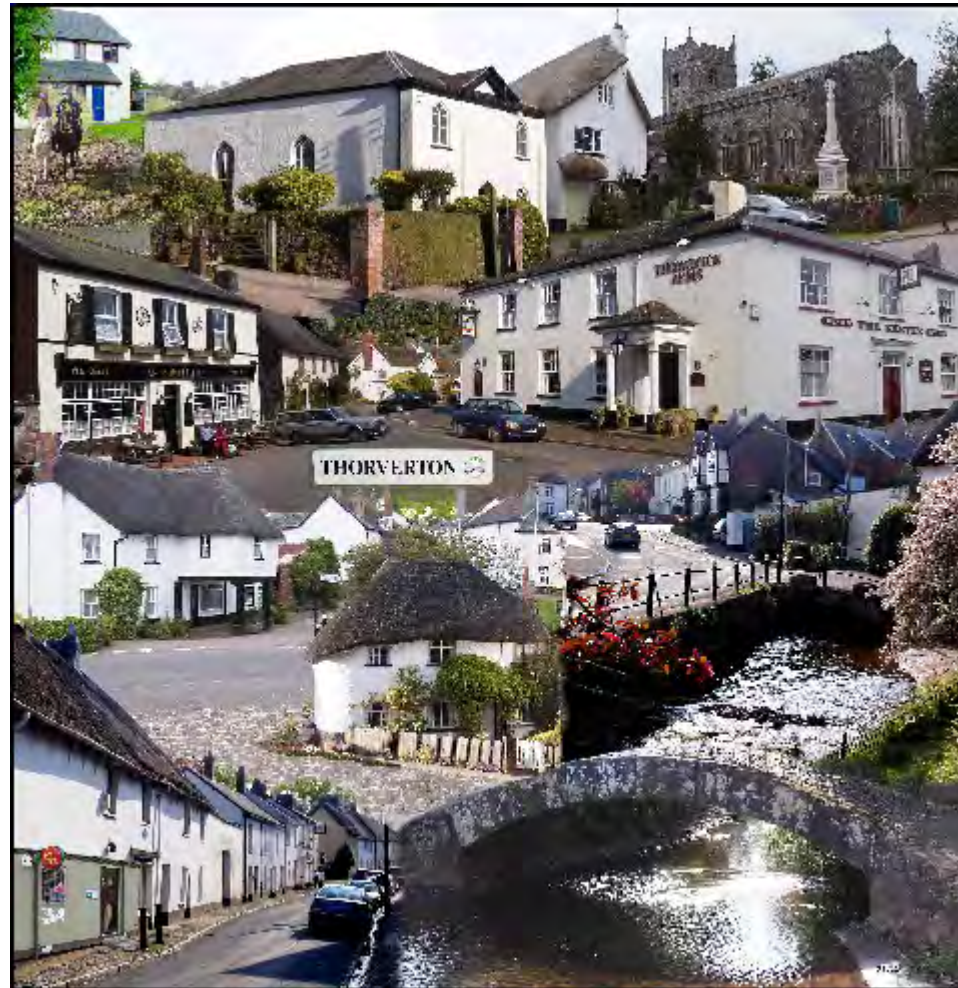


Thorverton Parish Plan



2008

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1. Introduction

Parish Plans created by the community are becoming increasingly important. They are needed to make sure that the views of the people in the Parish, over a whole range of issues, can be heard wherever and whenever these are necessary. This is particularly important at a time when government policy is encouraging more and more delegation of decision making to local authorities and communities. They are also extremely beneficial in informing organisations whose existing plans and guidelines need to change to reflect the particular needs of local people.

The Parish Plan is also an important document that provides background factual information on what the community has, what it needs and the reasons behind such need. Furthermore, vital funding bodies are increasingly looking for sound evidence of real need based on thorough community consultation.

In addition, the process of formulating a comprehensive Plan of this type highlights new ideas and new ways of solving problems. By increasing awareness and understanding throughout the community, it also shows how much our community can and should do for itself. An added benefit is that it has helped bring together, even more closely, the parishioners with their own Parish Council, and thus has strengthened further the cohesive identity of an already thriving community.



Looking south, down the Exe Valley, with Thorverton in the foreground and Rewe, Brampford Speke and Stoke Canon in the background

This report is set out in various topic-related sections for ease of reference. A summary of the main points is included at the end. The report concludes by proposing a number of specific objectives so that our progress can be monitored. It is recognised that this report is only the beginning of a continuing process. There will be development and indeed changes over the years as the

Plan evolves. If these objectives are to be achieved, many will depend upon local enterprise alone, but others will require action by, or help from, the Parish and District Councils as well as other bodies. The goal is to secure an even better sustainable, egalitarian and vibrant rural community for the future.

2. Creating the Plan

This section is described in some detail as it provides a background which may be of interest not only to parishioners but also to other communities faced with a similar challenge.

In 2007 the Parish Council commissioned a Parish Plan and nominated Cllr John Spivey to initiate the process of developing it by establishing a Launch Group. They agreed that John Spivey, Ward Crawford and Margaret Turner-Warwick should be asked to undertake this work. John Spivey drew up a budget and obtained a grant from Defra administered by the Community Council of Devon.

On the advice of Mr John Bodley Scott of the Mid Devon District Council and Mr Paul Edwards of the Community Council of Devon, members of the Launch Group attended various seminars and reviewed previous Plans drawn up by other parishes. Their first task was to organise a public meeting to ascertain community support for the project. This was held on the 26th September 2007 and about 110 people attended. Following introductory talks, everyone there was asked to contribute their personal views on what they felt was important for the Parish by writing their comments on 'Post-it' notes. Views were sought on a range of selected topics and contributors were also encouraged to suggest additional topics. The Post-its were then stuck on to appropriately labelled boards. The names of volunteers willing to help on various working groups and/or the Steering Group were also requested.

From this information the Launch Group brought together a group of volunteers to form an acting Steering Group. This group was composed of those willing to lead working groups based on the seven most important areas identified from the information on the Post-its. The Steering Group appointed Ward Crawford as Chairman of the Group and Rosalyn Brimacombe as Secretary to the whole project, and also agreed its terms of reference and other governance details. A flow chart was drawn up outlining how the work would be progressed and importantly how communication with the public and the Parish Council should be maintained. It was evident that it would take about 12-18 months to produce the final report for the Parish Council.



The first major task for the Steering Group was to set up the working parties and to design a questionnaire. The group was able to recruit Roseanne Benn, who had experience in the use of questionnaires in communities, to chair the Questionnaire Group. Malcolm Macdonald from the Devon County Council supervised the analysis of the questionnaire data.

The questionnaire was in two parts: the first concerned demographic data about the Parish and the second allowed every member of the Parish aged 11 years and over to express their views on some 60 questions. These had been compiled following detailed discussion by the seven working groups - each working group contributing 3 or 4 questions. Although the questionnaire was designed to capture opinions in a formalised way there was also ample room for individual comments. This was regarded as important to harness new ideas and minority views. The process of distribution, co-ordinated by Ward Crawford, was undertaken by seven volunteers, many of whom were working for their Duke of Edinburgh Awards or on other fieldwork projects.

355 questionnaire forms were distributed, of which 199 (56%) were returned with answers contributed by 392 people aged 11 and over. The quality of the data of those completing the questionnaire was very high. One of the striking features was the evidence that most people emphasised what was in the best



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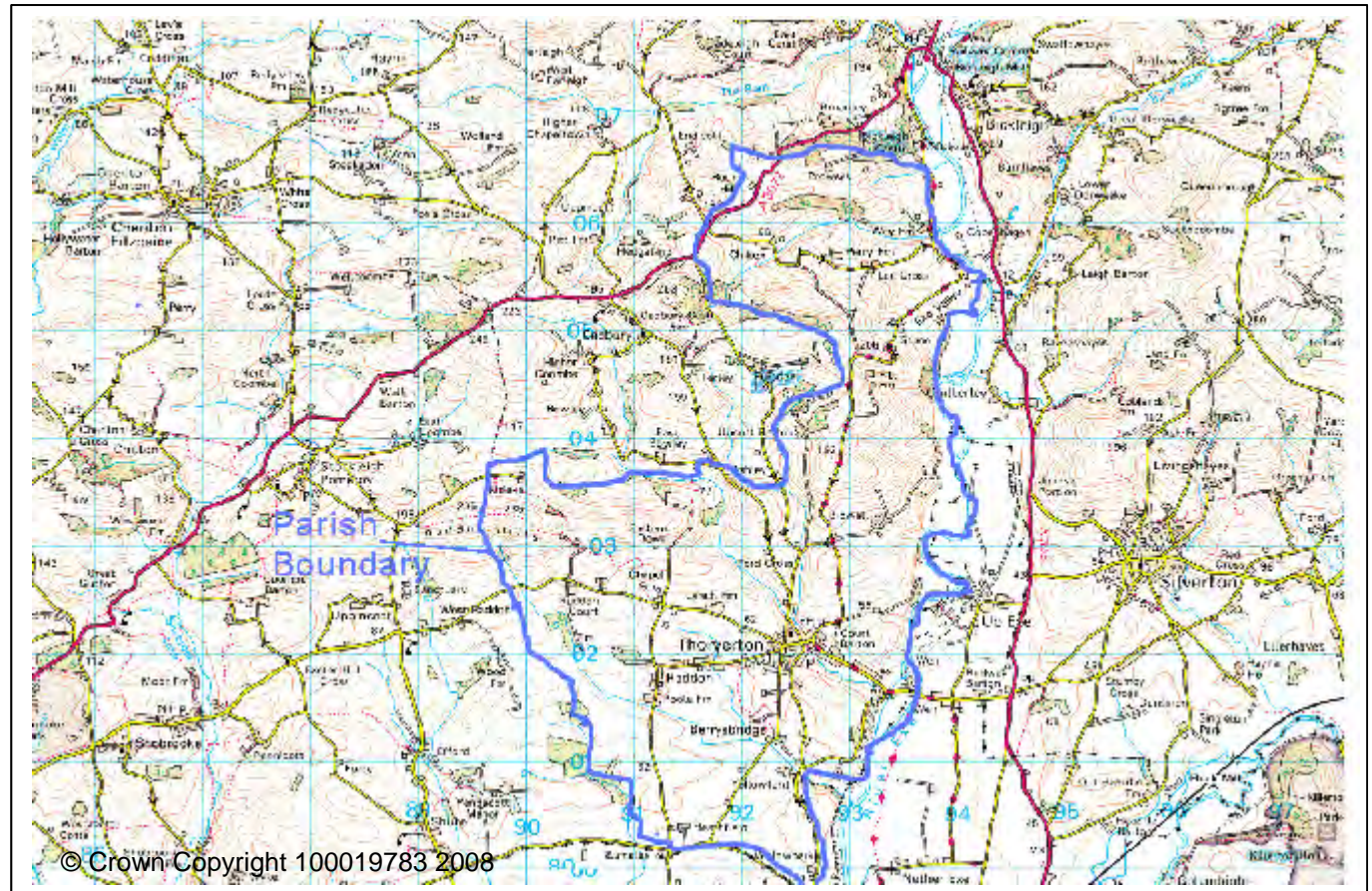
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3. Thorverton - the Parish - Setting the Scene

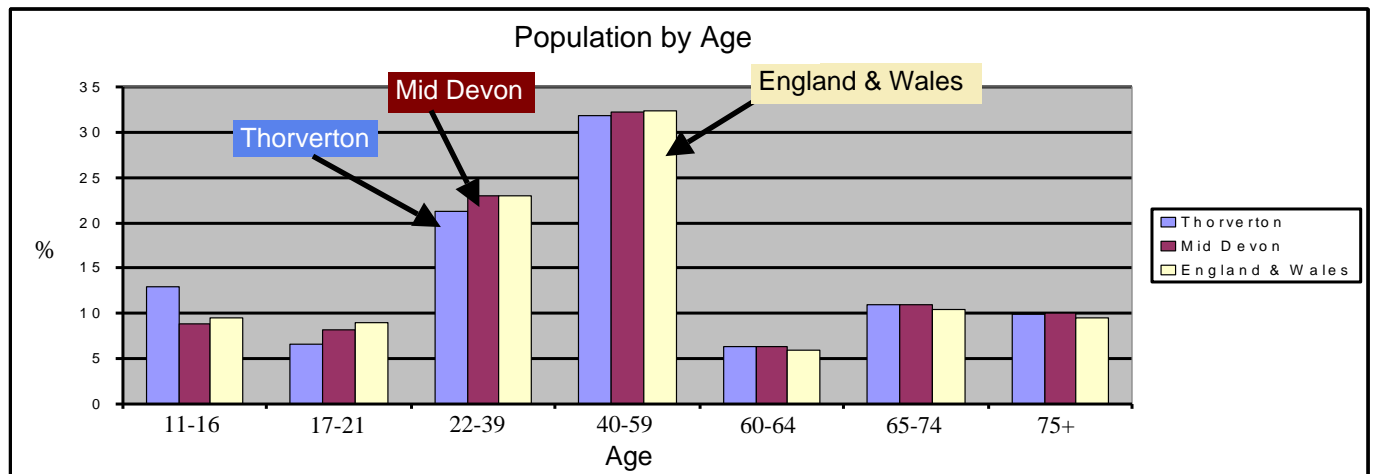


A map of the Parish is shown here. Thorverton is the largest village in the Parish, but there are a number of scattered hamlets and isolated farms which use the village for various services and amenities. The Parish is currently included within the remit of the Mid Devon District Council which covers three towns – Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton - each of which is about 8 miles away. Exeter is also within 8 miles. Thorverton is situated in an inland rural farming area attracting relatively few holiday-makers. Housing data from the questionnaire show that there are few second homes; 95% of properties are the occupants only home.



The population of the Parish is approximately 910. The age distribution is shown in the chart on the right. Approximately 220 are under the age of 21 and are mostly still in full-time education. 30% of the population are retired. This demographic distribution is very similar to national data for Mid Devon and also England and Wales.

There are an estimated 410 households, of which about 30% of the occupants have an annual income of less than £20,000 (ref. from tax, income and health information records supplied by the Devon County Council).



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Most of the village of Thorverton is a conservation area and is subject to rigorous planning constraints to protect its historic heritage. It has many historic features and several of the houses date back to the 17th century



Thorverton Conservation Area is within the continuous white line and the Settlement Area is within the broken white line

and earlier (see History on page 6 for more details). It is almost entirely surrounded by Church Commissioners' land (see page 8 for more details). Recently it has been included by the Mid Devon District Council in its Area Development Plan for some development, especially for affordable housing, local services and live/work accommodation.

Thorverton has a Church of England primary school with approximately 80 pupils. There are another 50 or so young children who attend the toddler group and playgroup. The village also benefits from a Post Office in a Portakabin, a general store housed in a converted mobile library and a farm shop selling local produce. There are two churches (Church of England and



The Butchers Shop (1763) and the Jubilee Green in the centre of the village

4. History

Thorverton came into being as a settlement on the high ground close to a fordable part of the River Exe, on the prehistoric direct route between the south-east of England and the far south-west. Nearly 20,000 flint tools have been found in the immediate vicinity as evidence of early inhabitants. The Romans came here, too: the remains of one villa or signal-station overlooking the river have been partly excavated, and Roman coins have been discovered elsewhere in the Parish.

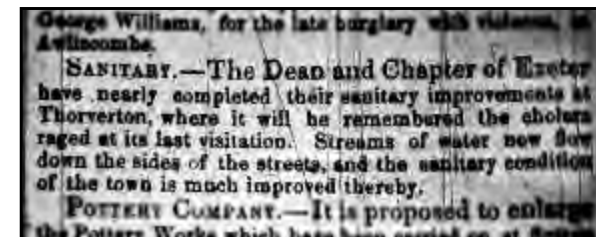
Its important situation on the crossing point between the east-west national route and the north-south local route between Exeter and Tiverton makes Thorverton's alleged absence from the Domesday Book surprising. In fact there can be little doubt that it appeared there as *Tovretona*, an area of some 4,500 acres with two mills, which has surprisingly been taken to refer to Tiverton, an area nearly four times as great as that. There may already have been a bridge at that time; certainly there were convenient bridges of stone over the Exe for travellers to use from at least the beginning of the 15th century.

When the church was first built is unknown. The earliest structure, of which remains survive, is reckoned to date from about 1200, while most of the present structure is thought to have been put up in the second half of the 15th century. The principal material used was the light volcanic Raddon stone, quarried from within the Parish, that was also much used in the building of fortifications and houses in



....washed away in the flood of 1875

Exeter and of other churches elsewhere in the county. The money for this expansion of the church came directly or indirectly from a yet more considerable local industry, serge making. For nearly 300 years a few individuals became rich as organizers of the process of gathering wool, treating it and converting it to material and dispatching the product to markets further afield or across the seas, while a great many contributed, for meagre rewards, at the lower stages: in 1731, according to an item in the *London Journal*, as many as 500 weavers and combers at Thorverton threatened action against local farmers who had made demands on them that they resented, while as late as the 1820s one of the public houses, the Exeter Inn, was the meeting place of a still active Woolcombers' Club. This was just one of a number of friendly societies here that existed for the support of their members in times of sickness, reflecting a lasting tradition of independence and lack of reliance upon the benevolence of others. This arguably resulted from the greater part of the



Exeter Flying Post 25th September 1856

Parish being owned, not by a resident lord of the manor, but by the somewhat distant Dean and Chapter of Exeter.

In '*Devon*' the historian W.G.Hoskins, whose grandmother grew up in Thorverton, nostalgically chose the details of occupations in this Parish's entry in White's *Directory of Devon* of 1850 to present a picture of a once typical English village, "*a portrait of a now disintegrated society, that met nearly all its earthly and spiritual needs within its own boundaries, self-contained and self-sufficient, and provided its own amusements*".



Dinneford Street and The Bury around 1906

At the time of which Hoskins was writing the population had risen to nearly 1500, but agricultural depression, the outdating of traditional trades, the development of better paid employment elsewhere and opportunities to emigrate led to a steady decline. There were high hopes for many years that the provision of a railway would revive Thorverton's earlier prosperity, but by the time this arrived in 1885 town status had been lost and the hopes dashed. By 1911 the population was less than half that of 1851 and by 1961 it was only 674.



Despite the closure of the railway in the 1960s, the population again rose to over 900, as the growth of car ownership made Thorverton a pleasant and convenient place to settle for those working in the expanding University of Exeter and in other large organisations which later relocated to the city.

The scope for further development (Affordable Housing in particular) is limited by the village's contiguity with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and agricultural land which remains largely owned by the Church Commissioners. (More history online at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thorverton>)



Sluice gate mechanism near the sheep dip in Dinneford Street



Reproduced by permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter Cathedral

The Coldridge Map of 1814



5. Housing and Planning

The last national Census in 2001 appeared to underestimate the number of dwellings in the Parish of Thorverton at 360, as Mid Devon District Council confirms the number paying Council Tax in 2008 to be 413. A breakdown within the census, however, gives a reasonable indication of the percentages of different forms of tenure. Owner-occupied properties accounted for 75% of the total; this is above the figure of 68% for England and Wales. Only eight (3%) of the owner-occupied houses were second homes or holiday accommodation. At 11%, rented properties represented virtually the same percentage of 12% for England and Wales, whereas at 14%, local authority and housing association properties were below the national figure of 20%.

Over the last 40 years or so there have been several housing schemes. One provided moderate sized open market houses on Glebe land (1979-80). Council houses and flats were built at Broadlands, but the majority of these have now been sold. In 1999, six houses were built for rental at Lynch Close in association with Falcon Housing and the Parish Council, on land sold by the Church Commissioners.

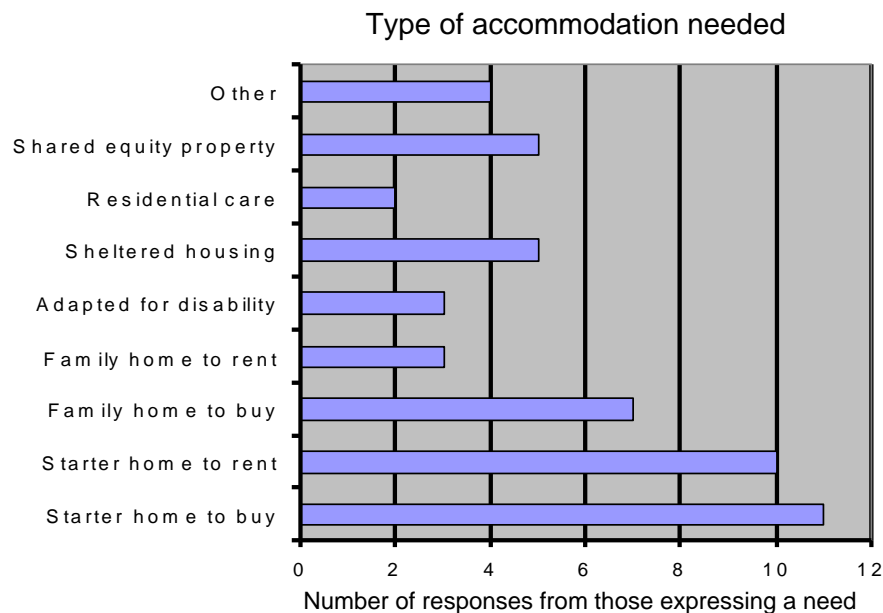
The Parish Council has endeavoured over many years to facilitate the building of a limited number of affordable houses in Thorverton for local people. It has faced two specific issues potentially restricting development, those being planning policy and land ownership. National, regional, county and local planning policies state that environmental sustainability considerations, particularly with regard to travel distances by car, should restrict the siting of future open market housing. In relation to Thorverton, the Mid Devon Local Plan therefore states that whereas, if a need has been

established, affordable housing might be permitted outside the settlement limit (in effect, the boundary of existing development), open market housing will not be allowed.

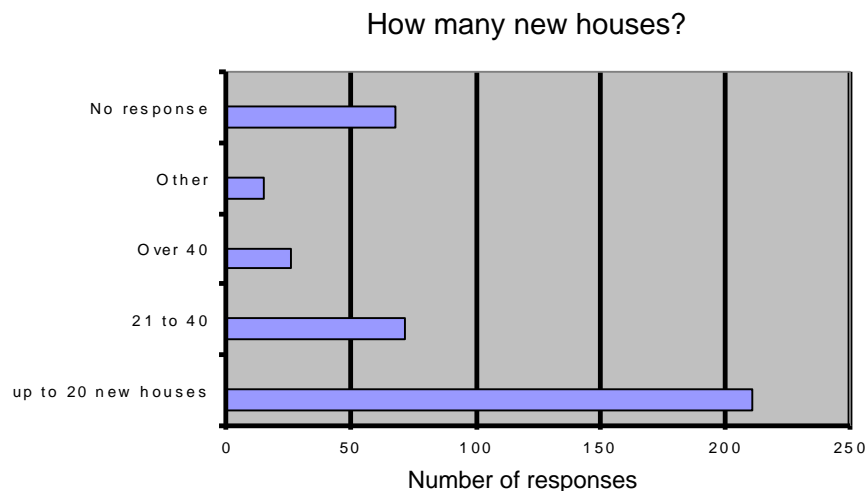
In relation to land ownership, the Church Commissioners own virtually all land surrounding the village, with a minor area owned by the Diocese of Exeter. Though there has been a recent indication that the Church of England wishes to promote affordable housing on its land, an initial response to the Parish Council by the agent representing the Diocese suggested that a development of affordable housing was unlikely to be accepted unless it provided land values identical to those of open market housing. The agents acting for the Church Commissioners have stated that they will only offer sites in Thorverton for mixed market/affordable housing development.

The outcome of these two conflicting policies is to be tested with the proposed planning application by the Church Commissioners on the site adjacent to Court Barton for seven open market and seven affordable houses.

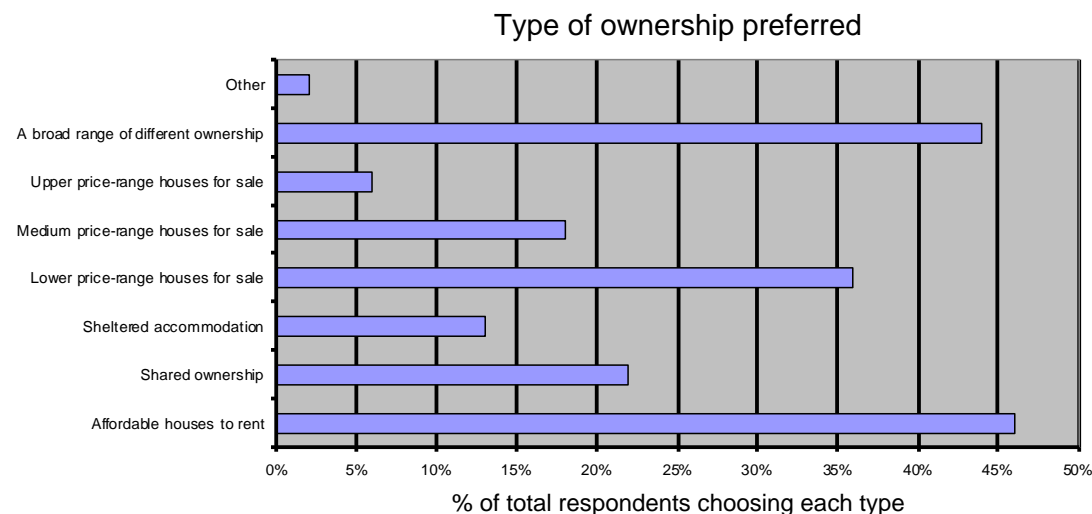
The Parish Plan survey established a clear need (28 households) for alternative accommodation within the next five years. The result may represent an underestimate due to the percentage return of the survey. The Mid Devon District Council Housing Needs Survey of 2004 reported that 31 households were in need of affordable housing. An update by Falcon Housing Association in 2007 confirmed the number to be 28 households. Even if the seven affordable houses (currently under negotiation) are built, this will still leave at least 21 households in need of this type of accommodation. In the present survey the greatest need expressed was for starter homes to buy or rent, though there was a spread of requirements.



A majority (73%) agreed or strongly agreed that it would benefit the village if more houses were built in the next ten years and again a majority (74%) favoured a broad mix of sizes. Of those who responded 65% thought that up to 20 new houses should be built.



The Matthew Taylor Report, recently published by the government, suggested that the national average of affordable properties relative to the total is too low in rural areas, being 13%, when compared with 22% in urban areas. In Thorverton in 2008 there are 47 local authority and housing association dwellings. This represents 11% of the total but over half of these (26) are sheltered bungalows, highlighting the low availability of houses and flats. With regard to the type of ownership, the survey showed that there was a preference for affordable housing and lower price-range houses for sale.



The vast majority of respondents (90%) agreed or strongly agreed that local people should have priority in the allocation of social housing.

In relation to planning applications, the large majority of those who responded considered that adequate notice and information was given. The majority of those who voiced an opinion (65%) agreed or strongly agreed that there should be stronger planning controls to protect the character of the village.





106 comments were received relating to the housing questions. Although a whole range of opinions was expressed, the strength of feeling regarding the need for affordable housing for local people was evident in the large number of responses concerning this issue.

Quote: “Desperate need for affordable housing for local young people - rent/shared ownership/buy, to allow family relationships to continue - ie child care provided by grandparents, children to maintain links with village, to ensure survival of the school.”

Mid Devon District Council has indicated that they consider their 2004 Housing Needs Survey to be now out of date; however they will only commission a further survey when land has been allocated for affordable housing by the landowners.

To sum up, the survey highlights concern about housing in the Parish and particularly the need for affordable housing for local people. Concern was also expressed that future housing should be sympathetic to the character of the village. If any development is to take place, problems of land ownership and planning policy will have to be resolved. There is a discrepancy between the established need for alternative accommodation and the desire for a relatively modest number of extra houses.

Action

- Lobby the Church Commissioners and Diocese of Exeter for the release of further land to cater for the need for affordable housing.
- If land does become available, request that Mid Devon District Council commissions a further Housing Needs Survey.
- With reference to maintaining the character of the village, guidance needs to be made available. It is therefore necessary to lobby Mid Devon District Council to complete its proposed Mid Devon Design Guide and Thorverton Conservation Area Appraisal.
- **Consider whether the community should undertake its own Village Design Appraisal.**



6. Education and Lifelong Learning

A mind stretched by a new idea never returns to its original dimensions.

(Oliver Wendell Holmes)



Introduction

The overall impression from the quality and the quantity of the responses within the three aspects in the lifelong learning section of the survey (the school, the playgroup and adult education) demonstrate that there is a strong feeling within the village that education is crucial for the sustainability of the Parish and is valued as an important part of people's lives, regardless of age.

School Facilities

Thorverton Church of England Primary School is situated in the heart of the village. The school is fortunate to stand on a wonderful site which includes a large field with a wooded area. There are records of schools in Thorverton going back over 350 years. The present building was erected on Glebe land in 1842 and after 1944 became a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School under the Devon Local Authority.

There are approximately 80 children on roll in three classes. Parents and local people give practical support in many ways, including running sports clubs, assisting with visits and residential trips, and coming into school to support children with their learning. It has a strong PTFA which raises additional funds and the children benefit from this in many ways. Currently there are

35 volunteers involved with various activities. These comprise 9 in the governing body, 10 with the PTFA, 8 with after-school clubs, sports and craft, 6 reading helpers and 2 volunteers with the choir. Many of the parents and grandparents were themselves pupils here, and there is a good tradition of the school being used by the whole community.

The school has strong links with the Church and is well supported by the local vicar and curate. The school works in partnership with the village playgroup, which most children attend before starting school. The majority of children leaving Thorverton C of E Primary School at 11 years of age go on to attend Queen Elizabeth's Community College in Crediton, with a small number of children going on to attend Exeter schools.

The vision for the school is that the children will develop the skills to be proactive and responsible citizens in a changing world. In order to achieve this, the children are given the opportunity to learn in many different and exciting ways. The school believes that children's emotional health and wellbeing is paramount to enable them to thrive. An extension has been built recently which provides a larger Early Years classroom, a music room and a downstairs office.

There were 60 comments in the completed questionnaires on the various needs of the school.

The areas of greatest concern identified through the questionnaire relate to the lack of a sports hall and the perceived need for children to be taught in single age classes. The addition of a purpose-built hall would enhance the education opportunities for the children and would also give a performance space and dining area. The range of abilities within a mixed age class are often no different to the range of abilities within a single year group classroom.

As there were several responses that demonstrated a lack of knowledge about what goes on at the school, the school is keen to involve anyone in the village who would like to contribute to the life of the school.

Action

- **To explore ways of providing a sports hall facility for the school.**
- **To encourage village participation in the life of the school from those people who are currently not part of the school community but who would like to be.**
- **To explore how the existing facilities can be adapted to improve provision for all children.**



Playgroup Facilities

The playgroup is an independent charity which currently operates from the Memorial Hall in the centre of the village, with a large, grassed outdoor area that the playgroup is able to use. The hall is not purpose-built as a childcare facility and the playgroup is limited by the facilities provided by the Memorial Hall in terms of meeting Ofsted standards, allocation of staff time, session planning and extending care opportunities.

The playgroup is not the sole user of the Memorial Hall and therefore staff have to set up from scratch at the beginning of each session and pack away at the end. The playgroup is well attended and liaises closely with the school to ensure continuity for the children moving from playgroup to full-time education.

There were 39 comments concerning the playgroup. The overwhelming concern identified through the questionnaire relates to the need for the playgroup to have its own premises, with some of the responses suggesting that it would be preferable for the premises to be on the same site as the school.

Actions

- To investigate the possibility of funding the development of a permanent building dedicated to playgroup use.
- To develop a shared development and learning plan between the school and the playgroup.

Adult Learning

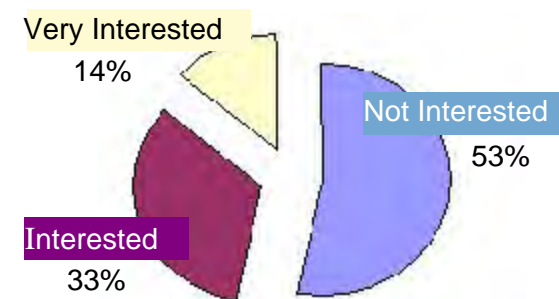
Currently there are not many opportunities to engage in adult learning within the village. The present provision includes yoga and Pilates classes, and although there are art, history and craft groups these tend to be leisure groups who have occasional speakers rather than educational sessions. There are many opportunities to access a wide variety of adult learning classes through Mid Devon District Council and organisations in Exeter, but accessing these involves travelling which incurs cost, time and expenditure, and adversely affects the environment.

There were 60 comments on adult learning in the returned questionnaires.

47% of people responding to the survey stated that they would be interested or very interested in attending adult education classes within the village. In the individual responses the suggestions for learning opportunities were many and varied. The most frequently identified areas of interest were fitness sessions, photography, language tuition and computer classes.



Art Group in the Memorial Hall



Interest in Adult Classes

Action

- To investigate the viability of providing classes for the most requested areas, at the Memorial Hall or elsewhere in the village.
- To ensure current classes are effectively advertised.
- To ensure that villagers are signposted to the educational opportunities they can access through Mid Devon District Council and other organisations.
- To explore further whether there are skills available within the community which might be harnessed to support local classes.

Conclusion

The numbers of written responses reflect the importance of education to the village. It is vital that there is a continuity of approach to education in the village that embraces the population from birth to old age, and meets the needs of people who value and acknowledge the benefits of education in its widest sense.

It is important that the village draws on the abilities of people within the community who may be able to offer educational skills, and also that opportunities are sought to draw on expertise and experience from others beyond the immediate village. There needs to be a vibrancy and a dynamic quality to the educational experiences within the community, and our ultimate goal is to embrace the ethos that education should be accessible to everyone throughout their lives. However, the financial practicality of this needs to be tested. Local support will be vital.



7. Youth

*Watching a
visiting theatre
group in the
Recreation
Ground*



It is estimated from County records that there are around 220 young people (aged 21 and under) in the Parish. Approximately 125 are aged 11 and under and nearly 100 aged 12 to 21.

The Youth Working Group decided to focus upon three main areas. The first was identifying the current facilities and activities available within the community; where they were adequate or where more was needed. The second area was transport. It was felt that this was important for younger people given the village's position and size. The third area was money. Again, it was felt that this was an important concern for young people. There are few jobs available for young people in Thorverton and they are consequently forced to look outside the village. This means purchasing a bus ticket and given the small wages of people under 18, this could mean an entire hour's earnings gone.

In addition to the specific areas addressed in the questionnaire, there were a number of others in which the views of those aged 11 to 21 (for brevity described in this report as 'youth') could be compared with adults of working age and those over 60 years. This gave an important insight into the views of younger people in relation to how they perceived the local community.

*A Thorverton Amateur Dramatic Society
production in the Memorial Hall*

Current Activities

Currently there are a number of activities for youth in the village, especially for the under 11s. There are active groups for Rainbows, Brownies, Junior Football Club, Junior Cricket Club and a Junior Consort. There are also a number of private opportunities including ballet, piano lessons and, importantly, the Exe Valley Adventurers group for older children which caters for a range of outward bound activities.

The Scouts Group ceased some years ago, and the Cubs closed down in 1999 mainly due to lack of volunteers to run it. There have been a number of attempts to run a youth club. Unfortunately these attempts have petered out, in part due to lack of an indoor area for ball games.



Youth Responses to the Questionnaire

There were 53 young people in the sample of the population, almost all (48) of whom answered most of the questions. This reflects on the enthusiasm of our young people.

90% of youth expressing an opinion believed that there were difficulties in reaching social and leisure activities outside the village and this was supported by an equal number of adults. Many of these considered that this was because the bus fares were too high.

An overwhelming number (95%) of youths said that there was a need for more village-based activities for them, and again this was very strongly endorsed by the adults (93%). It was impressive that of the fairly small number indicating that they were prepared to help with these activities, nearly half were under the age of 21. Amongst the many comments received there was great support for a revival of the Youth Club.

Many people said they could offer various paid jobs for youth, especially babysitting and gardening.

On many other questions regarding the need for various facilities in the Parish, young people largely endorsed the views of the adults. These included the importance of the recreation field, the village magazine 'Focus', the Memorial Hall, the Millennium Green, the shop and Post Office and the pubs!

In response to questions on various specific activities, the youth responses again reflected those of the adults in indicating interest in exercise classes (21%) and shared transport (25%). Also, as with the adults, none of the young respondents was interested in help with the cessation of smoking. *It is of course possible that Thorverton is already a largely non-smoking community and that this question is not relevant!* About a third of young people would like more information on village history, energy efficiency, local wildlife, local farming and especially local food for sale. Again these views were similar to those received from adults.



On the other hand, relatively more young people (29%) were interested in a basic First Aid Course; more youth felt strongly about the need for more renewable energy (60%) and energy saving (58%).

Overall it is evident that the views of young people were very similar to those of the adults, and it is likely that in answering the questionnaire they were considering the needs of the village as a whole rather than their own particular preferences.

Action

- **To investigate the possibility of restoring a youth club, perhaps appointing a youth co-ordinator who might be working in other parishes within the District. The youth club might be linked with the development of a sports hall where ball games were possible.**
- **To encourage the Parish Council to discuss with the bus companies subsidised fares and extended timetables, to allow young people to participate in after-school activities and other leisure activities outside the village.**
- **To establish a central point where local jobs might be advertised. To discuss further whether the pay for youth undertaking local jobs should be settled privately or whether a general wage should be agreed for all jobs.**

8. Local Services and Transport

The Parish has a number of retail and public services. The questionnaire results show how much the community values these services, many of which are supported by volunteers.

Post Office

Thorverton has had a Post Office certainly since 1870 when it was run by the Cummings family until 1994 when it closed due to retirement. It relocated to a room adjacent to a hairdressing business but this closed in 2000. Due to the enterprise of the late Michael Lewis, a community association (Thorverton Co-operative Society – TCOOPS) was created to re-establish the post office, which now operates from a Portakabin in the public Quarry Car Park. Permission for this siting was granted by the Parish Council and Church Commissioners under a temporary planning consent. The organisation has now been re-registered as a not-for-profit organisation – Thorverton Co-operative Trust (TCT) – in 2005.

TCT Ltd's business is well supported by the village and has a healthy turnover. Its profits finance the everyday running and maintenance of the Portakabin building and assist with the Post Office's overheads. Its services include newspaper and magazine sales, cards and stationery, photocopying, the use of a laundry service, and has a widely used noticeboard. More than a quarter of households support TCT as subscription paying members, and newspaper and magazines are regularly ordered by a similar percentage.



In the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority (93%) regarded the post office as either important (20%) or vital (73%) for the Parish. The post office's success is further endorsed by the fact that it has survived the recent round of closures. However, its future is not secure, especially without more permanent premises. It not only services Thorverton but also the neighbouring villages of Brampford Speke, Upton Pyne and Cadbury.

Shop

The general store in The Berry was run for nearly 50 years by the Pile family but ceased trading in 2006. Following a very well-supported public meeting, another community association was formed (Thorverton Rural Services Association – TRSA) to seek a longer-term solution for a permanent shop. The recent questionnaire supporting an earlier more detailed one in 2006, reflects the very strong support (92%) for the shop (important 24% and vitally important 68%). In the earlier questionnaire over half the respondents said that they would use the shop two or three times a week. Information was also gathered on the types of products they would like to purchase and the money that they were likely to spend.

The need to retain local customers was recognised. In the interim, between the shop closure and the finding of new permanent premises, Stephen and Allison Toogood organised and financed a temporary shop. 'Not The Village Shop' is open each weekday in a former mobile library located in the car park adjacent to the Post Office. Advice from ViRSA (Village Retail Services Association) is that the turnover of this shop, together with that of TCT Ltd's business and the Post Office, is now at a level



The Saturday Market in the Memorial Hall

considered to be viable for a successful community shop. They also advise that the long-term survival of either the shop or Post Office depends on the two operating together from the same premises.

In addition, the Memorial Hall Committee organises a Saturday market once a month, at which stalls can be booked to sell produce, craft work, books and so on. The market is very well supported, as is the café staffed by volunteers which operates simultaneously, serving 'hearty' breakfasts and beverages.

Pubs (see photos on page 34)

There are three pubs in the village, The Thorverton Arms, The Exeter and The Bell, each having delightfully different atmospheres. Two have restaurants and one also offers accommodation, which bring a flow of visitors to the village.



Library

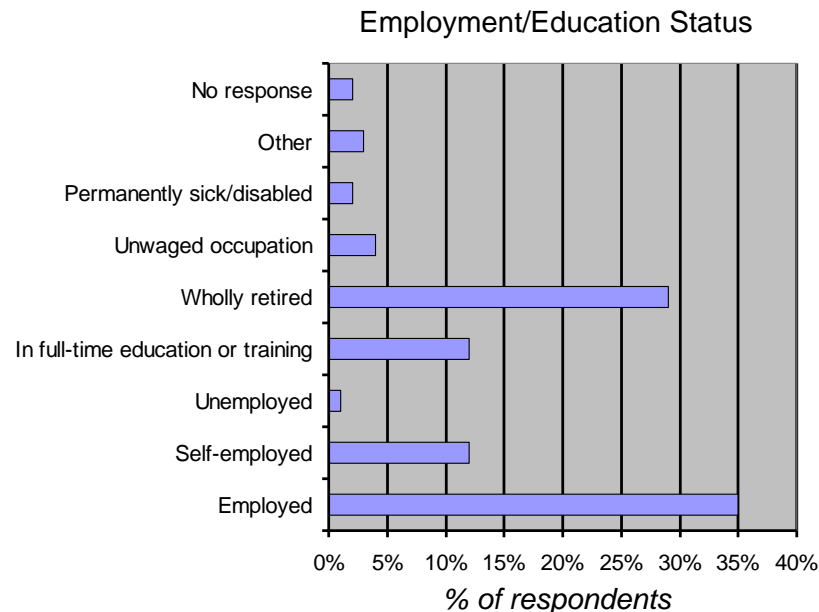
A mobile library visits the village every Wednesday afternoon.

Action

- **The greatest need is to establish a permanent site for the shop (possibly incorporating a café), and the Post Office**

Employment and Small Business

Virtually everyone in the village available for employment is in work; 23% are employed within the Parish, although 76% of these are in part-time employment and 36% work from home. Several undertake more than one job. Importantly only three of those of employment age are unemployed. 30% of respondents are retired, as are 70% of those over the age of 60. Of the 53 people recorded as undertaking voluntary work, 66% were over the age of 60. There is evidence that many more people in the village are in fact involved in voluntary work than is recorded in the questionnaires.



In addition to the traditional occupations involved with farming, there is a wide range of small businesses already in the village, including insurance, catering, cake making, flower arrangements, building and carpentry, decorating, photography and printing, window blinds, car repairs, tree surgery, accountancy, heating specialists, hairdressing, furniture makers and a farm shop. The old flour mill is now being converted into a small business facility and there will be further job opportunities there. 62% of respondents supported a need for more employment opportunities in the community and 58% supported the suggestion of a small-scale industrial or craft site.

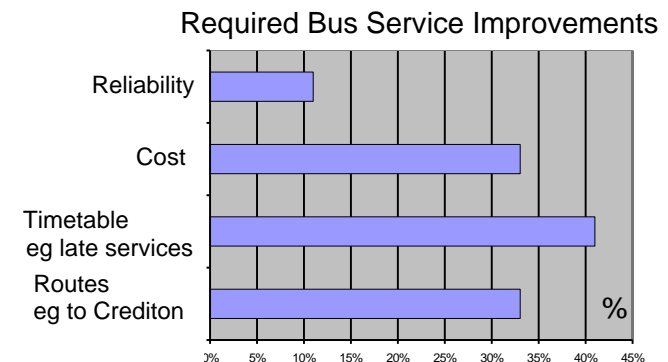
Thorverton has been included in the list of rural communities in the Area Development Plan documents for modest expansion, including facilities for live/work units

Action

- **To promote the development of units for further business premises.**

Transport

The current services include school buses to Crediton and a weekly free shopping service to Broadclyst. Public buses routed through Thorverton run between Tiverton and Exeter. The frequency of these services is currently uncertain following the merger of two operators. A third of respondents wanted the service to extend to Crediton. 41% supported the suggestion of extending the timetable to include a later service, and a third felt that the cost of bus fares needed to be reduced. 91% of those expressing a view felt that young people were unable to get to social and leisure activities due to the limited bus service.



There are free bus passes for the over 60s and subsidised travel for young people and students. However, these passes have time restrictions on them which limit their usefulness and which do not cover youth wishing to take part in after-school activities. The general view amongst respondents was that regular bus fares are expensive. However, as 52% who answered the questionnaire never use public transport, only 3% use it daily and 36% work from home so are not dependent on public services, this raises the inevitable question of whether a cost-effective, extended and less expensive service, can be provided by the private bus companies.



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Traffic, Cars and Parking

There is currently a 30 mph speed limit from the farm shop through the village. The questionnaire showed that speeding is of great concern. 69% of respondents agree that speed limits need to be enforced. It is estimated from the questionnaire returns that currently there are over 600 cars, vans etc in the village. There is one small public car park for about 20 cars. In general there does not seem to be a problem with parking; however, parking for teachers was identified as a major problem. 26% of vehicles are parked in garages, 48% 'off road' (but a proportion of these are on pavements) and 26% are parked on the road. There are, however, concerns that pavement parking is hazardous for pedestrians (especially the elderly, those with pushchairs and small children, wheelchair users etc). This poses a problem because if 'on pavement' parking is prohibited then 'on road' parking would increase and create further difficulties for emergency services, as well as large farm vehicles essential to this agricultural community.

The responses identified considerable support for the pavement to be extended along Silver Street to the Ruffwell Inn to make it safer for pedestrians. An additional need was also identified for larger parking facilities with security as vandalism is a problem.

Action

- To liaise with the MDDC to introduce sympathetic traffic calming measures and endeavour to identify further possible parking.

Security

Currently a community police officer and a community support officer cover the area. They make regular visits to the village and liaise with the voluntary Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators. They also hold a police surgery open to anyone in the neighbourhood.

In general the majority of the people are content with the security of the village, although over half the respondents were unaware that there is a police surgery. 39% felt there should be a more visible and comprehensive Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, but this requires volunteers to maintain the service.

Action

- To promote awareness and greater co-ordination between the police and Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators, it is suggested that a public meeting be held to publicise Neighbourhood Watch, to gain more members and raise its profile, perhaps through incorporating a regular newsletter in 'Focus' with input from the police. This could also carry useful contact names.



9. Health and Wellbeing



Locally the Devon Primary Care Trust is responsible for commissioning the best possible health care for people within its boundaries. In Thorverton, primary health care is provided largely through two GP surgeries; the Exe Valley Practice and Wyndham House Surgery, which also provides a dispensing service and a number of other health and wellbeing activities. 'Focus' magazine carries details of surgery opening hours. Acute hospital services are mainly centred in Exeter at the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust, but there are also minor injuries units at the local community hospitals in Tiverton and Crediton.

Rehabilitation services for the local population is provided by community re-ablement teams based at the Health Centre in Cullompton, Tiverton Community Hospital and, for those needing in-patient rehabilitation following a stroke, Crediton Hospital. Regular services are complemented by a number of voluntary and individual initiatives, which include organisations such as Age Concern Devon and Upstream, and collectively aim to improve health and social care in Devon. A local initiative called Local Involvement Network (LINK) aims to co-ordinate these activities. Their website is www.devonlink.org.uk

The doctors' surgery in Thorverton now has two partners, and is in cramped premises which cannot be extended and are unsuitable for wheelchair access. With the growth of community health services and particularly the large number of elderly people in the village, there is a fairly urgent need for a new site for a larger surgery and pharmacy.

The results from our questionnaire suggest that apart from the need to relocate the surgery, Thorverton residents are reasonably satisfied with the services provided to them. Rather than trying to concentrate on illness services, the aim was to gather information about barriers to healthy living in terms of access to services, opportunities to maintain wellbeing, and what was felt to be important in keeping healthy. There are a wealth of clubs and societies in the village which are detailed elsewhere in this report and which clearly have importance for people's perception of the quality of their life.

Surprisingly for a rural community, transport to health facilities did not appear to be difficult. 84% of the respondents had no difficulty getting to local hospitals and 91% had no difficulty with dental or therapy appointments. This contrasts with the desire to see improved public transport for leisure and social purposes (see page 16). In a similar way, very few of the respondents felt that there was a need for help managing medicines, provision of short-term relief to carers for dependent relatives or help filling in forms. A small minority felt the need for advice about benefits or allowances and a source of information about health and social care agencies; 15% and 12% respectively.

Looking for other unmet needs, the questionnaire asked about exercise classes, lunch and social clubs, transport schemes, sitting services for young and old, walking groups, first aid training and

smoking cessation support. The majority of respondents felt they would not be interested in these initiatives and did not describe any alternative needs. However about 50 residents expressed an interest in sitting services for young and old, 63 of all ages would be interested in 'Walk and Talk' groups, and about 80 people expressed interest in transport schemes. A sizeable minority, 30%, expressed interest in exercise classes, most of whom were female representing a broad cross-section of ages. 1 in 4 respondents in the 60 and over age group expressed an interest in the provision of lunch or social clubs, the interest being similar between the genders. The large proportion of those satisfied with services should not obscure minority groups who are most in need of health and social support.

There is a common perception that spiritual wellbeing is important in keeping healthy without necessarily this being linked to formal religion. Around half of the respondents felt this was true, with a quarter disagreeing and a quarter giving no opinion. This view was fairly constant throughout the age groups. These views are reflected by 67% of respondents who consider the Parish Church facility is important or vital, and 37% who feel similarly regarding the Baptist Church ('Chapel').

In summary, the questionnaire did not reveal any major unmet needs, although we are limited in our analysis by ignorance of the characteristics of the non-respondents who may represent a group with greater health needs.

Action

- **Identify possible sites for the relocation of the surgery and pharmacy.**
- **Consider needs of minority groups.**

10. Leisure, Clubs and Societies



For a village of its size, Thorverton is privileged to have an unusually high number (in excess of 30) of clubs, societies and organisations. These provide residents, and indeed the wider community, with a broad range of leisure activities, community events and amenities. The village is also fortunate in having a number of sites, green open spaces and buildings where many of these activities and events take place. The working group wanted to ascertain whether the existing recreation, sport, leisure and community event opportunities, along with their associated facilities, and amenities, were adequate to meet the needs of the Parish. It also wanted to know what additions or changes parishioners would like to see in order to recommend plans for the future.

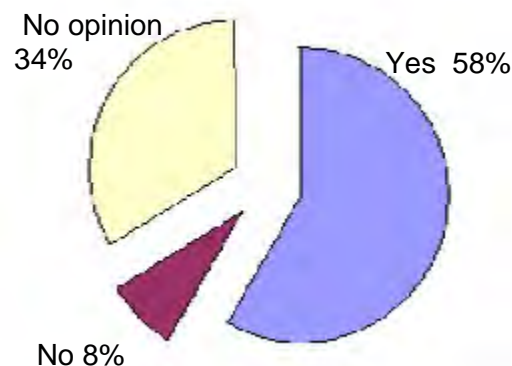
Sport and Leisure Facilities

The very substantial number of clubs, societies and leisure groups is listed in the appendix.

With a few exceptions, respondents generally seem fairly content with what is already provided. However, it is important that this is not taken for granted. Virtually all the leisure activities and facilities within the Parish are organised by volunteer committees or individuals, the vast majority of whom give of their time free of charge. We need to protect and maintain what we have and that, in itself, is a challenge. Maintaining the *status quo* is thus the first priority.

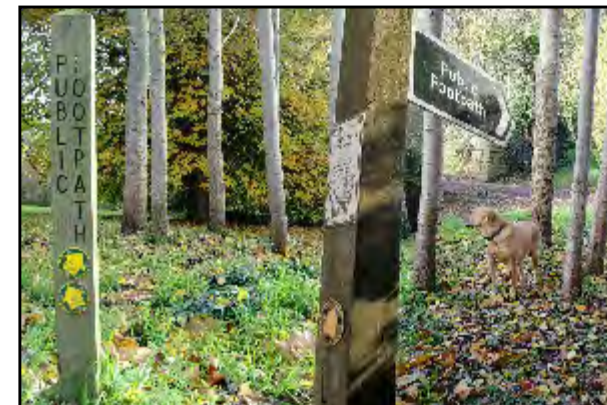
In spite of this it is evident from the questionnaire that there was a demand for further sport and leisure opportunities.

Would you like to see opportunities for sports, clubs or societies improved and/or increased?



58% of respondents stated that they would like to see more opportunities for sports, clubs and societies. In the individual responses 71 people came up with an interesting and varied list of suggestions.

Some 26 people would like to see facilities for tennis courts and the possible development of a tennis club. There was also considerable support amongst respondents for a sports hall incorporating indoor pursuits such as badminton and opportunities for young people. Of the nearly 50 comments on ideas for additional sports and leisure activities, 15 (30%) suggested the need for facilities for indoor sports.



Open Spaces and Footpaths

The majority of respondents (69%) indicated that they feel these facilities to be adequate. However quite a number expressed the wish for the footpaths to be linked to create circular walks and perhaps to add some cycleways.

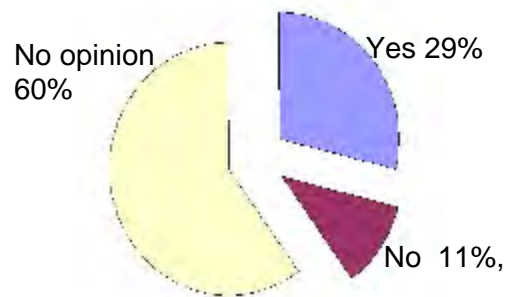
Action

- **Tennis courts and tennis club:** the suggestion is dependent on people coming forward not only finding a site and funding the project but also to organise it. Possibly one or two individuals could organise a meeting.
- **Indoor sports hall, including facilities for young people:** an enlarged Memorial Hall could provide these facilities with possible use by the school (see page 20).
- **Undertake a survey of footpaths highlighting where they did not achieve circular walks.**

Community Events

We are fortunate in having so many events throughout the year which bring the community together. They are generally run by individual organisations for fund-raising purposes. These include markets, coffee mornings, Church Week and the Arts Festival, Village Country Show, quiz nights, dramatic productions, pantomime, concerts, dances, auctions and many more. The wide range of current community events is listed in the appendix.

Would you like to see additional community events in the Parish?



The result suggests that the majority of respondents are content with the current level of existing community events held regularly within the Parish. However, the comments included suggestions for a wide and varied range of ideas for additional community events, including:

- A music festival with local talent
- A village bonfire night
- Sports day
- Resurrection of village carnival
- Village fun day

Action

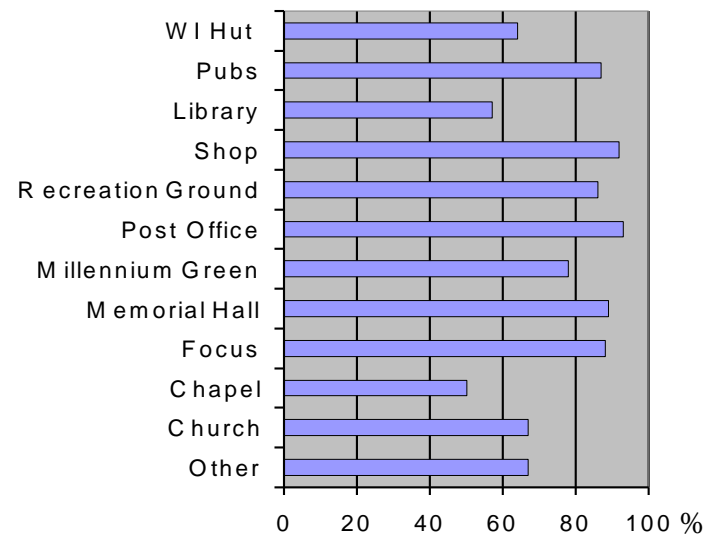
There is strong support for maintaining the current level of events.

Some organisations may like to consider some of the suggestions listed above when looking for new fund-raising ideas.

The Facilities for Leisure and Community Events

The success of programmes of events is of course very dependent on having adequate facilities and meeting places. Generally speaking, people seem satisfied with the existing facilities for meeting.

Importance of Facilities



This chart demonstrates the percentage of respondents who consider these venues and places of recreation either important or vital. However during the development of this Parish Plan a number of innovative ideas emerged for additional facilities.



Father Christmas in the Memorial Hall

A considerable number of respondents to the questionnaire suggested compelling reasons for the need to enlarge the Memorial Hall. It is recognised that this is a major project requiring large-scale funding. The Trustees are already seriously considering demolishing the Hall and replacing it with a larger, purpose-built building. A new hall could possibly accommodate sports, physical and education facilities possibly with a separate meeting room for other community events. It could provide the urgently needed facilities for a meeting place for youth perhaps associated with a more formal youth club. It might even be developed to provide a Community Centre. A village appraisal has already taken place to pursue these ideas.

Although the Women's Institute runs a 'chatter café' once a week in the W.I. Hut as

part of its impressive recent funding from the Lottery, it would appear from the individual comments that there is a need for such a facility to operate more frequently within the village.

It was also suggested that one of the reasons for relatively few adult learning opportunities within the Parish may be due to a lack of suitable venues and storage facilities. For example in the Lifelong Learning section of the survey, some respondents have suggested photography or computer classes. Appropriate facilities providing somewhere not only to run such classes but also to store the associated equipment safely and securely would be desirable.



Thorverton Country Show

Action

To undertake a detailed reappraisal of the facilities provided at the Memorial Hall with a view to developing a major scheme to rebuild it; possibly as a Community Centre. This might include amongst other things, facilities for sports/physical activities, community events, adult education groups and a meeting place for youth.

To consider the provision of a café. This might be located in the new Memorial Hall, in the WI Hut or the church.



An evening event in the Memorial Hall

Conclusion

Future new ideas, for example the establishment of tennis courts/club, will only happen if individuals are prepared to come forward and get things off the ground.

Major schemes, such as the possible redevelopment of the Memorial Hall, will need the encouragement and support of the entire community.

"It matters not how long we live, but how.

The great use of a life is to spend it for something which outlasts it.

It is not the hours you put in: it is what you put into the hours.

It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing because you can only do a little.

To do nothing is the way to be nothing."

(Anon)

11. Environment and Sustainability

Thorverton is set in the beautiful countryside of the mid Exe, the broad river valley on one side, and the gentle hills of Raddon on the other. The beauty of the location has attracted residents for a very long time, including Roman and even earlier settlers.

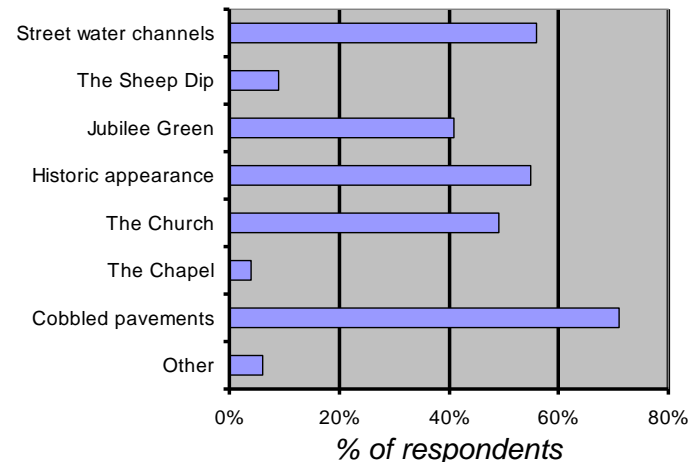
The village, located on clay and sand, has a subsoil of red rock, which gives the fertile earth its distinctive red colouring. The area is rich in rare and unusual rocks and minerals. Manganese has been found near Upton Pyne, and small quantities of gold in local streams. The igneous rock has been quarried at Raddon since the 12th century and the bubbled rock can be seen in numerous examples of local stonework.

It is probably not surprising, therefore, that many people currently living in and around a village, now regarded by the local council as one of the prime examples of conservation areas in its trust,

expressed a desire to maintain key visual features. Indeed, 32% of respondents said that they have chosen to live in the Parish because of a “love of country life”, with 33% saying the same of “village life”. The cobbled paths (71%), the general historic appearance (55%) and the ancient street water channels (57%) all rank highly in helping to create a positive character, whereas the overhead ‘wirescape’ (49%) and some inappropriate modifications to buildings (43%) are seen as detrimental.



Features important to the character of the village



The River Jordan is a delightful feature running through the centre of the village but occasional flooding causes damage to properties.



This emphasis on conservation and maintenance of visual attractiveness is also made through the balance of comments, which tended to be stronger when describing things that impacted negatively on the village environment or its character (with some 55 comments against 30 comments regarding things regarded as positive). On the other hand there was also strong support for sensitive and moderate developments which supported the sustainability of this vibrant rural community such as modest growth in lower income housing, local services and job opportunities.

In addition to understanding the strength of conservationist feelings, the working group considering the local views on the environment also wished to explore the potential level of support for new initiatives for what could be called ‘green’ issues, such as recycling and energy conservation. Here the responses were much less strong, with perhaps the exception of recycling.

Thorverton was chosen by the MDDC as one of their pilot sites in their scheme to increase the level of recycling by separating rubbish and which demonstrated a substantial reduction in non-recyclable waste: over 50% of what would once have gone to landfill is now composted or recycled. Some 60% of respondents however expressed a wish to see an extension of the range of materials



The Millennium Green

The village, located on clay and sand, has a subsoil of red rock, which gives the fertile earth its distinctive red colouring. The area is rich in rare and unusual rocks and minerals. Manganese has been found near Upton Pyne, and small quantities of gold in local streams. The igneous rock has been quarried at Raddon since the 12th century and the bubbled rock can be seen in numerous examples of local stonework.

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Thorverton from the south-west

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sensitive and moderate developments which supported the sustainability of this vibrant rural community such as modest growth in lower income housing, local services and job opportunities.

Action

- **Initiate “village clean-up days”, perhaps on a quarterly basis, to tackle any litter and fouling build-up, and build greater commitment to the maintenance of those communal areas currently looked after by a small group of volunteers.**
- **Investigate community sustainability initiatives.**
- **Lobby Mid Devon District Council to increase the range of materials taken for recycling, especially plastics.**

12. The Churches



The Parish Church



The Baptist Church



The Arts Festival during Church Week

The Baptist Church (sometimes referred to as the Chapel), situated at the top end of the village, has served the community for approximately 175 years. The inside has recently undergone extensive redecoration and refurbishment, and work is currently being undertaken on the outside surrounds. It is fortunate to have its own Minister, who can be contacted at any time, if needed, to help or advise. The Church is available for dedications of infants, weddings and funerals, as well as adult baptism for anyone in its own Church membership. As an 'Open Baptist Church', anyone of any religion or none can attend services; the Communion Services on the second Sunday of the month being for anyone who wishes to take part.

The rooms at the rear of the Baptist Church provide a venue for the 'Focus' Team to produce the village magazine, and the downstairs schoolroom is available for meetings.

In the case of the Parish Church, the responses to the questionnaire reflect its striking architectural presence in the heart of the village; indeed it is the oldest building. They reflect also the extent to which its role as a place for worship is valued, not just by regular churchgoers but by the wider community on special occasions in the year and for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

They recognise the contribution to the village made by the clergy team and members of the Church community. The Church sees people of all ages regularly coming together. In addition to well-attended all-age worship, it provides a resource for children and young people through its Junior Music Consort and children's and youth groups. It has strong ties with the village C. of E. Primary School.

Cultural events, such as concerts, are held in the Parish Church. Church Week takes place annually, with daily events such as tours of local gardens, cream teas, a street fair and walks over private land, which are enjoyed by many from the village and beyond. The East Devon Arts Festival, a major exhibition of arts and crafts, runs concurrently in the Church.

The following statistics from the individual questions provide evidence for these overall comments:

25% (99 people) of questionnaire respondents attend the Baptist or Parish Churches or elsewhere at least once a month.

24% (69) rated the Baptist Church as important, and 13% (37) rated it as vital. In addition 41% (133) rated the Parish Church as important and 26% (85) as vital.

49% (192) identified the Parish Church and 4% (17) the Baptist Church as one of three features from a list of features which have the most positive impact on Thorverton's character.

48% (187) affirmed that they thought that religion and/or spiritual wellbeing are important in keeping us healthy. This was supported by all age groups and by men as well as women.

Other responses in the questionnaire call for a place to meet and chat, perhaps a lunch club, and more cultural, social and community occasions and events.

Both churches have meeting rooms and well-equipped kitchens which serve high quality food on many occasions throughout the year.

Those involved with the two Churches, with their close ties and common purpose, were encouraged by the responses received to the questionnaire and will continue to serve the village, developing this further where possible.

Action

- **Consider using the Churches for a wider range of community activities.**

13. Summary of the Main Points



*Aerial view from the east with
the road to Crediton at the top*

The views of the community for this report were gathered at public meetings and collated by 7 working groups who also contributed to the formulation of a questionnaire. This was distributed to 355 households of which 199 (56%) completed forms were returned by 392 individuals aged 11 and over. These included nearly 1000 individual comments.

The work required to bring this Report together has been a corporate effort and involved more than 60 local people in its preparation.

It is very difficult to highlight priority areas for action from such a wealth of important information (summarised in the Detailed Action Plan on page 26), but a few of the most striking include the following:

- The historic heritage and special character of Thorverton is highly regarded and greatly loved. This must be preserved whenever changes and improvements are being considered.
- There is a need for affordable and low-cost housing to enable young people and their families to remain in the village, thus maintaining a balanced population which is essential for the long-term sustainability of this rural community and its services.
- The challenge will be to achieve a balance between controlled and limited growth to ensure the sustainability of the community and at the same time preserve the very special features of Thorverton.
- Local services including permanent premises for a shop, Post Office and surgery and a better hall for community events and the school are all regarded as vital for the future.
- There is almost unanimous agreement on the urgent need to improve the facilities for young people in the Parish.
- Because the Memorial Hall requires major restoration and repair, there is an exciting opportunity to undertake a fundamental review, and perhaps to redevelop the site along the lines of a Community Centre, bringing together in a cost-effective way several different community facilities.



Book stall at the Saturday Market



The Recreation Ground

Above all, the existing 'community spirit' is very highly treasured. It is reflected in the large number of social and other activities run by and for local people. It has evolved over centuries and must never be allowed to wane.

14. Detailed Action Plan

Section	Action	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timescale
5. Housing and Planning				
5.1 Affordable Housing	a) Need to release further land for affordable housing b) If land becomes available MDDC to commission a further Housing Needs Survey	Parish Council MDDC	District Planners, Church Commissioners, Diocese PC	Very Urgent Medium
5.2 Preserve Character of Village	a) Complete MDDC Thorverton Conservation Area Appraisal b) Consider Village Design Appraisal	MDDC Planners Parish Council	PC MDDC Planners	Medium/Important Medium
6. Education and Lifelong Learning				
6.1 Sports Hall	a) School and Memorial Hall to develop a co-ordinated plan and seek funding	School Governing Body	Memorial Hall	Medium
6.2 Playgroup Premises	a) Seek provision of permanent premises	Playgroup	School, Memorial Hall, Others	Urgent
6.3 Adult Learning	a) Ensure current classes effectively advertised b) Investigate new educational classes c) Signposting educational opportunities within district	Volunteer co-ordinator Volunteer co-ordinator Volunteer co-ordinator	Linked with DCC Adult Education	Medium Medium Medium
7. Youth				
7.1 Youth Group	a) Define facilities needed b) Investigate possibility of Youth Co-ordinator	Volunteer leader PC	DCC Youth leaders DCC	Urgent Urgent
7.2 Transport	a) Cost of bus fares for after-school activities	Volunteer	Bus companies	Urgent
7.3 Employment	a) Co-ordinate local job opportunities for youth b) Consider remuneration	Volunteer Volunteer		Medium Medium

Section	Action	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timescale
8. Local Services and Transport				
8.1 Shop and Post Office	a) Establish permanent sites for Shop and Post Office b) Identify who will run service	Existing community organisations	Existing community organisations Postmistress/ <i>'Not the Village Shop' Manager</i>	Very Urgent Urgent
8.2 Local Businesses	a) Promote further local businesses	PC to set up initiative	Local interested parties, MDDC & DCC	Medium
8.3 Local Transport	a) Investigate viability of extended timetable & possibly a service to Crediton	PC	Bus companies	Urgent
8.4 Traffic	a) Consider introducing 20 mph limit in village b) Identify further car parking	PC PC	Highways	Urgent Medium
8.5 Security	a) Extend Neighbourhood Watch Scheme b) Promote greater co-ordination between Police and Neighbourhood Watch	Volunteers Police	Police Volunteers	Medium Medium
9. Health and Wellbeing				
9.1 Exe Valley Surgery 9.2 Unmet Needs	a) Seek site for expanded premises b) Explore provision of additional services (see page 18)	Surgery PC, Surgery	MDDC Planning Age Concern Devon, DevonLink	Urgent Medium
10. Leisure, Clubs and Societies				
10.1 Recreational and Leisure Activities	a) Tennis Court b) Sports Hall c) Maintain present leisure activities	Volunteers Volunteers Memorial Hall	Landowners, PC Schools, Memorial Hall Volunteers, Societies, Club Members	Medium Medium Medium
10.2 Footpaths	a) Survey of footpaths b) Establish circular walks c) Extend Countryside Stewardship Schemes	Volunteers PC Farmers	PC & DCC ? Defra	Medium Long-term Long-term
10.3 Community Activities	a) Maintain current activities b) Consider new activities suggested in comments	Memorial Hall Voluntary organisations	PC/Volunteers Volunteers	Ongoing Ongoing

Section	Action	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Timescale
10.4 Community Facilities	a) Develop plans for rebuild of Memorial Hall with Community Centre envisaged b) Consider establishing a café? within Shop? within Memorial Hall? within Church?	Memorial Hall Memorial Hall, WI, Shop, Church	PC. Independent funding organisations	Urgent Medium
11. Environment and Sustainability				
11.1 Recycling	a) Lobby to extend recycling especially plastics	PC	MDDC Waste	Urgent
11.2 Litter	a) Initiate village clean-up days	Volunteers	PC	Urgent
11.3 Cycling	a) Consider ways of encouraging cycling safely, even on our country lanes	Volunteers	PC	Urgent
11.4 Energy Saving	a) Investigate community sustainability initiatives	Volunteers	PC	Urgent / Medium
11.5 Pavement along Silver Street	a) Extension of the pavement past the cricket field to the A396	PC	MDDC Highways	Urgent
12. The Churches				
12.1	a) Consider using Church for wider community uses	Parochial Church Council	Co-ordinated with those linked with suggested activities	Medium

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Launch Group

John Spivey, Margaret Turner-Warwick, Ward Crawford, Ros Brimacombe

Steering Group

Ward Crawford, Margaret Turner-Warwick, Ros Brimacombe, John Spivey, Doreen Jones, John White, Mike Baldwin, Mike Jeffreys, Tania Beard, Tim Colebrook

History

Ian Stoye

Housing and Planning Working Group

Mike Baldwin, Beryl Coe, Jean White, Roseanne Benn, Selina Scott, Andrew Crossley

Education and Lifelong Learning WG

Tania Beard, John Iffla (retired when no longer Chair of Governors), Jean White, Selina Scott, Chrissy Scott, Sue Renison, Hilary Lawson, Sarah Crawford, Annette Mawson, Denise Woodgate

Youth WG

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Local Services and Transport WG

Doreen Jones, Lilian Marshall, Jane Ristic, Phil Parry, Stephen Toogood

Health and Wellbeing WG

Mike Jeffreys, Jules Jeffreys, Gilly Haysom, Stephanie Shelton, Sheena Hunter-Hedges

Leisure, Clubs and Societies WG

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Questionnaire Group

Roseanne Benn, Beryl Coe, Roger Fieldhouse, Margaret Turner-Warwick

Questionnaire Distribution

Ward Crawford, Beryl Coe, Sarah Mitchell, Tim Colebrook, Richard Lane, Ella Jeffreys, Ollie Gomme, Edward Crawford

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Sarah Mitchell, Helen Ratcliffe, Claire Turner, John Spivey, Ward Crawford

Editorial Group

Margaret Turner-Warwick, John Spivey, Ros Brimacombe, Sarah Mitchell, David Mitchell

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Advisers

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16. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Thorverton's Clubs, Societies and Organisations

Societies/Leisure

Thorverton Amateur Dramatic Society (TADS)

TADS produce entertainment such as plays, pantomimes, shows, and revues on an ongoing basis for the enjoyment of the village and the wider community. It is self-funded and often gifts funds to other village organisations. Most productions are staged at the Memorial Hall.

TADS membership includes a wide cross-section of the village with people of all ages taking part in productions. Its main problem is having equipment stored around the village in several locations rather than under one roof.

For further information contact Colin Marshall, Dinneford House, Dinneford Street, EX5 5NU on 861228.

Thorverton Country Show

The annual Country Show started in 1995 as a Vintage Rally. It is organised by a sub-committee of the Thorverton Memorial Hall which is made up of Trustees and Non-Trustees. As well as bringing the community together, it is very much an event which puts the village on the map.

For further information contact Jean White, Waters Ford, Milford Lane, EX5 5NX on 860827.



Thorverton & District History Society

The Society was founded in 1990 by the late Michael Lewis. Its aim and objective was to provide a platform for discussion, to promote research into the history of the Parish and the maintenance of historical records.

Its aspirations are to have a museum with a small library attached, to promote research into the history of the village and Parish and so maintain records for future generations.

For further information contact William Stamper (Chair), Dunelm, Raddon, EX5 5PN on 860214 or Phyllis Langdon (Secretary), Ferndale, Bullen Street on 860932.

Thorverton Women's Institute

The Women's Institute Organisation is based on the ideal of fellowship, truth, tolerance and justice. Its objectives are to further the purpose of the Women's Institute Organisation and to help women of all ages to participate in comradeship, wide-ranging activities and new skills.

Thorverton W.I. is part of the "Broadclyst Group" and first met in 1924.

The current premises were opened by Lady Clinton on 3rd November 1926.

It holds regular monthly meetings to which various speakers are invited, and a Coffee Morning on the fourth Saturday of each month which includes a variety of stalls. It also holds various fund-raising events throughout the year.

The premises are used by other village organisations. New members are always welcome.

For further information contact Mrs Sylvia Gregory (President), 27 Broadlands, EX5 5PT on 860183 or Miss Susan Maguire (Secretary,) 3 Cleaves Close, EX5 5NN on 860631.



The Royal British Legion (Thorverton Branch)

The Branch was established in the village to promote the ideals of the Royal British Legion.

For further information contact William Stamper (Chair), Dunelm, Raddon, EX5 5PN on 860214.

Thorverton Art Group

The group has around 15 members from Thorverton and adjoining parishes. It meets on Friday mornings at the Memorial Hall in a very informal, friendly atmosphere. There are no age limits and no tutor, but generous criticism, augmented by the occasional demonstration session, gallery or studio visit, and, in the summer holiday, local field trips.

New members who share the objective of enjoying art and painting are welcome.

For further information contact Barrie Phillips, Crossmead, School Lane, EX5 5NR on 860529.

*Thorverton Art Group
in the Memorial Hall*



Ladies Group

A Young Wives Group started in 1971, eventually changing its name to Wives Group and then Ladies Group. It was, and is now, for ladies of any age. The group members meet in each others' houses on the second Thursday of the month from October to May, with occasional meals out or a theatre evening. Any surplus funds it generates are given to worthy causes in the village.

For further information contact Beryl Grace, Moss Bank, School Lane, EX5 5NR on 860489.

Thorverton Arts Exchange

Monthly meetings with particular themes are held in individual members' homes. The Arts Exchange share enthusiasms for writing, painting, film and craft with one another.

For further information contact Claire Cousins, Cubberley House, The Berry on 860438.

Thorverton Amblers, Ramblers and Trampers (TARTS)

The TARTS are an informal group of people, mainly from the village, who get together to enjoy walking in some of the outstanding areas of coast and countryside on our doorstep. Individual members take it in turn to plan and lead a walk with as many as 20-25 people taking part.

TARTS are always on the lookout for new ideas for walks and volunteers to lead them.

For further information contact Jean Brown on 861176 or Caroline Prince on 861002.



Youth/Education Groups

Thorverton Mother and Toddler Group

The group is a voluntary organisation run and funded by local parents who meet at the W.I. Hut on a Wednesday morning. Their aim is to give parents the opportunity to allow their children to interact with others and play in a safe, nurturing environment.

It enables children to begin developing skills in self-assurance, awareness and independence at a young age.

For further information contact Nic Fice, 9 Broadlands, EX5 5PT on 860318.

Thorverton Pre-School Playgroup

The Pre-School Playgroup is run during term-time for all children of Thorverton and the surrounding villages from 2½ - 5 years old, four mornings and one afternoon a week. The sessions are held at the Memorial Hall.

It is governed by a voluntary committee of parents and family members and is registered through Ofsted to take a maximum of 26 children.

For further information contact Laura Samuels (Chair), 10 Broadlands, on 861496 or Tracy Weeks, Dunsmore, Silverton, EX5 4DU on 861276.

Rainbows

The Rainbows meet at the W.I. Hut between 4.00-5.00pm on Tuesdays during term-time.

For further information contact Jean Pearn on 860105 or Penny Fice on 861136.

Brownies

Brownies meet at the W.I. Hut between 5.30-7.00pm on Fridays during term-time.

For further information contact Hannah James on 0789 403 7133.

Children's Dance/Ballet Class

Dance classes for children of all ages are held at the Memorial Hall on Wednesday afternoons during term-time.

For further information contact Sue Blackmur on 493226.

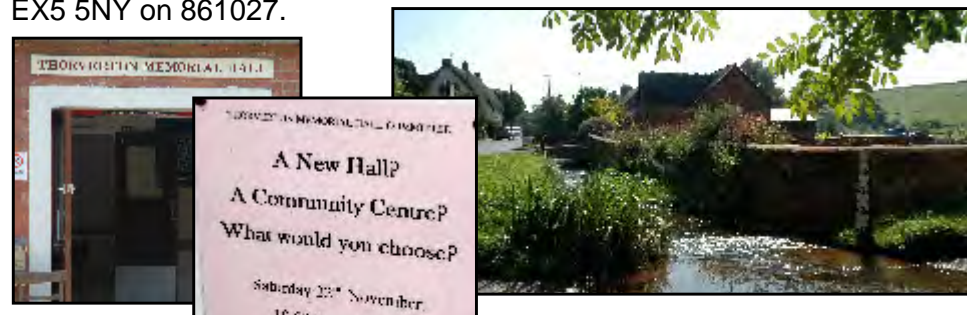
Amenities

Thorverton Memorial Hall

The Hall was given to the village in 1946 and was named in memory of those who died in the Second World War. It is a registered charity and is managed by a group of Trustees. It is available for hire by groups, organisations and individuals and is well used.

Regular fund-raising and community events are organised throughout the year. A Saturday Market, which provides full breakfast facilities, is held on the second Saturday of each month. It also provides other organisations with a platform to raise funds.

For further information contact Michael Shelton, Fir Tree House, Bullen Street, EX5 5NY on 861027.



Thorverton Recreation Ground

The Recreation Ground is administered by the Trustees of the Recreation Ground and is a registered Charity. The Trustees are the members of the Parish Council. Meetings of the Trustees are held as and when appropriate with at least one meeting per year.

The Recreation Ground is home to the Thorverton Football Club and all their home matches are played there. The Trustees have also provided play equipment for all ages of children. As old equipment becomes obsolete or beyond repair it is replaced with new. The Recreation Ground is a dog-free green area.

Thorverton Millennium Green Trust (TMGT)

The Trust was set up in order to purchase approximately five acres of land at the end of Milford lane. It provides recreation facilities and keeps the area as a green open space.

Thorverton Rural Environmental and Amenities Trust (TREAT)

This Trust was established to look for various avenues of funding.

An opportunity arose to apply for a Lottery grant to create a Millennium Green, which opened up other routes for grant funding. The grant applications were successful and, along with private donations, the land was purchased.

Because the remit for TREAT was so broad, the Lottery Commission insisted that a more specific Trust be set up. Hence TMGT was created to manage the Green. Currently both of these Trusts have the same Trustees.

Trees have been planted, and hard paths and seating areas created particularly to help the elderly and disabled. There is a flat area which is kept mown for children's games. The Green is maintained mostly by volunteers who mow grass paths, prune trees, sustain the wildflower area etc. They give their time, and cover the costs of fuel and the use of machinery.

For further information on TMGT and TREAT contact Margaret Turner- Warwick on 861173.



Fitness/Sport

Pilates

Two sessions of Pilates are held on Monday evenings from 7.00-8.00 & 8.00-9.00pm during term-time at the Memorial Hall.

For further information contact Vicki Thornbury on 01363 ??.

Yoga

Yoga sessions are held at the Memorial Hall on Thursday evenings from 7.00-8.30pm. For further information contact Heather Coley on 861476.

Thorverton Cricket Club



The Thorverton Cricket Club has been part of the community since 1860, with cricket being played throughout this period with the exception of the war years. There have been a number of changes to the game and the Club over the years, with its most successful period being in the 1970s and early 1980s.

The Club runs two senior sides on a Saturday in the Devon League and a Sunday XI which plays Club fixtures. On Sunday we aim to give games to those who do not play on a Saturday and to introduce younger members to the adult game. There are approximately 50 adult cricketers.

Since its start about 6 years ago the colts section has grown spectacularly with about 150 colts registered, ranging in age from 6 to 15 and including about 12 girls. There are 5 colt sides playing in the East Devon League. Colts training sessions are held on a Friday evening.

In 2008, for the first time, the Club carried out four afternoon training sessions with children from the village school. This has been very successful and will continue in the future.

The Club has recently invested in all-weather artificial net facilities which have proved to be a tremendous success. It is currently seeking to obtain Club Mark, which is a nationally accredited sporting award.

The Club celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2010 and it intends to have various activities during the year, possibly including a match against Somerset or MCC and a Ball to round the year off.

For further information contact Charles Kislingbury, Arley House, 19 Church Street, Silverton on 860270.

Thorverton Amateur Football Club

The Football Club was registered in 1991 and has, since then, steadily risen through the Leagues to the Premier Division of the Devon & Exeter Football League. It also has a second team which plays in the Senior Division 5 of the same League. The home matches are all played at the Recreation Ground in Thorverton. The Club is self-funded.

The Club now boasts a Youth Team for under 10s which plays in the Sainsbury's Friendly League.

For further information contact Dominic Carbines, 18 Cleaves Close, EX5 5NN on 860043.

Thorverton Netball Team

The Club formed some ten years ago and plays all its matches at Exeter University in Division 1 of the Exeter & District League on a Wednesday. It also plays in the Crediton & District League on Thursdays. Matches take place virtually all year round and new members are always welcome.

For further information contact Natasha Carbines, 18 Cleaves Close, EX5 5NN on 860043.

Golf Society of Players of Thorverton

The Society, which is based at the Exeter Inn, play mainly at Newton St Cyres Golf Club. Its objective is to enjoy communal activity golf with local residents, friends and guests. It would like to grow in number, which currently stands at around 30. It also wishes to encourage young people to join.

For further information contact Bob Hyde, Little Berry, The Bury on 860101.

Badminton Club

This club meets every Monday during term time at Exeter School Sports Hall in Barrack Road. 4 courts available from 5.15pm to 7.00pm. Beginners (of all age groups) welcome.

Contact John Spivey, Dinneford Spring, EX5 5NU on 861324.

Thorverton Wheelers and Tourers Society

This cycling group meet monthly for a Sunday cycle ride.

Contact Pat Garnett on 860652 or John Mann at The Exeter Inn on 860206.

The Football Field on the Recreation Ground



The Pubs of Thorverton



Appendix 2 – The Churches

Baptist Church

There are several quotes as to various meeting houses for Baptist and other Non-conformists in Thorverton, but the Church on the present site had its foundation stone laid in August 1834 on the principal road between Thorverton and Exeter. The Trust Deed stated that “The Meeting House was to be a place of Religious Worship by Protestant Dissenters of the Particular Baptist”.

The Minister of the Church is Revd Maurice Harrison of 26 Derrick Road, Tiverton, EX16 5AB, who is on duty most Sunday mornings at the Church at 11.00am. He can be contacted on 01884 258599.

The Treasurer and Secretary, Mr & Mrs Langdon of Ferndale, Bullen Street, EX5 5NG (860932) are always willing to open the Church for visitors at any time.

There is a special relationship between the Thorverton Baptist Church and its sister churches in Brampford Speke and Broadclyst, and regular joint services are held with the Parish Church in Thorverton.



*Thorverton
Baptist
Church*

Parish Church

St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Thorverton, Grade 1 listed, is a spacious church with attractive stained glass windows. It dates from early medieval times, although with subsequent development. The oldest remaining parts are the porch, notable for its stone carvings, and tower containing a ring of 10 bells, which attracts ringers from far and wide. There are a number of finely carved pews and a striking eagle lectern.

A lively all-age congregation participates in a variety of worship and groups, in which spiritual growth, provision for children and young people, and music feature strongly. Church members are active in the village community and its primary school in many ways, including through the annual Church Week and Arts Festival. (For further information contact Helen Pope of 3 Silver Street, EX5 5LT on 860159.) As part of a group of eight parishes, the Church operates within a much larger community, the Netherexe Parishes.

Future plans include: developing the provision of formal pastoral support to the community offered through the Church; building on the existing opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth; increasing the existing use made of the Church and its facilities as a venue for meetings and cultural events, and through wider use of the catering opportunities offered by the kitchen and dining area; continuing to maintain the fabric of this listed and beautiful building.

Details of contacts, Church services, groups and activities can be found on the noticeboard, in the Church porch, on the weekly sheet and in ‘Focus’. There is also a website (www.netherexe.org). All are welcome to attend the services and take advantage of the wide range of bible study and fellowship groups available throughout the Netherexe Parishes.



*Thorverton
Parish
Church
Choir*



Thorverton centre from the east, with Bullen Street at the top