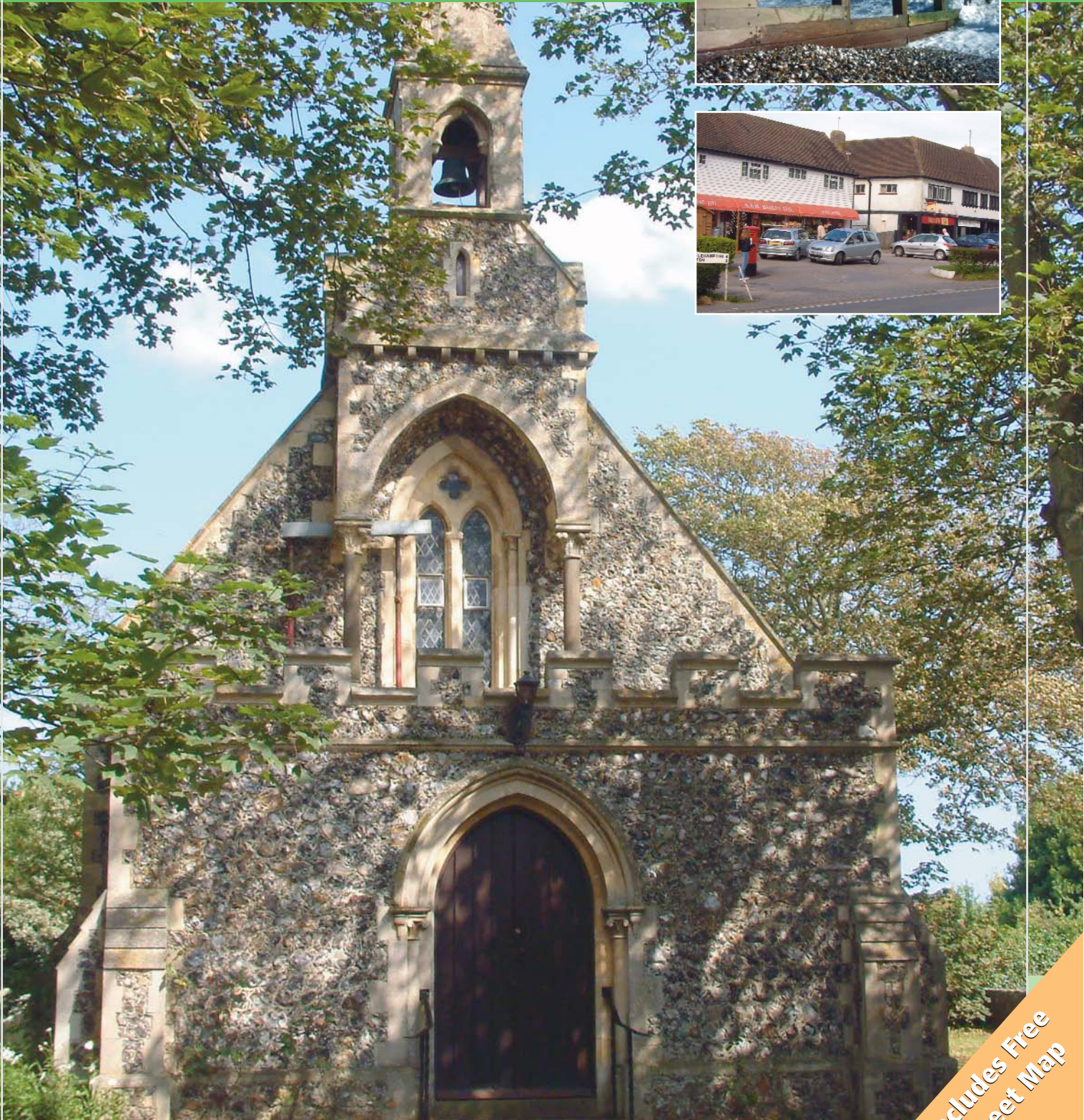


2004

Middleton-on-Sea Parish Action Plan



Includes Free
Street Map



A little about Middleton-on-Sea

The Parish of Middleton-on-Sea is a seaside village half way between Bognor Regis and Littlehampton in West Sussex, UK, complete with duck pond, village green, thatched cottages and a manor house. It has a sandy beach with a shingle bank between timber groynes but the coastline is unusual due to the eight sea defence rock islands that dominate the coastline to the East of the Parish.

According to the Domesday Book there was a Manor at Middleton in 1066, which was apparently valued at £4.00. In 1838 the old village church collapsed onto the beach from its position on a low cliff. The current Middleton-on-Sea parish church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, was designed by John Elliot in 1849 to replace the medieval church that was lost to the sea. There are still a few fragments of the tombstones in the churchyard salvaged from the old church's graveyard.

Middleton was a thriving community in the middle ages and evidence of much earlier settlement was unearthed in 1931 when Roman-British pottery was exposed by coastal erosion. By 1906 the population of this area had fallen to

just 35 people, but this figure has risen to over 5,000 at the start of the 21st Century.

In 1914 with the advent of the First World War an extensive seaplane factory was erected on the seashore. Much of the development of this area commenced after the First World War. For some it was a time when they returned to the area where they had worked on the seaplanes. For others it was the purchase of a small holiday home, to be used at weekends.

There have been many changes over the last 30 years although the central area, which is designated as an 'Area of Special Character', has managed to preserve many of the 'village community' qualities envisaged by its founder Captain Coldicott.

From Middleton to Elmer the main influence on the area in terms of traffic and building is the change from a holiday area to a year round residential area. Many of the houses, particularly in the Elmer area, which were mainly used as holiday retreats and were of non-standard construction, have now been rebuilt as permanent homes. The replacement of the former holiday centre by a range of houses and apartments has also had the effect of significantly increasing the amount of traffic using the Elmer Road throughout the year.

The resident population of Middleton-on-Sea, as measured in the 2001 Census, was 5,105 of which 46 per cent were male and 54 per cent were female.

2001 Census	Middleton-on-Sea	Arun	England and Wales
Age Group	Percentages of residents	Percentage of residents	Percentage of residents
Under 16	16.8%	17.1%	20.2%
16 to 19	3.4%	3.9%	4.9%
20 to 29	7.6%	9.0%	12.6%
30 to 59	39.0%	38.2%	41.5%
60 to 74	18.8%	17.9%	13.3%
75 and over	14.4%	14.0%	7.6%
Average age	46.0 yrs.	44.7 yrs.	38.6 yrs.

2001 Census	Arun	England and Wales
Property Type	Percentage of households living in this type of property	Percentage of households living in this type of property
Detached	34.5%	22.8%
Semi-detached	23.3%	31.6%
Terraced	20.0%	26.0%
Flat	20.9%	19.2%





What's it all about?



The Parish Council agreed that Middleton-on-Sea should enter into a scheme devised and funded by the Countryside Agency called 'Parish Plan'.

Consulting Residents

- The plan aims to consult with local residents and form short and long-term actions for the area to satisfy the needs of the community.
- A public meeting identified areas that concerned people and helped form the questionnaire structure.
- A stand at the village fete was used to gauge local feelings and concerns.
- Questionnaires were used to allow all residents to provide feedback on specific issues that concerned them. A total of 798 people returned a completed questionnaire.
- The final draft of the plan was distributed to all the interested organisations for comment prior to final publication:
 - Local residents associations
 - Bus Company
 - Middleton-on-Sea Parish Council
 - Local schools
 - Village Hall trustees
 - Environment agency
 - Arun District Council
 - Countryside Agency
 - West Sussex County Council
 - Action for Rural Sussex
 - Sussex Police

Investing in the community

- There is a perception that the three levels of local government make decisions that affect Middleton-on-Sea without understanding what is important to people that live here. The Parish Plan will help prevent opportunities being...
 - missed because of lack of planning
 - overlooked due to poor control and communication
 - avoided due to worries about time and money
- Grants and funds are often available but not taken advantage of
- Constructing partnerships between local authorities

Who will use the plan?

- Middleton-on-Sea Residents and Businesses
- Middleton-on-Sea Parish Council (MPC)
- Arun District Council (ADC)
- West Sussex County Council (WSCC)
- Local Groups and Organisations
- Police



The Results

- Countryside and the Environment
- Roads and Transport
- Policing, Crime and Public Safety
- Community Life
- Young people
- Business and services



Countryside and the Environment

- Over 50% of the respondents thought something should be done about potential flooding from both rainwater and the sea.
- There was widespread satisfaction with the refuse collection service (75%). Respondents were also very satisfied with the Public Car Park (69%) and satisfied with the Public Toilets (44%). Opinions on recycling facilities, condition of the verges and of dog bins were evenly divided between satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
- Respondents gave most support to regular home collections (60%) as a way of encouraging more recycling, with the introduction of better methods of storage at home also contributing to a good extent (41%). Better management of existing public recycling points and the introduction of more sites were supported to a lesser extent.
- There was widespread appreciation of 'original village' architectural features and of 'village-type' natural features and good support was given to retain and protect such features.
- 146 (18%) of the respondents would support the investigation of the possibility of having allotments in the Parish.



- Respondents gave a wide range of views on ways of improving aspects of living in the Parish. Road safety matters featured most in responses including traffic levels and speeds and street lighting. In particular, improvements to Comet Corner were frequently mentioned. Two

other aspects to receive a good deal of attention were anti-social behaviour, including vandalism and litter/dumping and a desire to curb 'excessive' and 'unsuitable' housing development.





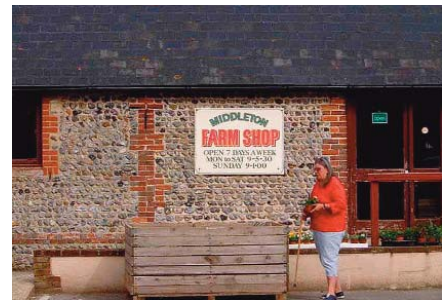
WHAT	HOW	WHO
Natural and physical environment	Inform those responsible for planning and for maintenance of the environment of the views expressed by the public and include a full list of responses. Raise awareness of the significance of the local ecological and environmental sites of National Conservation Importance and with reference to the Strategy for West Sussex Landscapes Report.	MPC ADC WSCC
Consider setting up a local environmental group	Propose to Parish Council.	MPC
Potential flooding by both rainwater and the sea	Inform responsible authorities of concerns of public. Monitor flooding incidents to gather evidence for lobbying with consideration of the coastal strategy and shoreline management plan.	ADC Environment Agency MPC
Degree of satisfaction with local services	Inform relevant authorities, particularly about services where there is less satisfaction - recycling facilities, verges and dog bins.	MPC ADC WSCC
Encouragement of recycling	Inform ADC of results and lobby for investigation of better methods of home storage and regular home collection of a wider range of materials.	ADC
Litter and dumping	Consider setting up of additional local litter picking and encourage residents to report offenders.	MPC Residents
Provision of allotments	Set up an Allotment Group to develop the idea. Identify and acquire suitable land.	MPC, Residents National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners, WSCC
Constrain development	Inform responsible authorities of widespread views on restricting 'excessive' and 'unsuitable' housing development.	MPC ADC WSCC
Tree preservation	Investigate feasibility of more tree preservation orders and to encourage more tree planting as appropriate.	MPC ADC WSCC



Community Life: Middleton-on-Sea - The Choice

The choice of Middleton-on-Sea as the place to live had been made by the majority of respondents on the basis that it was a quiet, pleasant and friendly village with the added advantage of having the coast to the south and the countryside to the north and east.

It was generally seen as having good transport links to the surrounding area, and the fact that it was a no through road was also considered an advantage.



WHAT	HOW	WHO
Nature of the village environment to be maintained	Monitor planning applications and suggest that future building should only be supported if it will enhance the lives of the people in the village and encourage the sense of community.	Residents MPC ADC
Remaining green and open areas preserved and improved for the enjoyment of the community	Encourage residents groups to support community projects. For example maintenance of village pond, cleaning beach, country park.	Residents MPC ADC WSCC Community Wardens
Investigate production of 'Village Welcome' Pack	Incorporate the Middleton-on-Sea Design Statement, Middleton-on-Sea Action Plan, Middleton News and local information. Investigate interest of local estate agents and businesses. Display on MPC notice boards and the internet.	MPC Estate Agents. Businesses
Encourage the preservation of buildings of character	Monitor planning applications and make appropriate representations.	Residents MPC

Village facilities

Middleton has the benefit of a number of facilities including an attractive range of shops in Middleton Village with additional shops along the Elmer Road. Also there is an excellent Village Hall, the St. Nicholas Church, the Middleton Sports Club, and a Mobile Library visits. There are many pedestrian access points to the beach, two large playing fields (Shrubbs Field, Larksfield), a village pond, a wooded area (Ancton), a developing woodland area (Worm's Wood). The new Scout HQ is also available for hire when not in use by the Scouts and when the Jubilee Village Hall is unavailable. A number of seats have been provided throughout the village but it was suggested that more could be installed to encourage walking in the area, for example alongside the footpaths and on the beach.

WHAT	HOW	WHO
Provision of Seats	Identify further sites, e.g overlooking Elmer rock islands, footpaths. Add position of seats to street plan to be used in Action Plan. Display on Parish Notice boards Suggest possibility of 'memorial' seats.	MPC Parish Action Plan Committee (PAP) Residents
Access to beach	Investigate feasibility of a 'natural' walkway along beach from Old Point to Elmer. Investigate possible ramp access for wheelchairs near Elmer Rocks where 'natural' walkway is established.	Estate Associations MPC Environment Agency Disability Groups



WHAT	HOW	WHO
Provision of additional clubs and activities as suggested	Check availability of Village Hall / Scout HQ for additional clubs/ activities. Ascertain through publicity, e.g. Middleton News, St. Nicholas Church newsletter, Notice boards etc. if there is anyone with the interest, expertise, connections who would be prepared to investigate the possibility of setting up a cinema club / others. Identify level of interest in other suggestions. Advertise those clubs already in existence.	Residents Interested groups Village Hall Trustees Touring Cinema

Village Activities

Already there is a wide range of activities on offer, although it would appear from the survey that some people are unaware of what is available e.g. Bridge Club. Many suggestions were made but apart from the overwhelming number of requests for additional activities for the young people in the village, the suggestion of a cinema club was the most popular. As this could provide a suitable activity for all ages it may be the priority to investigate further.

The Village Hall

Generally all the responses indicated satisfaction with the specified aspects. There was some dissatisfaction with the range of activities, however it would appear that there is a lack of awareness of what is already available.

WHAT	HOW	WHO
Publicity of what is available	Develop awareness of existing activities, time, place, cost, contact numbers using newsletters, web site, notice boards etc.	Village Hall Trustees Clubs/Societies MPC Local Schools, Church
Additional Activities	Information regarding requirements, restrictions on use of venues, e.g. Licensing rules, use of music, Public Liability insurance, Health and Safety measures, Critical risk assessment, disability access etc. to be made available through a variety of means.	Interested residents Venue committees Local Schools Local Paper

The Playing fields

Shrubbs Field appeared from the responses to be the most used. This may be because it is more central to the village and car parking, changing facilities and toilets are available, whereas Larksfield, on the north western edge of the village, although bigger in area has no parking, toilet or changing facilities. Larksfield is a large open space with clusters of mature trees, a small children's playground, a small, open shelter and a natural wind break will be formed as the trees in Worms Wood mature.

Other uses of the fields included, village fetes, events, shows, activities, social events, cubs / scouts activities, car boot sales, walking, relaxation, kite flying, watching sports, leisure activities.

WHAT	HOW	WHO
Develop use of Larksfield for Community activities	Work with interested parties to investigate range of suggestions identified in questionnaire. Set up a group to make a study of additional facilities that could be provided. Enlist the support of young people. Request subsidy for 'holiday play schemes'.	ADC MPC Youth Forum. Existing Clubs using field. Play scheme Organisations Local Schools
Develop use of Shrubbs Field for Community activities	Identify present provision and availability of grounds for further provision.	Management Committee MPC Youth Forum Existing clubs using field Local schools
Provision of further facilities at both Shrubbs Field and Larksfield	Submit request for additional 'dog' and litter bins. Investigate the creation of attractive picnic areas.	MPC ADC Management Committee





Young People

Preparing the way for our Children

- The Village Action Plan included a specific questionnaire aimed at the young people of our village.
- By giving them a voice it has been possible to find out what their overall views are with regard to what they think about living in Middleton and how it could be improved for them. The parish council will be given a chance to adopt the village plan and any actions that have been backed by hard evidence from the results of the questionnaire.

Conclusions from the results

- Feedback from the main questionnaire supported the view that there has been under investment in facilities for the young people in Middleton-on-Sea.
- Most of the 43 young people who responded wanted money spent on leisure facilities (59%) and thought that the facilities in or around the Jubilee Hall should be a focus for future improvements. Amongst the suggestions were sports facilities and 'less babyish' play equipment.



- There was much interest in the provision of BMX bike and skate park facilities.
- Most of the respondents showed an interest in evening cafes and meeting places specifically for young people (69%).
- Many of the respondents have jobs (48%). More affordable transport would enable young people to get to places like Bognor and Chichester more often.
- Most of the young people (74%) liked the beach and countryside of Middleton and felt that a cleaner village and beach was needed. They also acknowledge that some teenagers are at a loss for something to do and can get into mischief. They want something done about this too.

WHAT	HOW	WHO
Young People's Action Group (YPAG)	Interested young people can get together to agree how to best address issues affecting young people in Middleton.	PAP MPC ADC
Youth Council	A more formal Youth Council could result from a successful YPAG and would liaise directly with the local authorities.	PAP
Funding youth groups and activities	Investigate how funding might be found to support proposals for youth activities.	MPC ADC WSCC
Venues for young people's activities	Investigate possibility of using a Shrubbs Field venue as a resource café/meeting place/study venue or after school club.	MPC ADC WSCC
Accessible and cheaper transport for young people	Investigate possible schemes and the funding required.	MPC ADC WSCC
Installation of play facilities	Investigate possibility for the provision of an all weather sports facility and skate facility in the parish.	MPC ADC



Roads and Transport

- Middleton-on-Sea has a mixture of public and private roads. The main public road running through the village is the B2132 and it converges with the busy A259 at the 'Southdowns' mini roundabout and crosses it to Yapton at the busy staggered junction known locally as 'Comet Corner'.
- Speed is restricted to 30mph throughout the village and to 50mph on the A259 at the Comet Corner junction.
- With 90% of respondents giving a car as their main form of transport the increase in traffic over the years has led to concerns about a number of issues both from a driver and a pedestrian point of view.
- There is no doubt that the route out of the village along Yapton Road and the junction at Comet corner was of most concern. So much so that 54% admitted to leaving the village by a different route to avoid using it at busy times. It was not surprising therefore that improving the junction was a number one priority with 55% wanting traffic lights and 39% seeking a roundabout solution. In addition to the junction, concern was raised about the speed and size of vehicles using Yapton Road and the overgrown hedgerows restricting its width.
- Speed in general was perceived to be a problem. There were calls from 55% to enforce the speed limit more effectively and a similar number wanted to restrict the speed limit on both Public and Private roads to 20mph.
- Pedestrians felt unsafe crossing the public roads. Elmer Road in particular caused concern because of the volume and speed of the traffic using it. There were calls for a safer way of crossing between the doctor's surgery and the One-Stop shop, which may be explained by the increase in retirement homes that have recently been built nearby.
- Parking was seen to be another major problem. Better enforcement of parking restrictions was requested especially outside the Elmer Post Office and where the vision coming out of side roads was impeded. Suggestions were also made to restrict parking at the Middleton shops on the north side of the road and at the school.
- There were many ideas on how to restrict the volume of traffic in general. These included providing a school bus to run from Elmer via Flansham Park, improving the bus service to Barnham Station and having a bus service running from Elmer via the village to Chichester. Improving the safety of bike riders was also a suggestion with calls for cycle paths to link those to Bognor Regis and Littlehampton.
- Those living on the Flansham Park Estate and Ilex Way were concerned about the speed and 'rat-running' that took place along their roads.





WHAT	HOW	WHO
Improve the Junction at Comet Corner.	Support the local campaign to improve the safety of the junction.	MPC WSCC
Encourage safer parking	Local campaign to highlight dangers. Encourage authorities to enforce current restrictions.	MPC Police
Safer vehicle speeds throughout the village	Encourage police to enforce speed limits. Consider methods of traffic calming. 20mph limit could be placed near shops.	Police WSCC
Provide safe crossing areas.	Review of the crossing points raised in the questionnaire.	WSCC
Bus services	Encourage the bus company to investigate the viability of a service to Barnham.	MPC Stagecoach WSCC
Cycle paths	Enquire if provision could be made to make cycling safer in the village.	WSCC
School Bus	A dedicated school bus may reduce traffic and improve parking.	MPC, WSCC Local Schools
Yapton Road	Encourage regular maintenance of hedges and enquire about enforcing vehicle width restrictions.	MPC WSCC
Street Lighting	Review the provision of street lighting particularly to improve safety for road users and pedestrians.	MPC WSCC

Police, Crime & Public Safety



- Most people in Middleton-on-Sea who completed the questionnaire (68%) are very concerned about vandalism and anti-social behaviour in the parish. There are some concerns about theft, assault and intimidation.
- 53% of respondents are dissatisfied with police visibility in the area and think that policing in the parish is not effective.
- To improve the situation, most people (95%) favour installation of CCTV, whilst many would like to see more private security patrols and improved lighting.
- Many respondents (60%) already reported belonging to a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, and others (14%) would consider joining one. However according to official records closer to 84% of homes are already members of Neighbourhood Watch in Middleton.



WHAT	HOW	WHO
Vandalism and anti-social behaviour	Encourage residents to report all incidents to the police.	MPC Police
	Set up Local Action Team (LAT) that will use local knowledge and work in partnership with the police to target action against anti-social behaviour.	Residents MPC Police
	Conduct more detailed survey and report findings to Sussex Police Authority.	MPC
	Investigate installation of CCTV and better lighting at appropriate sites.	Police
Police effectiveness	Conduct regular surveys and report findings to police.	Local Action Team
Improve residents confidence in local policing	Seek effective two-way communication with police and publish performance information.	MPC Police



Businesses and Services

- 50% of respondents were concerned that local shops may close and 73% identified the chemist and 71% a post office as the ones they would miss most. Most people shop in Middleton because it is convenient (82%) although personal service (54%) and parking (51%) were also important factors.
- An Internet access and Library holding point would enable more people to use the Internet as the nearest places for public Internet access are in Bognor or Littlehampton. Books could also be identified and ordered then collected and returned at this location as an alternative to the mobile library.

WHAT	HOW	WHO
Middleton-on-Sea Traders Association	Suggest that Parish Council initiate meetings between local traders to discuss common issues and opportunities with a view to having regular meetings.	MPC
Internet access and Library holding point	Encourage the authorities to find premises suitable for a small bank of computers connected to the internet.	MPC WSCC
Web site for Middleton-on-Sea	Identify suitable volunteers to design and maintain a web site funded by Parish Council.	Residents MPC



- Many residents that responded said that they had Internet access at home (48%) and would use a Middleton-on-Sea web site mainly for finding out about local news (32%), services (32%) and what's on (27%). Some people would also use it for local notices and identifying local firms and shops.



What next?

The Parish Action Plan Committee will continue to promote the actions that have been identified in the plan. In the long term new issues will arise and there may be other opportunities to ask the residents for their views.

If you are interested then more detailed information about the questionnaire responses will be available by email or by telephoning the number below with you details.

Joining in

- Join or set up a community group. Examples are:
 - Middleton Environmental Group
 - Middleton Preservation Group
 - Middleton-on-Sea Traders Association
 - Local Action Team
 - Young Peoples Group
 - Allotments Group
 - Parish Action Plan Committee
 - Other groups

- Helping out. For example:
 - Helping at community events
 - Litter picking
 - Odd jobs
 - Designing and maintaining a web site
 - Good neighbour scheme

- Contact us to join in
 - Email to Middleton-on-Sea@lycos.co.uk
 - Leave a voice message on 0870 4321090 (national rates)
 - Write to Middleton-on-Sea PAP, c/o The Parish Clerk, Chalfont Close, Middleton-on-Sea, PO22 7SL

- Keeping up to date with progress
 - Middleton News Reports
 - Parish Council Minutes
 - Middleton-on-Sea Web Site
 - Register for email updates



The success of the Parish Action Plan depends on the various local parties working together in partnership. We are sure that by completing these actions we will make Middleton-on-Sea a better place to live both now and into the future. Let us all work together to defend the good and address the bad for all our sakes.



Acknowledgments



Produced by the Middleton-on-Sea Village Parish Action Plan Committee with thanks to the Countryside Agency, Middleton-on-Sea Parish Council, Action for Rural Sussex and all those people who worked together to help produce this plan

This document was produced in accordance to the Countryside Agency's 'Parish Plan' scheme.

Aerial photographs courtesy of the Bognor Regis Observer

Designed by Print Plus, Arun District Council



