replacing with wooden fencing, community planting of certain areas around both villages or the replacement of the large willow tree at the bottom of Willow Grove with an alternative seasoned tree.

### Impact of Weather

The survey asked if residents had in place any emergency plan or if they know a contact number in the event of flooding from surface or river waters. 74% of respondents had no plan or did not know or have any contact numbers, 26% said that they did not have an emergency plan but did know who to contact. One respondent suggested that perhaps the Parish Council could provide a contact number in the Parish News Letter.

When asked if during severe winter weather months did residents consider that the roads through Old Stratford and Passenheim are adequately cleared, 33% felt that they were cleared satisfactory but 67% felt that they were not. Comments from respondents indicated that snow ploughs passing over the bridge into Old Stratford from Milton Keynes, have raised their plough and ceased gritting. Also during snow conditions the villages rarely benefit from the gritting lorry from Northamptonshire, which clears the old A5 but not the Deanshanger Road in Old Stratford, which is the main bus route. Residents stated that they do not see a gritting lorry or snow plough through Passenheim.

68% of respondents felt that there are insufficient grit bins around the villages, 32% felt that there are sufficient.

## Nature

Residents were asked if they thought that either or both villages should have a nature reserve, 56% felt that there should be a nature reserve in either one or both Old Stratford and Passenham, 16% felt that there was no need and 3% had no opinion, 25% did not respond to this question.

Many suggestions for a site for a nature reserve were suggested including:

- Easters Field,
- Old Buckingham Arm Canal,
- Blackhorse Field,
- Land off the A5 roundabout where the fly-posters are,
- Community Hall to end of Deanshanger Rd, including the Old Canal,
- Cosgrove Road, Old Canal Site,
- Passenham Gravel Pits,
- All through Passenham,
- Rear of Community Hall including the Old Canal,
- The whole of the Community Centre Field,
- Land Off the Meadows, The whole of the 100 Acre Field,
- All Sites Under threat of Development,
- Long Meadow and Passenham Mill,
- Buckingham Arm from Old Stratford to Cosgrove
- All River Banks around Old Stratford, especially Oxfield Park.

The survey also asked residents if they would be interested in helping with any special projects which may arise in Old Stratford and/or Passenham. 26% felt that they could help with protecting wildlife habitat, 18% with clearing ponds and/or canals, 17% with surveying trees and 14% helping with maintaining footpaths. 37% of respondents felt that they could not commit to helping in any project and 1% said that they may possibly help.

Opinions were sought regarding where the finance should be found for any suggestions highlighted in the survey. 46% of respondents felt that fund raising would be appropriate and this was closely followed by sponsorship. 19% thought that private contributions would be acceptable, whilst 23% were in favour of moderate council tax increases.

Only 1% thought that higher council tax increases could be the answer. Three percent had no opinion and 1% had other suggestions, including that finance should come from existing council tax, Government and grant money and local government adjustments in current spending from other areas.



## Tourism

Old Stratford and Passenheim do not have any major tourist attractions within their confines. There is a beautiful early 17<sup>th</sup> Century or possibly even earlier church at Passenheim. Both villages are within short distances of many historical sites and stately homes. Old Stratford has one Travel Lodge Hotel and a Private Guest House.

Old Stratford and Passenheim are situated within a mile from the historic market town of Stony Stratford and twelve miles from the home of motor sport, Silverstone.

Finally residents were asked if they thought a detailed history of Old Stratford and Passenheim should be developed for future generations, 65% thought yes it was a good idea and 7% did not feel that there was a need, 28% had no opinion about either.



*St Guthlacs Church, Passenheim*

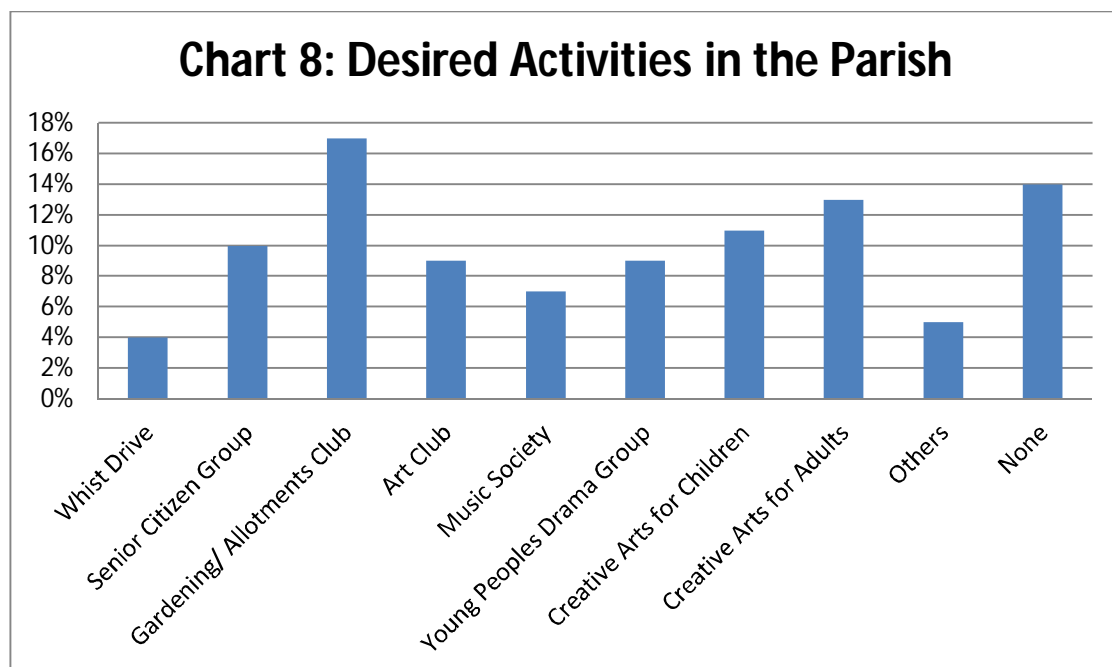
## Recreation and Leisure

The survey asked residents if they use any of the local facilities. 12% of respondents use the Community Centre, 11% use Memorial Hall, 16% use the pub in Old Stratford and 2% use the mobile library. 36% of respondents use Pubs or Clubs outside the villages.

Several respondents made comments with regards to the facilities, for example that they would use the village pub if it was nicer, would use the mobile library if it came to the village at a time when people are not at work and where can they find the mobile library?

### Activities

The residents were asked which new clubs might they or their family attend if they could be started in Old Stratford and Passenheim. The results are charted below.



Some of the respondents had suggestions of their own in respect of new clubs or activities, including Bingo nights, Modern Dance Classes, Summer Fetes, Reading Groups, Country and Line Dancing Classes, Youth Club, Yoga Classes, Scout Troup, Judo Club, Ballroom Dancing Classes, Bridge Club and a Baking Club.

### Rights of Way

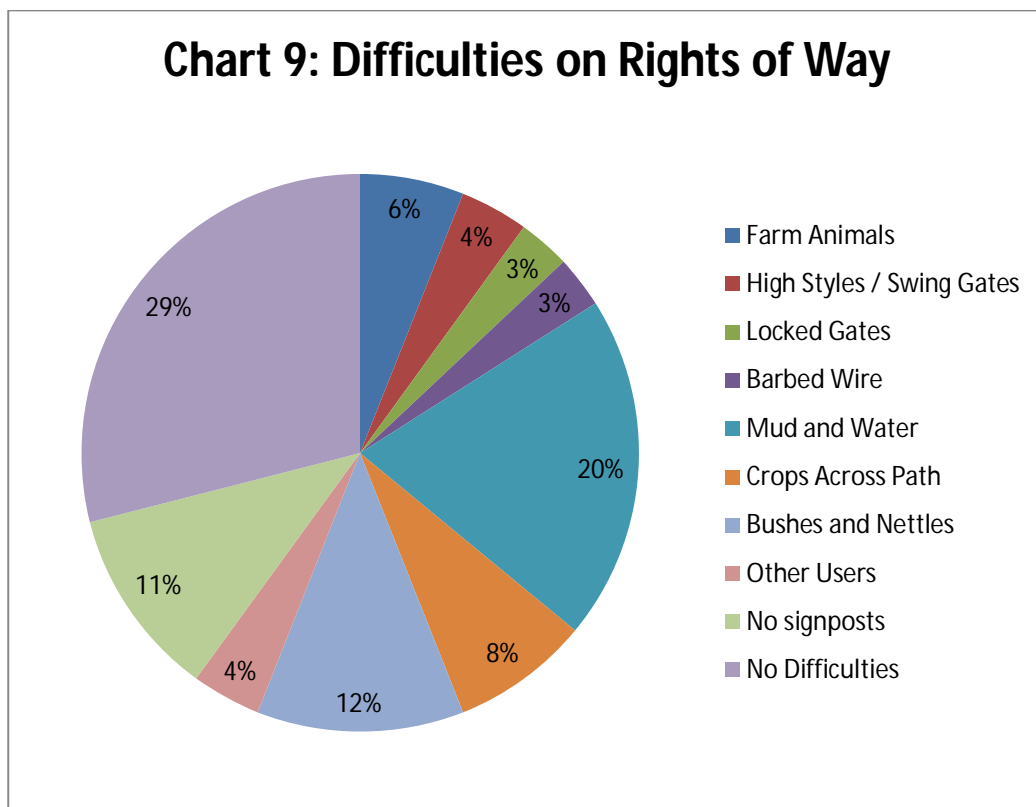
The survey asked if residents were aware of the location of the local footpaths and bridleways. 67% responded that they are aware, with just 10% stating that they did not know.

57% of respondents advised they can use the footpaths and bridleways without difficulty and just 1% experienced some difficulties. An even distribution of responses was received between those who think that footpaths are well signposted and those that do not. Comments received indicate that some people

find it very difficult to use the footpaths and bridleways when pushing children in pushchairs or buggies. Other respondents asked if a map of all footpaths and bridleways can be provided.

Continuing with footpaths and bridleways the survey asked if more information should be made available and residents were asked to answer as many as thought appropriate. 45% felt that maps of the local footpaths and bridleways would be useful, 47% felt would like a leaflet and 23% thought that guided walks of the area would be an asset. 18% had no opinion, whilst 1% had other suggestions, for information on example seasonal nature and what can be seen in the Parish. One respondent stated that they had great difficulties crossing the A5 north of Old Stratford when trying to use the footpaths to Furtho.

Residents were asked if they have encountered any difficulties whilst using the rights of way. Responses are depicted below:



Comments were made by some respondents, including that some had experienced difficulties with dogs off leads, as well as loose dogs, near the traveller's site at Shady Corner, others cited dogs fouling the footpaths and bridleways, footpath areas taped off due to horses being in the field and finally some were concerned with the amount of litter to be found in the countryside.

## Vision for the Future

The Parish Council has considered the results of the survey and has developed a future plan that aims to address the key concerns highlighted by respondents.

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Reinstate the Parish Confines of Old Stratford.	Parish Council to provide information to local planners and lobby for reinstatement.	South Northants District Council (SNDC).	2015/16
Ensure suitable and sustainable growth of the Villages.	Liaise with South Northamptonshire Council Planners	SNDC, District Councillor,	Ongoing
Increase biodiversity in the Parish	Investigate and create Site for Local Nature Reserve.	RSPB, Countryside Alliance.	2020
Improve infrastructure conditions for residents	Improve street lighting on the A5.	Northants County Council, County Councillor	2015
	Improve road clearing during severe winter months.	Highways Agency, County Council	Ongoing
	Construction of Combined Cycle and Footpath bridge over the river.	County Council Highways & Milton Keynes	Long term project
A safe environment for residents in the Parish	Work to find a solution to the issue of parking outside the Old Stratford shop to reduce risk to pedestrians and other road users.	County Council Highways	Before end of 2015



## Other Actions for the Parish

From the questionnaire responses received, there are a number of other actions that it is felt are required to improve the parish. The village actions should always be kept SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timetabled).

<u>Aim</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Partners</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
Improvement of the environment through community engagement	Request volunteers for Spring Clean around Old Stratford and Passenheim.	Members of the Community.	Twice per annum.
	Request Volunteers for a litter pick.	Members of the Community.	Annually.
	Request Volunteers to Maintain Local Footpaths and Bridleways.	Members of the community.	As required.
	Raise awareness of Neighbourhood Watch programme and how residents can get involved	Neighbourhood watch co-ordinator	Ongoing
Maintain and improve services for the village	Lobby the Post Office to reinstate branch in Old Stratford.	Members of the community,	Ongoing
	Keep the village Pub open by lobbying the franchise owner - Punch Taverns, and support by using the pub.	Villagers.	Ongoing
	Work with bus company to improve service to the villages.	Bus service, SNDC, MKC	2015/16
	Raise awareness of mobile library in the Parish	Northants County Council	2015
	Refurbish Memorial Hall Roof.	Parish Council	Pre- 2018

## Contacts

For further information about the Parish Plan please contact:

Parish Plan Co-ordinator:	<b>Mr Tony Pateman</b>	Tel: 01908 567907
Parish Council Chair:	<b>Mr Richard Whittaker</b>	Tel: 01908 567895
Parish Council Clerk:	<b>Mr Derek Everett MILCM</b>	Tel: 01908 569053

### Other useful contacts:

Village Hall Manager	<b>Mrs Leslie Peach</b>	Tel: 01908 307461
Preschool Group Secretary	<b>Mrs Dawn Higgs</b>	Tel: 01908 260664
Primary School:	<b>Old Stratford</b>	Tel: 01908 267700
District Councillor:	<b>Mrs Mary Clarke</b>	Tel: 07747757524
County Councillor:	<b>Mr Allan Walker</b>	Tel: 01908 260302
Neighbourhood watch Contact:	<b>Mrs Jackie Ibell</b>	Tel: 01908 562677

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the team of Parish Councillors for their task in delivering and following up on the Questionnaires, making it all possible. The support of the three centres used for the dropping off of completed Questionnaires, the Community Hall (Mrs L. Peach), the Village Primary School (Mrs J. Tween) and the Owners of the Village shop were also greatly appreciated.

Most importantly, thank you to all those householders who completed and returned their questionnaires, enabling the content of this plan to be developed.

# Glossary and Acronyms

## **Localism Bill:**

Government Legislation received royal ascent November 2012. This Bill forms the basis of all Local issues in respect of planning and the Communities wishes and requirements of all Communities.

## **MKC**

Milton Keynes Council – the neighbouring local government authority

## **Neighbourhood Plan:**

A plan developed by Towns and Villages in respect of its Residents wishes and requirements, it formally express their wishes with regards to Planning and the issues involving the Planning Process. It has been found to be a costly exercise when formally being adopted by the Local Planning Authority.

## **Parish Boundaries:**

Defines the boundaries within which a Parish Council has the day to day running.

## **SNDC**

South Northamptonshire District Council – the local government authority for Old Stratford Parish

## **Village Confines:**

A defined area surrounding a Village or Town which identifies open spaces, greenfield and brownfield areas, it also acts as a safety net when Planning issues need clarifying.

## **Village Plan and/or Appraisal:**

The Village Plan or Appraisal defines the Communities wishes and aspirations, it does not hold the Legal weight as does the Neighbourhood Plan but does highlight the wishes of the Community.

The Parish Plan is available to view on the Old Stratford Parish Council website at:

[www.oldstratford.org.uk](http://www.oldstratford.org.uk)