

**WHITSBURY VILLAGE PLAN**  
**SECURING OUR FUTURE**



Produced by the Parish of Whitsbury, August 2006

# ***“WHITSBURY VILLAGE PLAN – SECURING OUR FUTURE”***

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### References:

1. The Parish of Whitsbury & St Leonard’s, A Short Story from Earliest Times, C Houghton-Brown 1986
2. <http://www.nfdc.gov.uk>, NFDC website.
3. <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/getmap>, Ordnance Survey website.

With thanks for the support and funding of New Forest District Council.

# ***“WHITSBURY VILLAGE PLAN – SECURING OUR FUTURE”***

## **SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION**

The first and most important thing to do here is to acknowledge those who have given their time and effort for this Plan. This encompasses two groups. The first is actually the least obvious, although the most important, and comprising all those Villagers who have taken the time to respond to the questionnaire and also discuss their views with the members of the Committee. No plan would have been possible without their input.

The second is the members of the Village Plan Committee. Accordingly, I would like to extend my thanks to the following for giving of their knowledge and advice so freely, and doing so with overt enthusiasm and good humour at all times; the Plan that follows reflects their endeavours:

- Jenny Kinsey.
- Nick Locock.
- James Stanford.
- Jeffery Tolman.

The path towards this Plan was begun by the Parish Council. They recognized the imperative to create a plan in order to express the views of the community and thus kick-started the process at a meeting on 14 March 2005. The Village Plan Committee was set one task, to express the views of the Villagers in order to produce a village plan that could help guide the development of the village. To be able to do so in an unbiased manner it was recognized that the Village Plan Committee should be entirely independent from the Parish Council or any of the other bodies that currently represent the Village; the Committee members, while volunteers, were selected accordingly.

When reading this Plan three issues should be borne in mind:

- The lack of points to action should not be seen as a lack of imagination, inspiration or ambition by the Villagers on behalf of the Village. Quite the contrary, two key points should be drawn from this; it reflects strongly the feeling that there is little that the residents wish to be changed, this view being clear in the results of the questionnaire; it also reflects the confidence felt by the residents in those bodies that currently represent the village, namely the Parish Council, Village Hall Committee and Parochial Church Council.
- Some points for action that are raised in this Plan may already have been addressed or are being addressed currently. It is still appropriate that these issues are highlighted, as they prompted a significant reaction by the residents.
- This Plan highlights issues that the residents of Whitsbury wish other appropriate bodies to address; it is up to these bodies to now take these issues forward.

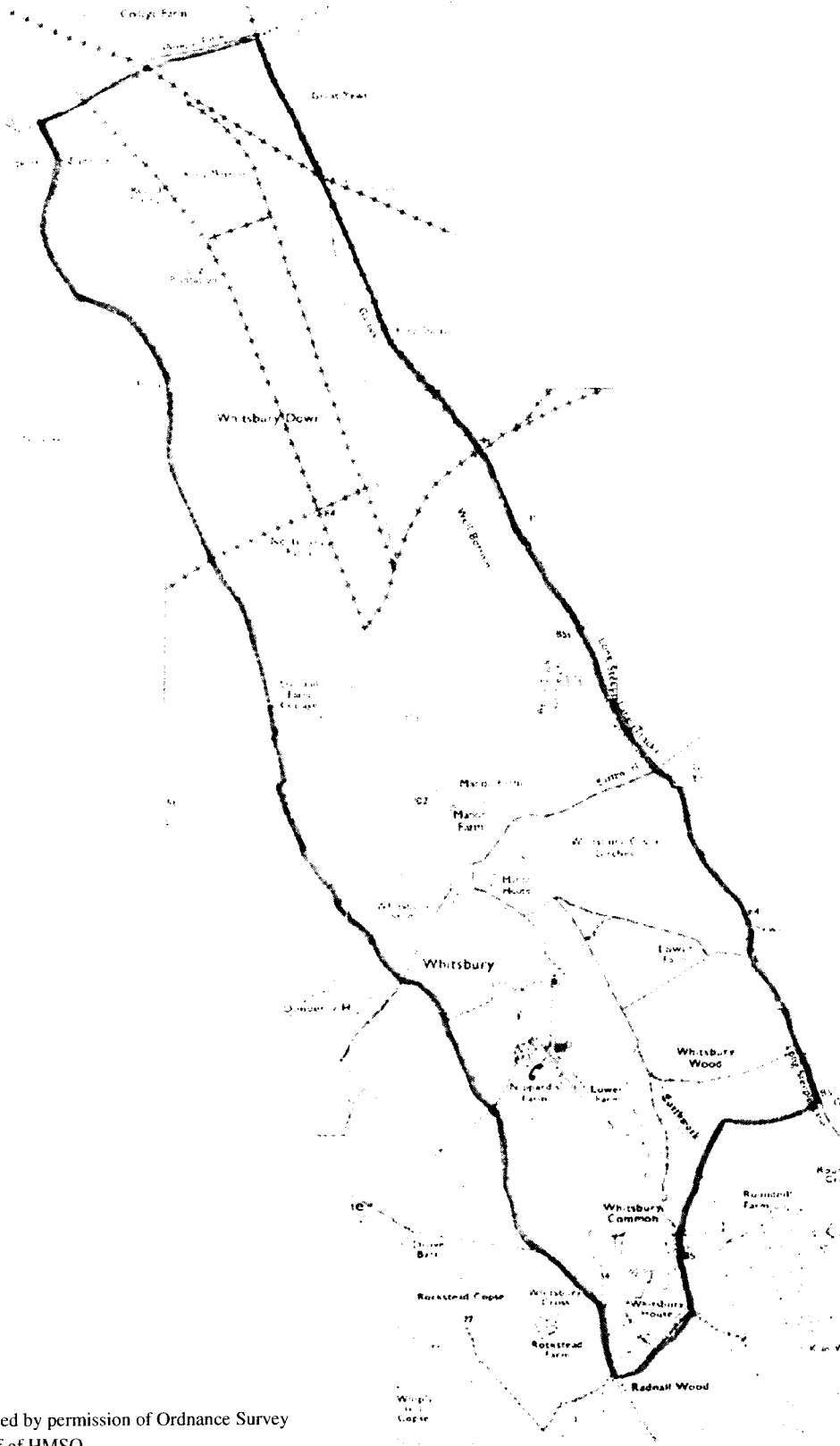
Finally, I ask you to read the Plan. We have attempted to keep it short and simple. For those not fortunate to live in Whitsbury it exposes what is special about our Village, for Whitsbury residents it is about securing our future!

Yours sincerely,

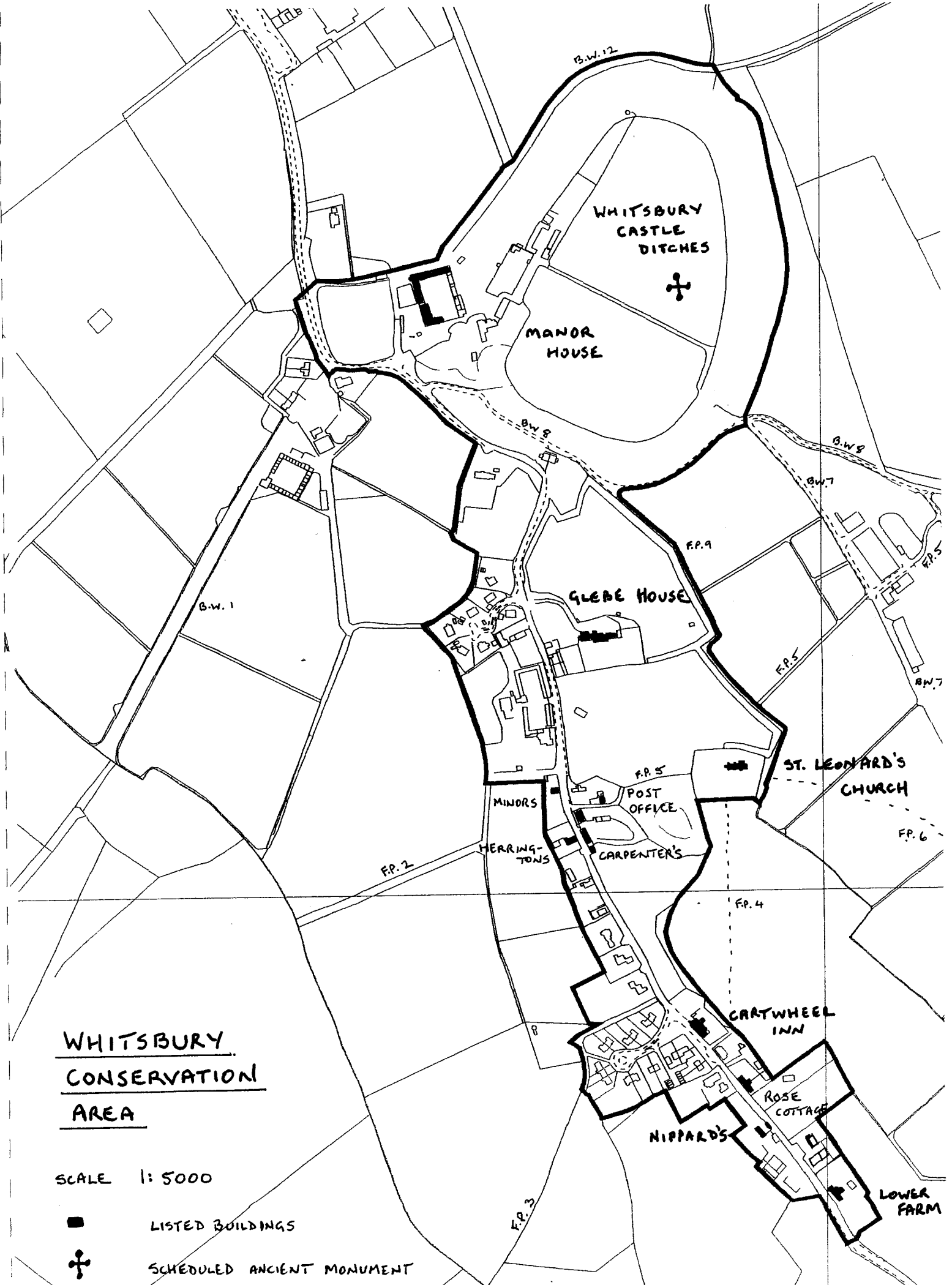
Neil Dalton

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**SECTION 2 – WHITSBURY PARISH MAP**



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WHITSBURY  
CONSERVATION  
AREA

SCALE 1:5000

- LISTED BUILDINGS
- ⊕ SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT

F.P. FOOTPATH      B.W. BRIDLEWAY

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### **SECTION 3 – WHITSBURY, SOME HISTORY**

Whitsbury has a depth of history. It is mentioned (Witeberge) in the Domesday Book. The Tenant-in-Chief was Robert fitz Gerald, nephew of Edward of Salisbury, the Sheriff of Wiltshire. The village then comprised 5 ploughlands, 50 acres of pasture, 10 acres of coppice and a mill. The population was 5 servants, 5 villagers, 11 cottagers and 1 borderer.

Habitation on the site of the village, however, extends way back further. The surrounding chalklands have been settled since earliest times with flint implements dating from the Mesolithic period having been found nearby. At the top end of the Village and with dominating views over the surrounding countryside is a hill fort, near which Roman coins dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD have been found. After Roman occupation the fort formed part of a line of fortifications, also comprising Clearbury Rings and Old Sarum, facing East and defending the line of the River Avon.

Since the details catalogued in the Domesday Book, periodic records have charted the fortunes of the Village. In 1428 it is thought that there were only about 10 occupied houses in the Village. By 1801 the Village had consolidated to some degree, a survey then giving the numbers at 22 occupied houses, totalling 60 males and 72 females, of whom 43 were employed in agriculture. Shortly thereafter, in 1824, Whitsbury is recorded to have had 5 farmers, farming a total of 1622 acres between them, the majority of which were tenanted from Lord Shaftesbury. In 1905 the parish was recorded to comprise 1823 acres, of which 904 were arable, 689 permanent pasture and the balance woodland. More recently, in 1984, these figures had changed to reflect 700 acres of arable, 871 acres permanent pasture, 125 acres woodland and 120 acres of grass gallops.

Throughout this period, a constant presence in the Village has been St Leonard's Church, which occupies a breathtaking spot above the main part of the Village on the wooded slopes to the North of the road. While the exact date of the foundation of St Leonard's is not known, it formed part of the endowment of the monastery at Reading founded by Henry I, who died in 1119. Inside the Church there is a list of incumbents and patrons dating back to 1307. A Church of England elementary school for 60 scholars was built by Edward Edwards in 1871, a memorial in the Church commemorates his death in 1903. St. Leonard's was largely repaired and altered in 1878. Considerable restoration work was carried out on the Tower, including the installation of 9 bells cast by Mears of Whitechapel. As well as St Leonard's there is also a small Methodist Church built in 1901.

Another equally important feature is the Village Hall. Built in 1906, the Hall exemplifies the architecture at the time, with beautiful wood panelling throughout, and, despite much modernization, has managed to retain its original character. While still retaining a small Post Office, once there was also a shop, located in the Cartwheel Inn, which closed in 1970. There was once a Village School, located just to the South of Major's Farm, it was demolished in the 1950s and no sign of it now remains.

Although development has occurred in recent years, Whitsbury has changed little in recent times, in particular the streetscene due to the lack of street lighting, pavements or traffic calming measures. Development that has occurred has, on the whole, been sympathetic to character of the Village. As a consequence, signs of Whitsbury's history are evident in the wealth of beautiful houses, many of which are thatched, and the other buildings and the surrounding countryside mentioned above.

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## **SECTION 4 - WHITSBURY, THE PRESENT DAY**

Whitsbury is part of the group of villages on the edge of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Village is quintessentially English in nature, stretching primarily along a single road that winds its way up a valley flanked on both sides by brick-walled and hedged gardens and old cottages, which themselves are surrounded by gently wooded slopes. Striking features are the beautiful church of St Leonard's, with a breathtaking view over the surrounding area, the Manor House in a sunny spot at the top of the hill and the gallops lying to the North of the Village. There is more, with a profusion of other wonderful cottages, houses and buildings, while the location in general is stunning. The natural beauty of Whitsbury is equally balanced by the vibrancy of the community itself. While not a large village, with only 94 houses and just on 200 residents, there is an undoubted spark within the Village and the social diary is rarely empty.

The main employment is based upon the very successful equine and agricultural industry, comprising 4 major yards of racing stables, stud and dairy. Consequently, the people-intense nature of these businesses has allowed Whitsbury to retain a charm that has been lost in many other villages and communities. This human tableau is further enriched by the many international stable hands working in the various yards. Furthermore, the daily presence of both the racehorses and on the roads, byways, gallops and young bloodstock in the fields and paddocks all around the Village gives an undeniable rural and equine atmosphere.

While lacking a shop, Whitsbury is fortunate to have a range of other facilities and in particular many that allow an active social calendar to be maintained. There are two churches; St Leonard's and a Methodist Church; a well maintained Village Hall; a pub, The Cartwheel; and a small Post Office. There is a strong sense of community in the Village, which is undoubtedly underpinned by the range of social activities that take place. These range from the annual Beer Festival, parties and a host of other events in the pub, to the annual Village Show, bingo evenings and a variety of other events in the Village Hall. Periodically, these are supplemented by barn dances, fetes and other one-off events.

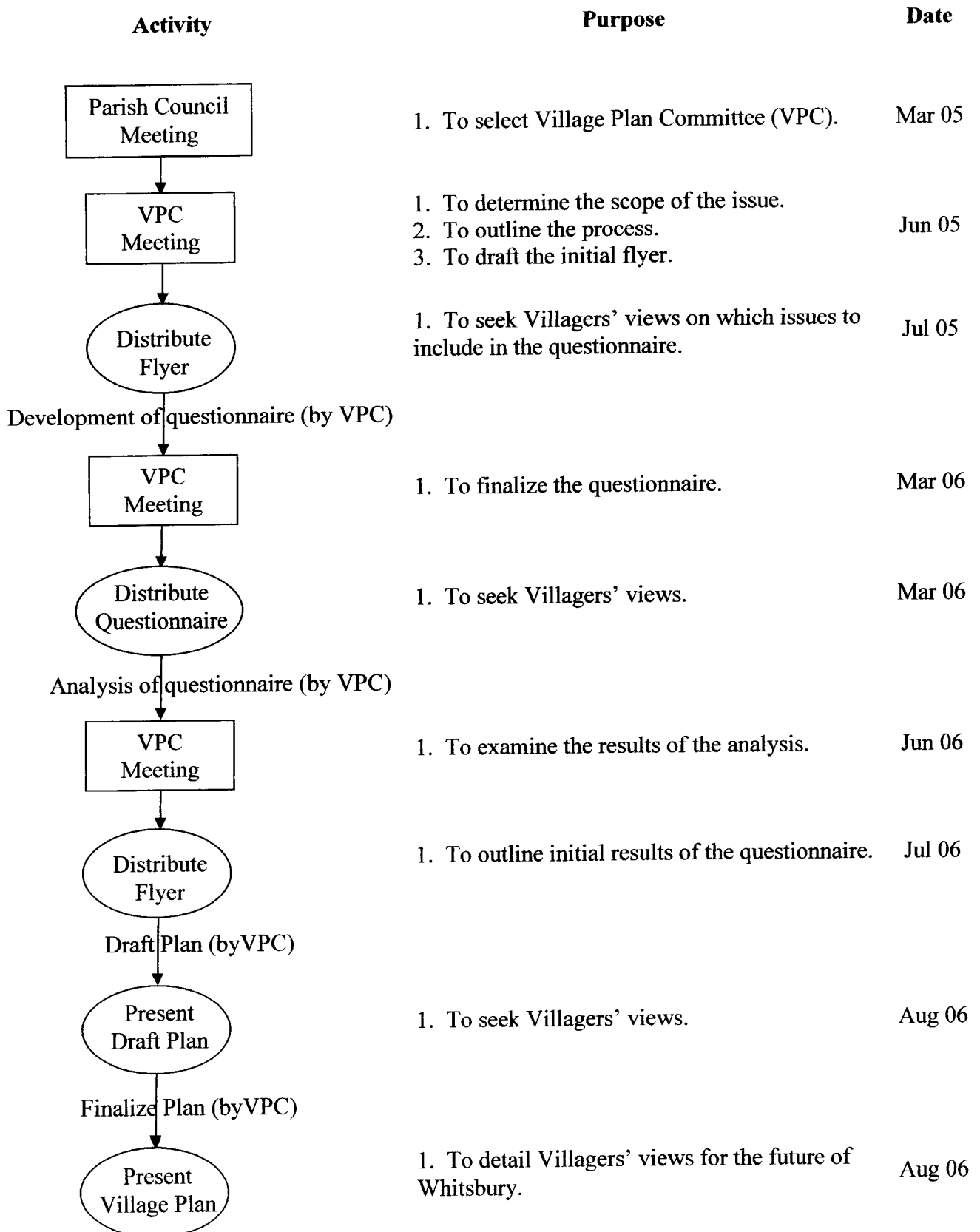
As well as being active socially, Whitsbury is also an active community in respect of self representation. Villagers are represented locally by the Parish Council, Village Hall Committees (Trustees, Management Committee and Hall Committee) and Parochial Church Council. These bodies have carried out a huge amount of good work on behalf of the whole community, a fine example being the significant recent development of the Village Hall, which encompassed a sizable lottery grant. Equally, there are many individuals who address issues within the community at their own volition.

Whitsbury enjoys a wonderful balance. It is a peaceful and beautiful village yet with an energetic and active community. It has much to offer.

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## **SECTION 5 - THE PROCESS**

The intent throughout was to keep the process as simple as possible. The size of Whitsbury and intuitive feel for the range of issues to be addressed did not indicate a need for a series of village meetings or a range of sub-committees. The process followed is detailed below.





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## **SECTION 6 - QUESTIONNAIRE AND ANALYSIS**

### **SECTION 1 – COMMUNITY, ATMOSPHERE AND COMMUNICATION**

1. How long have you lived in Whitsbury? (71)

Less than 1 year 4 1 to 5 years 15 6 to 10 years 9 Over 10 years 43

2. Do you have a family background in Whitsbury or its immediate vicinity? (71)

Yes 26 No 45

3. I enjoy living in Whitsbury: (70)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50	20			

Additional comments: Nil

4. Why do you live in Whitsbury? (70)

For work 18 For the village ambience/character 49

Other (please give details): Local Family - 3

5. What do you like most about living in Whitsbury?

Setting – 53

Community/friendliness – 35

6. What do you like least about living in Whitsbury?

Nothing – 17

No shop – 6

Lack of public transport – 5

Snobbish attitudes - 3

Lorries, speeding cars & motorbikes – 11

Lack of children’s facilities – 5

4WDs/motorbikes on byways - 4

7. What do you think is the most important thing that could be changed to improve Whitsbury?

Nothing – 36

Speeding and motorists on byways – 4

Play area/children’s facilities - 9

Shop - 4

8. Whitsbury has a strong sense of community? (73)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32	35	5	1	

Additional comments: Nil

9. There are a sufficient number and variety of events organized within Whitsbury (in the Village Hall and elsewhere) to foster the atmosphere and sense of community: **(73)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22	45	5	1	

If you Disagree or Strongly Disagree, please suggest other activities that might be organized or provide additional comments:

Classes/sports & games facilities - 3

10. Sufficient is done to try to integrate new arrivals, including international workers such as stable hands, etc, into the community: **(72)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	26	27	9	4

If you Disagree or Strongly Disagree, please suggest how this might be better achieved or provide additional comments:

Annual Village Garden Party – 3

Welcome note - 2

11. Whitsbury is well served by local representatives

Body	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Hampshire County Council <b>(68)</b>	10	21	36		1
New Forest District Council <b>(68)</b>	14	23	30	1	
Parish Council <b>(67)</b>	30	30	4	3	
Village Hall Committee <b>(72)</b>	37	33	2		
Parochial Church Council <b>(61)</b>	18	23	18	2	

Additional comments: Nil

12. How do you find out what is going on in Whitsbury?

Type	I Use It		I Do Not Use It
	Regularly	Infrequently	
Whichbury Newsletter <b>(68)</b>	64	3	1
Noticeboard (bottom of Church footpath) <b>(54)</b>	15	19	20
Noticeboard (at Lower Grove) <b>(58)</b>	35	13	10
Noticeboard (at the Village Hall) <b>(48)</b>	10	18	20
Word of Mouth <b>(72)</b>	63	9	

13. Whitsbury needs other forms of communication: (67)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2	9	16	40	

If you Strongly Agree or Agree, please suggest ideas, such as a website, additional newsletter, etc:

Website – 4

Annual Village meeting - 1

14. There is a nuisance caused by:

Issue	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Noise (63)	7	4	9	33	10
Light (62)	2	3	1	39	17
Dog Mess (62)	2	7	8	41	4
Litter (63)	4	17	3	35	4
Behaviour (including lack of courtesy by drivers, riders, etc) (66)	12	20	6	26	2
Other					

15. If Strongly Agree or Agree to any section of Question 14 what remedial action would you recommend?

Notices - 2

Dog Mess Bins (cost to empty) - 1

Organized Litter Collections - 6

Awareness Campaign -14

Litter Bins (cost to empty) - 2

Other - 0

Additional comments:

Light: 2 Strongly Agree - concerned about over-powerful security lights

2 Strongly Agree & 2 Agree - concerned about noise from those leaving pub late at night

Noise: 2 Strongly Agree - concerned about chainsaws, etc at unsociable times

## SECTION 2 – SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT

16. The fabric of Whitsbury is well maintained: (71)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30	41			

Further comments for any element about which you Disagree or Strongly Disagree: Nil

17. Do you think that Whitsbury needs: (72)

Additional pavements or street lighting? Yes 1

No 71

18. How often do you use the footpaths and other public rights of way in Whitsbury?

Facility	Weekly or More	Monthly or More	Annually or More	Less than Annually
Footpaths (71)	47	14	7	3
Byways (61)	34	15	5	7
Bridleways (59)	29	13	10	7

19. Why do you use the public rights of way?

Exercise/fitness - 48  
 Nature watching - 16  
 Transport (to get somewhere else!) - 14  
 Dog walking - 25  
 Horse riding - 8  
 Other - 6

20. The public rights of way are suitably maintained and well marked: (71)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	41	9	10	3

If you Disagree or Strongly Disagree, please give details:

21. The following cause a nuisance on public rights of way or elsewhere:

Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Walkers (51)	1		10	23	17
Horse Riders (52)	1	3	9	26	13
Cyclists (52)	1	4	10	28	9
Motorcyclists (63)	24	18	9	11	1
4x4 drivers (70)	32	15	9	13	1
Dogs (48)		4	9	21	14
Other – Lorries (1)		1			

Additional comments:

4 WDs/motorbikes destroying byways and peace - 15

### SECTION 3 - BUILDING, DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS

22. Planning and development control is conducted suitably and with due sensitivity to the character of Whitsbury: (67)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11	44	7	5	

Additional comments: Nil

23. Do you feel that there is a need for further housing in the village as (please tick)?

Affordable Housing (eg Housing Association owned for rent to people with strong local ties): 38

Social Housing (Council owned housing for rent): 11

Sheltered Housing: 2

Other: 0

Additional comments: No development - 29

24. There is the need for additional sources of employment in Whitsbury: (70)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3	10	21	30	6

Additional comments:

2 Strongly Agree - wishing for holiday opportunities for the young

25. There is a need for the following in Whitsbury:

Facility	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Post Office (68)	41	13	13	1	
Village Shop (61)	19	10	20	9	3
Mobile Shop (57)	15	11	22	7	2

Additional comments: Viability of any business

### **FACILITIES (TO INCLUDE THOSE FOR THE YOUNG AND ELDERLY)**

26. What additional facilities would you like to see provided and would you make use of?

Facility	Should be Provided		Would Use	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Mother & Baby/ Toddler/Child's Club	23	15	5	28
Activities for the Older Generation	33	9	6	28
Playing Field	28	19	9	22
Children's Playground	43	9	12	21
Other:				
Tennis Court	2		2	
Mobile Library	2		2	

27. Whitsbury should consider some form of investment for the benefit of the children, some form of youth trust: (67)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	20	30	7	2

Additional comments: Nil

### TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND ROUTES

28. How often do you use the following modes of transport?

Type	Daily	Weekly	Less than weekly
Car (67)	59	8	
Motorcycle (5)	1		4
Other motorized vehicle (9)	3		6
Bus (15)		4	11
Bicycle (25)	1	6	18
Horse (11)	4	1	6

29. Please indicate here if you do not own or have the use of a motorized vehicle: 2

30. The following cause a nuisance to road users in Whitsbury:

Issue	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Speeding vehicles (66)	25	27	9	5	
Parked vehicles (52)	2	7	17	24	2
Lorries and delivery vehicles (55)	13	5	18	17	2
Horses (54)	3	5	7	30	9
Cyclists (51)			14	31	6
Pedestrians (50)			7	35	8
Potholes and poor road maintenance (64)	17	23	7	15	2
Poor drainage or flooding (60)	12	18	9	18	3

If you Strongly Agree or Agree please provide additional comments:

Speed of lorries (milk tanker) coming down through village - 4  
Lorries and vehicles breaking down verges, banks and edges of road - 4

31. There should be some form of traffic calming in Whitsbury: (69)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	16	18	15	14

If you Strongly Agree or Agree, where and what type of traffic calming?

More signs (children at Lower Grove, Horses at ends of village, etc) - 12

Speed bumps (on corners) - 8

No bumps or narrowing - 3

32. There is sufficient car parking in Whitsbury: **(69)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12	39	9	9	

Additional comments:

Village Hall car park more/always available - 7

33. Roads in Whitsbury are sufficiently well signed to highlight frequent hazards to motorists (horses, other animals, old people and children): **(69)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	29	5	19	10

Additional comments:

Children Playing signs at Lower Grove – 11

Deer signs in road to south – 8

## AND FINALLY

34. What aspects of Whitsbury do you believe should be kept unchanged in order to maintain its unique character?

Aspect	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Ambivalent
Village Hall <b>(60)</b>	48	10		2
Active Calendar of Village Events <b>(67)</b>	51	16		
Post Office <b>(72)</b>	43	21	6	2
Pub <b>(70)</b>	57	10	3	
Mix of Houses <b>(64)</b>	40	20	4	
Public Rights of Way <b>(69)</b>	53	14		2
Churches <b>(71)</b>	47	20	2	2
Lack of Modernization (eg street lighting and pavements) <b>(66)</b>	46	7	10	3
Equine "atmosphere" <b>(68)</b>	49	15	1	3
Working Nature of Village <b>(58)</b>	49	9		
Other				

# ***“WHITSBURY VILLAGE PLAN – SECURING OUR FUTURE”***

## **SECTION 7 - VISION STATEMENT**

This statement distils the views expressed by the Villagers in the production of the Whitsbury Plan.

Whitsbury is a place where we enjoy living. It is a village with a unique character that has a strong and heartfelt appeal for all living here. We wish to preserve that appeal both now and for future generations. We accept that some change is inevitable but believe that a clear vision born out of communication and consensus amongst our residents will enable us to steer that change such that it will be beneficial to all. Our vision does not address specific issues but expresses our perception of the village as a whole and what we wish for its future.

We believe the character of Whitsbury is defined by the intangible qualities expressed below. While change may occur it should not impact on these.

- The timeless charm of the village. We are very lucky to live in a village that has suffered little modern development and is visually very appealing; it is quaint and quintessentially English. The village is set in beautiful countryside with a distinct rural atmosphere born out of the lively agricultural and equine activity that forms the backbone of the employment and economy.
- The sense of community. While not a large village, Whitsbury has an extremely vigorous community. A wide range of events is held each year, which are always fully supported. This active interaction between residents enables everyone to know one another and forges an undeniable strength of bond within the community. This lies at the very heart of Whitsbury's character.
- The mutual respect between residents. The village's community spirit is founded upon the respect reciprocated between all residents. Whitsbury has a sense of composure balanced with vitality. There is a recognition that at times we all have to do things that will impact on our neighbours, yet this is done with due regard such that a concern does not become an issue.

While we have articulated the essence of the village that we wish to preserve - what we want - it is equally important that we express what we do not want.

Most fundamentally it must be recognized that Whitsbury is a small village with limited infrastructure and services.

- The village enjoys a tranquillity in terms of; noise – there is little traffic and no industrial sites; light – there is no street lighting; and visual aspect – there are no significant eyesores or obstructions, such as mobile telephone aerials.
- Development in terms of industry, new houses or other building (such as aerials or street lighting) would undoubtedly stretch the infrastructure or demand its growth, and alter the character of the village by impacting on the tranquillity we enjoy. This is unwelcome.
- The importance of the sense of community of the village has been expressed clearly.



- Anything that would threaten this would be extremely unwelcome, in particular the loss of our own parish council, through which the residents of Whitsbury alone express themselves and are represented locally.
- To maintain a balanced village community, there may be future need for more affordable housing. This need must be regularly reviewed

Change is inevitable; we recognize this. We believe, however, that it can be guided such that it is a positive thing and improves our quality of life by introducing the opportunities of the modern world without being detrimental to our quality of life by impacting on the characteristics that attracted us to live in Whitsbury; those outlined above. With care and forethought, the correct balance can be maintained for now and in the future.

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### **SECTION 8 – THE PLAN**

#### **Summary**

The majority of households responded to the questionnaire and it is very clear, from this and the large number of additional comments, that the Villagers care greatly for this Village. That, in itself, bodes well for the future. That so little change is sought also says something about the special nature of Whitsbury and is a good tribute to the overall stewardship the Village enjoys. In two areas in particular, however, we need to do more; we need to be more welcoming to newcomers, whether permanent or temporary residents, to help integrate them better into our community; and we also need to address a series of issues relating to traffic and safety. These issues are detailed among the Action Points below. Both, however, are areas we can begin to address on an individual basis - as part of the resolution to both is based in our own behaviour and the encouragement of others – in order that rapid progress can be made and formalities kept to the minimum.

The complete Plan (available in both the Village Hall and Post Office) contains the full summary of responses to the questionnaire, as well as outlining the process followed by the Village Plan Committee and providing further background information. This has been published in full so that everyone can share in the views and understand fully where the action points have arisen from.

Please contact any member of the Plan Committee if you have any further questions or comments. Finally, thank you all for being so supportive of this project, which is the best way of expressing the views of the whole Village and so will hopefully result in us truly “securing our future” in the ways we want most.

## Action Points

The Action Points below are primarily derived from the results of the questionnaire. The results have, however, been tempered by the views of the Village Plan Committee in order to consider their viability (eg the establishment of a shop), importance, priority and the timescale for action.

Serial	Action Point	Reference	Action By	Timescale
1.	To produce a welcome pack for new residents to the village	Question 10	Parish Council / PCC	On-going
2.	To arrange social events to include all new residents	Question 14	Parish Council / Village Hall Social Committee	On-going
3.	To prevent the nuisance caused by 4x4 drivers and motorcyclists, especially on the byways	Question 21	Parish Council	Immediate
4.	To provide a youth trust for the Village and investigate establishing a children's play area	Question 27	Parish Council / New Forest District Council	On-going
5.	To address vehicles speeding through the Village through exploring the use of speed indicator devices	Question 30	Parish Council / Police	Immediate
6.	To investigate more flexible use of the Village Hall car park for Village events	Question 32	Village Hall Management Trustees	Immediate
7.	To provide improved signage to highlight racehorses on the road, children playing at Lower Grove and to encourage more responsible driving	Question 33	Parish Council / New Forest District Council	Immediate

Action taken to address these points should be conducted in light of the other key aspects highlighted by the questionnaire, namely those aspects of the Village that the residents wish to remain unchanged. These are reflected in the Vision Statement (Section 7).