

AMENITIES WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORTS TO STEERING GROUP.

The Amenities Group is chaired by Jenny Wodey and includes Neil Shefferd, Steve Neale, Joanne Axton and Gill Morgan. Other villagers were co-opted or consulted with, as required.

Topics covered by the Amenities Group included St Michaels church and the Methodist chapel, the village hall, the recreation ground pavilion, The Swan and The Carpenters Arms pubs. The group also considered library provision, access to doctors, the mobile library, village communication, allotments, and some of the social groups or associations including Stewkley Walkers, and the Stewkley Players. St. Michael's C of E Combined School is considered a village amenity however it is covered by a separate report from the Nursery and Primary Education Working Group.

Amenity Group members were selected because of their involvement with, and knowledge of, the village amenities.

Group members were assigned different topics, see Table 1 below, and some individual reports were created that form the basis of this summary report. The methodology used to generate the reports differed depending upon the amenity in question and the person assigned the topic. Where appropriate, the report writing was delegated to personnel involved on a daily basis with the amenity in question - for example the Village Hall committee.

Subject	Assigned to	Report written by
Church	Joanne Axton	Jenny Wodey
Chapel	Jenny Wodey	Lynda Hart/Chapel
Pubs	Steve Neale	Jenny Wodey
Village Hall	Gill Morgan	VH Committee
Recreation ground pavilion	Jenny Wodey/Gill Morgan	JW/GM and Rec committee
Village Communication	Neil Shefferd	Neil Shefferd
Stewkley Players	Gill Morgan	GM and Players' committee
Stewkley Walkers	Jenny Wodey	Alice Horne
Mobile library	Jenny Wodey	Jenny Wodey
Doctors	Gill Morgan	Gill Morgan
Allotments	Gill Morgan	Gill Morgan

Table 1: Allocation of Amenities within the Working Group members.

The AVDC Local Plan makes several references to community facilities, which incorporates our definition of amenities. For example :

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes healthy inclusive communities where residents have opportunities to meet through safe and accessible environments.

Community facilities and services include public halls, schools, shops, post offices, public houses, places of worship, libraries, museums, creches, day centres and doctors surgeries. They make a vital contribution to the social and economic life of the community, particularly in rural areas, and are especially important for elderly and disabled people and for those who do not have easy access to private or public transport.

The council will resist proposals for the change of use of community buildings and facilities for which there is a demonstrable local need. In considering applications for

alternative development or uses, the council will consider the viability of the existing use, the presence of alternative local facilities and the community benefits of the proposed use. Where permission includes converting the use of a building, conditions will be imposed to ensure later resumption of a community use is not excluded. In considering applications for residential development, **the council will consider the need for new community facilities arising from the proposal. Conditions will be imposed on permissions, or planning obligations sought in order to secure appropriate community facilities, or financial contributions towards community facilities, reasonably related to the scale and kind of housing proposed.**

Growth will be accompanied **by the delivery of infrastructure, services, and facilities in the right places and at the right time, to bring maximum benefits to new and existing communities. This includes improving transport (to encourage sustainable transport choices), education, health, green infrastructure, community facilities, leisure facilities, communications technology, water and air quality and flood protection measures.**

Consultation & views expressed.

As this group had several different topics to cover, numerous people were consulted with. These included Drs Peel and Silverman from the Wing surgeries, Andrew Robson from the Oxford Diocese, the Village Hall committee (via Jill Scott), Stewkley Players committee (via Gill Morgan), recreation committee (via Julie Dawson and Steve Faulkner), Alice Horne, Carol Nash, Peter Wade (Stewkley Walkers) Lynda Hart, Circuit Superintendent Helen Kirk, Rev Irena Byron (Chapel), Geoff Ring, Rev Philip Derbyshire(church), Punch Inns (via John Flewin), Jim Woolley, Rachel Woolley (the pubs), John Hart, John Flewin, Keith Higgins, Neil Shefferd, Sam Conway (communications), Mobile Library van driver and Bucks CC.

A public consultation was held between March 11 and April 15 2017 when the drafted report and policies were available for review and comment by the residents of the parish. Nineteen comments were received from 10 individuals related to this report and its drafted policies. These are summarised in Appendix 3.

Further feedback was received by the Neighbourhood Planning team at AVDC in August 2018, see Appendix 4. Modifications were made to the report as a result of this feedback.

Prior to finalising this report in 2019, some sections were updated for factual accuracy.

Issues, Vision & Conclusions

General Statement about Future Proofing for some key Stewkley Amenities.

With the exception of the school hall, all non-commercial amenities in Stewkley exist because of the unpaid work of volunteers. Their current status is not a predictor of future health. New families moving into the village might be interested in volunteering at the school if they have children attending the school however the village hall and recreation pavilion in particular find it more difficult to attract adult volunteers, especially in the age range of early 20s to late 40s. Starting careers and families now fill these years, and involvement in the community, adult sports and activities is sacrificed. Any of these amenities in Stewkley could fail in the next 20-25 years if the number of volunteers to help run them falls to an unsustainable level.

Stewkley has several 'spaces' that are available for hire by the villagers. These include the village hall (VH), the pavilion on the recreation ground, the school hall and the Methodist chapel hall. The spaces are quite different in what they offer and should not openly compete. For example the VH has a state of the art kitchen and cloakroom facilities, and can easily accommodate events for 150 -200 people, where bar facilities can be hired in. The pavilion has its own bar and room for events involving up to 100 people, the school hall is a large space without many facilities but will accommodate dance, pilates, exercise classes and similar activities, and the Methodist chapel room has a small kitchen and can accommodate events for about 80 people. Appendix 2 outlines the current (at time or writing) typical access to the different available 'spaces'.

The recreation ground represents the sporting centre of the village and it, and the pavilion are located at the central point of the village where High Streets North and South meet. Main sports users of the pavilion are the adult and junior footballers and cricketers. Long term, it is difficult to predict the number of adult members who will sign up. Increasingly participation in cricket is considered to take up too much of the weekend and all over the region, small village cricket and football clubs are closing. The pavilion hires a cleaner and is managed by a committee who are unpaid volunteers. The groups who largely use the rec pavilion bar are the senior football and cricket club members, and a small number of villagers who have paid their membership fee. The bar in the pavilion is run on a voluntary basis with a rota of bar staff. Currently one of the volunteers has professional knowledge of bar stock control.

The church and chapel not only deliver their pastoral care to their respective congregations but they offer vital support for the elderly, infirm and vulnerable villagers.

Individual summaries by amenity

1. Allotments

Issues

The current allocations of allotments at the edge of the village on the Soulbury Road are not owned by the village, or parish council. They are situated on land owned by the Oxford diocese, and are known as the Stewkley Glebe allotments.

The diocese has no obligation to make provision of allotments, however it has stated its intent that whilst there remains an interest in allotment gardening it will continue to do so. It is very unlikely the area now regarded as allotments would ever be increased; it is more likely to be decreased if interest in allotments wains.

The soil is heavy clay, there is no water except for a small pond that provides some water during Spring and early Summer. There is a roadside padlocked gate providing some security to the site, however sheds are regularly broken into and tools/materials stolen.

The gardening area is divided into 12 plots, and these are rented as full, half or quarter plots. Annual rent is not expensive – approximately 10p / day. Currently all plots are rented, and approximately twenty individuals or families garden on the Stewkley Glebe allotments.

Once a rental agreement is in place, the diocese is unable to replace a tenant if the rent is paid regardless of whether they actually work the land.

Vision

Interest continues to be expressed by villagers in having a plot despite the drawbacks of soil structure, water and security. It is likely that more small (quarter) plots will be rented as these are considered manageable amounts of land, big enough to grow fruit and vegetables for the average family. The diocese is willing to do this and has allowed the current allotment holders to manage the advertising and recruitment of new gardeners.

Future proofing the allotment provision could also include the parish council buying a parcel of land from its reserves. In both these circumstances, the allotment plots should be sized as quarter plots and rented cheaply but with a requirement that the land be gardened or the tenancy removed.

Conclusion

There appears to be no immediate concern for this amenity. There is an opportunity to future proof if there is an increase in demand.

2. Access to Doctors

Issues

According to the village survey, more than 80% of Stewkley villagers use one of the two surgeries in Wing. There is no regular bus service between Stewkley and Wing and therefore patients must drive or be driven to their appointments. There is a car lift service offered by people associated to the church to help those villagers without transport get to doctors, hospital and dentists appointments etc. Both surgeries are located in smallish facilities with limited parking.

Both surgeries used to have weekly or regular consultations in Stewkley. Originally held at the library until that was closed, they are now in the recreation ground pavilion. This service however is only offered now by the Ashcroft surgery. The other surgery in Wing stopped about 8 years ago because of lack of interest/demand.

The Stewkley-based consultations are very limited in what the doctors can do which contributes to them not being in high demand. No injections can be given, and physical examinations cannot be made. As food and drink are consumed in the pavilion, urine samples cannot be brought in or collected there. The facility has to be of a standard approvable by the Care Quality Commission to enable any intervention other than a superficial consultation or prescription renewal.

Wifi provision in the pavilion means that patient notes can be accessed during consultation.

Vision

Both surgeries expect to expand their facilities although the parking provision is unlikely to be improved in either place. They expect to be in a position to increase the number of patients on their books and to be able to accept new patients from Stewkley, despite the fact that Wing itself will be building several hundred new houses in the next 5-20 years.

A custom built facility in Stewkley that would be approvable by the CQC would enable one or both of the surgeries to provide local appointments for the elderly of the village, for mothers

and babies, and potentially for clinics like diabetes annual checks. Eventually if demand were high enough, there could be a regular locum doctor on site. Ashcroft Surgery has stated its interest in commissioning a dedicated branch surgery in Stewkley if funds could be found from New Homes Bonus or similar schemes. Neighbouring village patients (e.g. Mursley or Drayton Parslow) would also be welcome to use the Branch surgery

Stewkley could provide a morning or afternoon minibus run to pick up prescriptions for villagers and to drop off and collect patients for their appointments.

Conclusion

The impetus for real change would only happen if Stewkley were able to build a CQC approvable facility. Funds could be requested from developers to support required infrastructure needs but the size of developments in Stewkley would not warrant it. Applications via the New Homes Bonus schemes and possibly in conjunction with our neighbouring villages should be explored.

It is suggested that the relationship with Ashcroft Surgery is nurtured to at least maintain the current level of service in the village.

The Department of Health requirements are detailed in Building Notice 00-09 and are available as a PDF via this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-infection-control-in-the-built-environment>

3. Recreation Pavilion

Issues

The pavilion is a building dating from the 1970s and has recently undergone a refurbishment to extend and improve the changing rooms and shower blocks and to add an outside verandah, as well as redesigning the bar, upgrading the kitchen and improving the layout of the general public areas. The pavilion has high speed (fibre) wifi. Funding for the project came from the Recreation Association, a legacy, the Parish Council and external grants.

The bar is currently open for members from 4-8 every Saturday night and occasionally on Friday evenings. Anyone can become a member of the sports club bar for £5/year, and there are about 60 members from the village who are not associated with the sports clubs. The Rec regularly provides a bar facility for Stewkley Players on their production nights.

Hire of the pavilion is partially restricted by the priority use of the sports clubs, and if the bar is requested, by having volunteers to run the bar. Finding volunteers to staff the bar is a key limitation.

The pavilion is locked up when not in use and the number of key holders is restricted and key allocation documented. The only paid employee is the cleaner.

Vision

Continue to improve the appearance of the pavilion. A clock tower is under consideration.

Develop the pavilion into a better used facility by increasing the number of activities that use the recreation ground, increase the pool of people who are involved with the recreation ground and from that increase the pool of people available as volunteers.

A sub-committee of the rec committee could focus on expanding the number of sporting activities and events in the recreation ground and the use the pavilion. More groups should increase the number of volunteers available to open up the pavilion and the bar.

For example, is there an opportunity to capitalize on the cycle races that start from the rec? Are there opportunities for Summer sporting events, which would expand usage during the long Summer days? Could the current hardcourt area near the tennis courts be changed to give a court big enough for netball and basketball as its current size is too small and it is under-used? Indoor activities like chess, cribbage and other card games, a book swap or mini library, monthly book clubs would be new suitable uses of the pavilion. All these activities require someone to open up and close down the facility.

If demand is there, and sustainability can be proven, using S106 funds, provide a new sports hall to accommodate indoor sports adjacent to pavilion to accommodate sports such as badminton, short mat bowls, and an opportunity for indoor volleyball, basketball and netball as well as indoor tennis. Allow other villages to hire the sports facilities.

Conclusion

Increased usage will only be possible if more people get involved as volunteers to run the bar or to organize and support new clubs and activities. The rec committee can help by creating a sub-committee focused on finding new ways to improve usage but the committee is too small to do more than manage the initiative. If villagers do not engage, nothing substantial will change.

To recognise its enormous value to the village, Stewkley Parish Council listed the pavilion with AVDC as a community asset.

4. Stewkley Players

Issues

In common with many groups, there is a lack of members aged 20-45. However unlike many other village groups, Stewkley has a relatively high proportion of male actors.

Membership remains reasonably static around 60 adult members. New members join from the surrounding villages as well as within Stewkley.

The group often lacks depth in certain expertise for example the technical roles of sound and lighting and are often one person away from not staging a play with the usual high quality of technical know how.

Vision

Stewkley Players will remain at the village hall for the foreseeable future, as it has a very accommodating allocation of space for storage, installed technical equipment and access to the stage for set building.

If membership remains steady around the 60-65 mark there should be no change to current provision of 2 plays a year.

If membership increases or members desire it, a junior section could be considered with the staging of junior plays as well as the current adult productions.

Conclusion

The group is reasonably future-proofed by its own on-going drives for new members. It is unlikely anything will or should change.

5. Stewkley Walkers

Issues

Many active members are resident outside the village. The adopt-a-path scheme existed until recently but there is a lack of volunteers due to ageing of membership.

Vision

To increase membership with residents in the village and to get more young people interested in walks and the countryside. To make sure the paths are kept clear and walkable any problem can be reported on the Transport for Bucks website.

In the recent village survey, the countryside was given as a major reason for wanting to live and stay in Stewkley. The Walkers would like to be able to turn this into active engagement with our country paths.

Conclusion

To reprint the Stewkley Walks booklet, to advertise where each Stewkley walk goes and try and get family walks organised at the weekends or on Summer evenings. The walkers have a website, Facebook page and there are posters on the notice boards.

6. Village Hall

Issues

Hall bookings tend to focus on evenings and weekends. The hall is available during the day. The organization of hall bookings and general upkeep is done by volunteers, there are two paid employees: a steward to open and close the hall and a cleaner. Hall bookings are taken by phone.

High speed (fibre) wifi is available at the village hall.

Parking is available at the hall and there is an overflow parking arrangement with the school.

Vision

The village hall finances are in good shape and the committee structure is secured as long as the current hall users are represented on the committee.

The village hall is the social hub and centre of the village and the variety of its bookings do reflect that.

Conclusions

No concerns have been expressed by the village hall committee about the future proofing of the village hall.

7. Chapel

Issues

There are various meetings held at the Chapel, for example chapel lunches once a month on the 3rd Saturday in the month. Without the money generated from these lunches which are provided by volunteers the chapel would find it difficult to meet running costs.

The room is hired out for various functions at rates agreed with the Village Hall and the Pavilion, so as not to take business from them. The hall has not got an alcohol license, as there is no alcohol or gambling in Methodist establishments.

It has been recognised that there is an age group that is missing from chapel attendance 25/50 yr olds. The Chapel has not got a caretaker like the VH and similar to the Rec pavilion, it has to be opened/closed by volunteers/superintendents that have keys.

Vision

To find other ways for the chapel to increase their revenue, like hiring the hall to groups in the day, e.g. computer club, line dancing, youth orchestra or painting for youngsters (this has been suggested by the youth) anyone who wants to run a club, day or evening. More interaction with the Church and their congregation is needed.

Conclusion

Trying to get the 25/50 age group back into the chapel is being addressed. A new group is hoping to be formed once a month which will be called Reflection.

The chapel is going to put leaflets in the chapel porch and on the notice board informing residents what is taking place each week/month in the chapel. Also to put a leaflet into the welcome packs that the WI send to new residents.

The chapel can seat 250-300 people so could be encouraged for concerts etc., scouting and guiding groups use it for special functions. Brownies use it for their Christmas Christingle and units come from many local villages.

8. St Michaels Church

Issues.

The Church urgently needs toilet and catering facilities but also improved facilities for meeting both in formal and informal worship.

All these would have been met by the proposed Chapterhouse which was unfortunately rejected by AVDC after receiving considerable support from some conservationists and members from St. Michael's and other churches.

We considered an appeal and were informed there was a good chance of success but we did not wish the issue to fester and potentially become an ongoing cause of dissension. The issues mentioned above still exist however.

The planning permission on the portakabin will not last forever. Apart from the loo we have completely outgrown the meeting facility except for small business meetings.

Vision

Our vision has always been to grow the Church both in number and in depth. We have had some success in these areas but the lack of facilities is a serious issue which is

currently considerably hampering this. The PCC is looking at the best way forward and there are potentially two possibilities:

- 1)inside the Church;
- 2)Outside.

There are difficulties with both these according to some conservationists but many churches, including Grade 1 and most Cathedrals have completely reordered their interiors in order to reflect the needs of their population in the 21st.century. We are not primarily or merely a heritage site but a living church.

Conclusion.

One of the main objections to the Chapter House was that the village has enough facilities etc. From the perspective of the Church it appears that everyone is encouraged to grow and develop except the Church which to us appears to be discriminatory because none of the other bodies can realistically work for us because our particular physical location at the very heart of the village.

8.1 Lawn Cemetery

As of December 2018, 296 people are buried in the cemetery. There are spaces for approx. 33 graves and 67 cremation plots in the existing cemetery, in addition to 53 burial spaces or cremation plots that are reserved. We may have over 20 years before needing the new burial area, which has approx. 200 graves and 200 cremation plots. The current provision is expected to last until 2080.

9. Public houses

9.1 The Carpenter Arms

Issues

The Carpenter's Arms was reopened in 2017 after being closed for approximately 18 months. It was internally refurbished by its PubCo owners. At time of writing it is currently closed again.

Vision

The managers offer a menu of pub grub, real ales and designer gins, and the refurbishment has made the pub a cosy and welcoming hostelry. The Carpenters Arms hosts the annual scouts bonfire and fireworks display.

Conclusion

The Carpenters Arms was listed as a community asset by CAMRA and remains on the AVDC list.

9.2 The Swan

Issues

The Swan has had multiple landlords in the last 2-3years, and would benefit from some stable management to rebuild its reputation as family pub for the residents of the village. It has recently had investment from Enterprise Inns resulting in some internal and external redecoration, new signage and a new bar, however it would still benefit from further refurbishment especially the kitchen and toilet areas.

Vision

The manager offers pub food, including Sunday lunches, and makes good use of the garden during the Summer months.

Conclusion

The Swan was registered as a Community Asset by The Friends of the Swan and remains on the AVDC list.

10. Communication including broadband provision

10.1 Stewkley Grapevine.

Issues

People need to be made aware that each month an electronic version of the grapevine is available to download as a PDF and can be loaded onto iBook or similar tablet book reading applications.

Main issue for the future is succession planning and ensuring that a new generation comes forward to ensure the grapevine can continue.

Vision

The grapevine could establish more of a web presence so that important information can be communicated more quickly. This would be particularly useful if something happened at short notice.

The team are currently investigating the possible options regarding Facebook but the worry is that any web platform needs careful moderation.

Conclusion

The Stewkley grapevine is a village magazine published monthly (except January). It has been printed since 1996 and now is colour.

It will continue to be delivered free to each home and business in the village

10.2 Stewkley website.

Issues

There is a village website, Stewkley.org, with information about village news, activities and amenities. Many of the clubs and societies have their own website and there is a link from Stewkley.org to the Players, School, Local History Group, Village Hall and the Parish Council. Keeping the website updated is a real challenge.

Websites rely on volunteers with necessary expertise to ensure they are maintained regularly and look professional.

The intended core topic would be Stewkley Village Life, a forum is easy to set up but would require a small team of individuals to act as moderator and check suitability of added content.

Vision

To provide more technical training sessions (Computer Club)

Should recruit a group of webmasters ideally containing one person from every group that has a page on the main website.

Web based forum could provide a means for villagers to discuss and make comments on any topic.

Conclusion

A local network layer could potentially provide independent social communications, community internet radio and advice in energy or extreme weather events.

10.3 School directory.

Issues

People had requested that the directory is made into an online source, which would require consultation with the School and Friends Association. 2016 was the last directory published in paper format.

Vision

Currently on hold. No immediate plans to reissue in paper, or move to an on-line platform.

Conclusion

Before a decision can be reached on the format consultation with appropriate bodies would be required. Early indications are that the suggestion of a change in format would be considered.

10.4 Newspaper columns.

Issues

Stewkley has a regular new column in the Leighton Buzzard Observer and the Bucks Herald. There are concerns about succession planning and the future of the newspapers - it is not known what the future of the industry is as a whole. It is unlikely the columns would be published online.

Vision

To continue the column in its present form for the foreseeable future

Conclusion

This will continue while there are local people willing to give their time and effort.

10.5 Broadband.

Issues

In common with many rural areas, broadband service in Stewkley is patchy and unreliable.

Broadband to Stewkley residents has been supplied by various providers via the BT Openreach Exchange in Stewkley, which is connected to subscribers through two cabinets

(one at the North end of the village, the other at the South end) and directly through so-called Exchange-only lines to a number of properties in the centre of the village.

In recent times, many sections of the village have experienced breakdowns and broadband outage sometimes for several weeks. Demand for bandwidth increases as more people are on line and using it for home entertainment. Increasingly people work from home. Faster and more reliable broadband connections have been a long-standing demand from many residents, especially as performance drops off markedly with distance from the exchange, something evidenced by the amount of discussion on the subject at the Neighbourhood Plan's first village meeting.

Vision

Fibre broadband is being installed in the village by Gigaclear giving all homes the opportunity to connect to a fast and reportedly reliable fibre network. Gigaclear also supplied the wifi hotspots at the village hall and the recreation pavilion.

Other opportunities and wifi providers e.g. Village Networks are also available and people are becoming more aware of, and more comfortable with BT alternatives.

Conclusion

With the increasing use of the Internet in all facets of daily domestic and business life, the provision of better broadband capacity and speeds will be encouraged, with a target to future-proof the capability. This would equally support the growing need for good internet connections for home-working, with obvious benefits in reducing traffic on the village's roads.

10.5.1 Stewkley FaceBook and Social Media accounts including Instagram, twitter and whatsapp.

Issues

There is a village-wide Facebook page used for buying, selling and information sharing. It is a closed group and applications are made to join. Facebook accounts are maintained by individual group or organisation e.g. St Michaels School and the Stewkley players.

Vision

A village-wide Twitter and other social media accounts linked to all other village group accounts would be a 21st century way to inform villagers of current and new events and changes to events, to advertise and promote activities, and to communicate within and between groups. However it would need volunteers to administer and moderate it. These volunteers are most likely to come from today's teenagers and twenties who have grown up using social media.

Conclusion

Possible in the future when a new generation of current young people become the next generation of village volunteers.

11 Mobile library

Issues

Bucks CC have confirmed that 20 residents use only the Stewkley Library Van, the rest of the residents that use the van also use Library facilities elsewhere. Bucks CC also confirmed

that 62 residents have had items issued from the Library Van at The Recreation Ground and High Street North in the last 12 months.

In 2018, the van was withdrawn from service.

Policy statements and recommendations

These policy statements must be interpreted and implemented in conjunction with other relevant policies within this Neighbourhood Plan – for example Conservation and Heritage policies and Housing policies.

Policy Statement 1 – Protecting our Community Facilities

It is important that the Parish retains its community facilities listed below. Proposals that result in the loss of an existing community facility will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable.

-
- St. Michael's church;
- St. Michael's C of E Combined School
- Stewkley Methodist Chapel and Hall;
- Village Hall;
- Recreation Ground and Pavilion
- The Swan Public House
- The Carpenter Arms Public House

Specifically, the two public houses will require evidence that the property has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use, at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months.

Policy Statement 2 – Development of Existing or New Community Use Buildings

Development proposals affecting the Community Facilities will only be permitted if the proposed development protects and enhances their community value, and respects heritage including traditional frontages and local character as well as all other relevant plan policies.

Proposals to improve an established community building by way of physical improvements, extension or redevelopment will be supported provided the community benefits of the scheme outweigh any potential harm to the viability and usage of the existing facility.

New or replacement community buildings will only be supported if clear evidence of an unmet need for a new facility can be illustrated, that cannot be met through extensions or redevelopment of existing community buildings. An audit of existing community buildings and their usage will be required to support any application for the development of a new community building.

Recommendation 1:

Encourage all amenities to make use of the village website, social media and other communication media to improve their publicity, encourage more volunteers to get involved, and increase their bookings. Only through increased usage and increasing the number of volunteers to manage them will existing amenities be future-proofed.

Recommendation 2:

All of the village amenities are supported by volunteers, without which many would be a risk. It is recommended that a volunteer scheme be established to recruit new volunteer and share expertise amongst the various village groups and organisations.

Recommendation 3:

New building developments should recognise the need for choice of supply for Superfast (via copper) or Ultrafast (via fibre) broadband and incorporate the infrastructure to connect to both.

Appendix 1

Comprehensive list of community facilities available to residents

St. Michael's Church
Stewkley Methodist Chapel and Hall
The Village Hall
The Recreation Ground and Pavilion
St. Michaels School and School Hall
The Swan Public House
The Carpenters Arms Public House
The Village Shop
Scout Hut
The Allotments

Appendix 2

Table of current usage of Stewkley amenities

WEEKLY AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PREMISES IN STEWKLEY

	PAVILION	VILLAGE HALL Billiard Room	CHAPEL HALL	VILLAGE HALL Main Hall	SCHOOL HALL
	Seats about 40, tables available and includes access to kitchen	Seats about 50, tables available and includes access to kitchen	Seats about 100, tables available and includes access to kitchen No alcohol permitted on premises	Seats about 150, tables available and includes access to kitchen	
Monday					
Morning	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	
Afternoon	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	
Evening	Unavailable until Scout Hut built	Available 3rd and 4th weeks	Available each week	Available April to August	
Tuesday					
Morning	Unavailable	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	
Afternoon	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	Available April to August	
Evening	Available school holidays	Available each week	Variable availability	Variable availability	
Wednesday					
Morning	Available each week	Available each week	Unavailable	Available each week	Not available during the day in term time but available some evenings and weekends
Afternoon	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	Available school holidays	
Evening	Available 3rd week	Available 1st, 3rd and 4th weeks	Variable availability	Unavailable	
Thursday					
Morning	Available 2nd, 3rd and 4th weeks	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	
Afternoon	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	Available each week	
Evening	Available 1st, 3rd and 4th weeks	Available each week	Available each week	Unavailable	
Friday					
Morning	Available each week	Available each week	Unavailable	Available school holidays	
Afternoon	Available each week	Available school holidays	Unavailable	Available school holidays	
Evening	Unavailable until Scout Hut built	Available each week	Unavailable	Available April to August	
Saturday					
Morning	Variable availability	Variable availability	Variable availability	Variable availability	
Afternoon	Variable availability	Variable availability	Variable availability	Variable availability	
Evening	Variable availability	Variable availability	Variable availability	Variable availability	
Sunday					
Morning	Variable availability	Variable availability	Unavailable	Variable availability	
Afternoon	Variable availability	Variable availability	Unavailable	Variable availability	
Evening	Variable availability	Variable availability	Unavailable	Variable availability	

May 2017

Appendix 3

Summary of comments received during public consultation

Report Section	Comment (frequency)
8. St Michaels Church	No evidence that the proposed Chapter House has split church and residents (3)
8. St Michaels Church	AVDC Historic Buildings has now provided a letter (2)
8. St Michaels Church	Why is sentence about requiring planning permission necessary? (3)
<u>Policy 1</u>	<u>Agree (5)</u>
	<u>Include new scout hut.</u> <u>Village is fortunate to have so many and varied assets.</u> <u>Important that community assets are maintained.</u>
<u>Policy 2</u>	<u>Agree (4)</u> <u>Ensure referenced policies are revised such that they do not conflict or overrule this policy.</u> <u>Essential to improve community usage and availability of amenities with new housing and more people.</u>
<u>Policy 2</u>	<u>Disagree (1)</u> <u>Non residential building sites must be identified in support of the policy.</u> <u>Unmet need must not trump open/breathing spaces, vistas, ecology etc. Consider all possible options and efficiencies available before creating new buildings.</u>
	<u>General comments (1)</u> <u>Large duplication of spaces/halls available.</u> <u>Overhead to sustain them seems wasteful. Plan should look at ways to make these spaces more efficient</u>

Appendix 4

Summary of comments received from AVDC NP team

Policy statement	AVDC comment	Stewkley response
<p>Policy 1</p>	<p>Is there an evidence paper setting out what exactly the value of each of these assets is to the examiner who will not be familiar with the area. See again Aston Clinton b1</p> <p>Proposals that result in the loss of an existing community facility or employment use will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable. This will require evidence that the property has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use, at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months. Proposals to expand or alter existing community, retail or employment uses will be supported as long as they respect heritage - including traditional frontages and local character in general as well as all other relevant plan policies.</p>	<p>Amenities report referred to amenities as community assets. We have replaced the word Asset with Facility to align with wording in AVDC Local Plan and prevent confusion about our intention.</p> <p>Wording has been included as suggested on requirements to demonstrate a loss of viability.</p>
<p>Policy 2</p>	<p>What about the loss of existing community buildings? We have one in the VALP, Policy I3. Or Quainton CF1.</p> <p>It will be difficult to justify why we shouldn't be able to approve a new community facility though as unless the facilities is an Asset of Community Value or has a heritage designation why would we not wish to see the replacement of older facilities with new ones. Are they really saying the owners of facilities will never need to move to new premises? Would expect to see some locational criteria about new community facilities e.g being walkable from the village centre or existing location.</p> <p>Suggest looking at Aston Clinton POLICY B1 - Community Facilities for a good example</p>	<p>Wording has been added to clarify that existing buildings may be replaced if required and that traffic and parking must be taken into consideration when any redevelopment is proposed, as well as new or improved pavements to ensure pedestrian access.</p>