

Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Plan 2011-2016



Introduction

Brimscombe and Thrupp hold the potential for stunning regeneration and sustainable development over the next five years. The key to success will be to both work with the support of the local community and also to harness community imagination and engagement.

There is also a timely opportunity to discuss bringing the community together as an enlarged Parish which would properly include residents who regard their neighbourhood as Brimscombe and Thrupp.

Parish Plan

This Plan has been developed by Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council and represents the council's strategy for the next five years and beyond. It is based on research contained in the **Parish Appraisal** which accompanies this document. The area is currently facing a period of great change largely as a result of the regeneration of the Cotswold Canals, a project led by Stroud District Council. A number of other on-going issues have also been identified, for example traffic management, litter, and care for the environment.

The council has consulted extensively with residents and businesses in the area to ensure that local needs and priorities are addressed by development plans affecting the two villages. There are many challenges to be faced, not least the need to balance many conflicting interests, but at the same time there will be many opportunities to shape the future for the benefit of people who will live in, work in and visit Brimscombe and Thrupp, now and for years to come.

Consultation

In 2007 Stroud District Council prepared an Area Action Plan (AAP) for much of Brimscombe which was intended to become part of the council's Local Development Framework (LDF). AAPs were subsequently deemed not to be an appropriate component of an LDF, so the AAP for Brimscombe has not been adopted for its original purpose. It is however being used by the council's canal project team and has been an important reference for this document.

In 2006 the Parish Council conducted a survey of residents and businesses in the parish. 126 households and 12 businesses took part in the survey, which covered a wide range of topics. The issues and opportunities raised by this survey are at the heart of this plan.

In 2003 the Parish Council ran a consultation on the regeneration of the canal and Brimscombe Port. The results were published in, *Regenerating Brimscombe Port and the Canal. The Wishes of Thrupp Parish Council and local residents*. The wishes expressed in the report are echoed in the more recent consultations and have therefore also been incorporated into this plan.

The results of all of these consultations were distilled into a draft document which was adopted by the Parish Council as an interim document, which formed the basis of a final consultation to ensure that it accurately reflects the priorities of local people and is consistent with the strategies of other organisations and local authorities. The results of this consultation are shown in the attached document Parish Plan Consultation Results. The comments received were highly supportive of the Interim document, but a few changes have been made as a result of feedback received. This final document was formally adopted by the Parish Council on 5th April 2011.

How to comment on this document

This document is available to read or download from the parish council website www.thrupp-pc.gov.uk. Printed copies may be requested from the Parish Clerk.

Whilst this Plan is a long-term document, the intention is to review progress annually and make any adjustments when required. All comments received will be considered and the plan adjusted where necessary. If you have any feedback or suggestions please contact us:

By email: thruppclerk@hotmail.co.uk

By post: Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council, 11 Broadstone Close, Barnwood, Gloucester, GL4 3TX

Priorities for Action

This Parish Plan identifies 11 priorities for action which have been supported by the wider community.

1. We will encourage, support and engage with initiatives which make Brimscombe and Thrupp more **sustainable** as a place to live, work and play.
2. We will encourage and support development of appropriate **brownfield sites**, in particular along the canal corridor. We will not support development on greenfield sites outside of the settlement boundary.
3. We will support high quality, sustainable, mixed **development** (supported by appropriate **infrastructure** improvements) that provides employment and housing to meet local needs.
4. **Housing** developments should include: low-cost starter homes, family housing and affordable housing to rent, all built to a high standard of design.
5. Commercial developments should support **employment** opportunities which meet the needs and skills of local people.
6. We want to ensure that the **canal regeneration** is used to revitalise the whole area and to make **Brimscombe Port** the vibrant heart of our community.
7. Development at Brimscombe Port should include a significant element of **community use**, including at the heart of the site a new multi-use building offering a range of facilities, services and employment opportunities, to be developed, owned and run by the community as a social enterprise centre.
8. We will establish a **Brimscombe and Thrupp Community Development Trust** which will become active in developing opportunities for local people.
9. We will work to improve **road safety, accessibility** and **parking**.
10. We will seek opportunities to reduce **crime** and **anti-social behaviour**.
11. We will conserve and enhance our local **heritage, landscape** and **biodiversity** especially buildings of historical importance and wildlife conservation areas.

A vision of Brimscombe and Thrupp in 10 years' time

The following is a potential vision of what it might be like to live in, work in or visit Brimscombe and Thrupp in 10 years' time. It is aspirational and aims to inspire positive action in the parish.

A recent winner of the "Most Enterprising Parish in the South West" award, Brimscombe and Thrupp is a popular place to live and work, with thriving businesses and successful schools. There is a strong community spirit in the parish with very low levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. The Parish Council has prompted a number of innovative initiatives on a variety of issues including renewable energy, apprenticeships, community enterprise workshops, and home insulation.

There is a good range of housing to suit all needs, ages and pockets, including several recent developments on old brownfield sites. These developments include a mixture of homes of varying sizes and tenure, businesses, leisure and community facilities. The new buildings have been carefully designed to suit the local character and historic environment, while incorporating cutting edge sustainable design. Important historic buildings and landmarks have been retained and sympathetically restored as part of the development work.

Brimscombe Port is the heart of the Parish with a strong community of homes and businesses centred on the redeveloped canal. Many visitors come to visit the Port enjoying the historic buildings, green spaces and attractive waterside areas. Residents and visitors alike can visit the Brimscombe and Thrupp community centre with its waterside café, community rooms and workspaces.

The restored canal is a busy tourist attraction popular with boat users. Walkers and cyclists also use the tow path and new cycle track to enjoy the local area or simply to travel to Stroud and beyond.

Local businesses are enjoying brisk trade from visitors and several new ventures have been created in response to demand for local shops, cafés and restaurants. The new community centre provides a good range of facilities for home workers including office services and workspaces. The new developments have created opportunities for local people to work in light industry, offices and studios for the creative industries. As a result the number of people travelling outside of the district to work has reduced.

Local schools have grown to accommodate rising pupil numbers and continue to enjoy excellent results. Outside of school children enjoy using the new play area at Brimscombe Port, playing sports on the playing field and joining in with activities and clubs at the Brimscombe and Thrupp Community Centre.

Because development has been limited to the brownfield sites in the parish the surrounding countryside and scenery and its setting within the Cotswold AONB have been conserved and enhanced to support a wide range of species and habitats. New wildlife areas have been created on the development sites, which are already home to a number of important species.

Although development has increased traffic, the effects of this have been mitigated by improving public and community transport, e.g. the car club that operates from Brimscombe Port. The recent opening of Brimscombe station will also impact on traffic levels. New pedestrian crossings and improved junctions on the A419 have improved road safety and reduced traffic speeds.

Background Information

1 Sustainability

We will consider the environmental, economic, and social implications of the decisions we make so as to ensure the future wellbeing of our area.

We will develop and support projects aimed at conserving energy or producing renewable energy, possibly in collaboration with neighbouring parishes. Target areas are:

- energy conservation for existing housing
- producing renewable energy from: micro hydro, wind or solar
- public and community transport, for example lift/car sharing
- a cycle route to Stroud.

We will encourage developers to incorporate the highest possible levels of energy efficiency into new buildings and building refurbishments where this can be done without compromising affordability.

2 Brownfield sites

Brimscombe and Thrupp parish has a number of brownfield sites, which could potentially be used for creative and sustainable development providing a mixture of housing and commercial buildings.

We will encourage and support development of appropriate brownfield sites in particular along the canal corridor. It is important that the green spaces between the two villages and the smaller settlements are protected to preserve the villages' rural identities. We will not support development outside of the settlement boundary (defined in Stroud District Council's Local Plan 2005).

The potential development sites include:

- Lewiston Mill
- Brimscombe Port
- Parts of the Brimscombe Mill site
- Parts of Hope Mill and Canal Ironworks site
- Ham Mill, and
- Parts of the Griffin Mill site

We will conduct a detailed survey of these sites to better understand their size, condition, ownership and planning status.

3 Development and infrastructure

It is essential that new development provides a balanced mix of both jobs and homes. The impact of development on infrastructure and local services must also be considered, in particular community facilities, healthcare provision and local schools. Infrastructure needs also include highway infrastructure and related transport services such as buses. We will seek to ensure that

any new developments are supported by appropriate infrastructure improvements.

Flood risk

The Parish Council maintains a watching brief in respect of flood risks and will take action to report any problems, for example blocked culverts to the necessary authorities.

In respect of new development we will seek to ensure that flood risk issues are addressed, especially in terms of residential use, either through infrastructure works or the use of building or site design.

Community and leisure facilities

We will promote the existing community infrastructure, including schools, shops and services, so that the community is aware of what is available already; and work to improve and extend the range of community facilities. Additional facilities or services that will be sought include: a new social enterprise centre (*see Section 6 below*), medical services, outdoor public spaces including children's play areas, and activities for children and young people.

We would like to see the playing fields on the A419, next to the football club, taken into community ownership and use. We will negotiate with Gloucestershire County Council on the future of this site.

Education

We will continue to support our local schools in Brimscombe and Thrupp and to seek opportunities for local adult education.

Brimscombe Primary School is already a successful school, but has great potential for development as it is a single-storey building with extensive grounds. The development of the Port in particular will provide homes for families in the immediate catchment area, so the developer will need to provide a proper financial contribution to ensure appropriate development of school capacity.

4 Housing

There is generally limited capacity for housing development in the Stroud area, but Brimscombe and Thrupp parish is being considered by the District Council as a potential site for up to 2,000 new homes, with a preference for brownfield, canal-side developments, as part of its consultation on a new Core Strategy. We do not consider this scale of development would be appropriate given the physical constraints and size of the parish.

The responses to questions about new housing in the 2006 survey show that there is strong support for limited development of: low-cost starter homes, family housing and affordable housing to rent; and little or no support for substantial development. There is also a desire for a mixture of housing types. Major developments¹ should include an element of affordable housing to meet local needs; Stroud District Council's Local Plan seeks 30% affordable housing provision on "appropriate developments of 0.5 hectares or more or those capable of 15 dwellings or more". We will work with Stroud District Council to better understand the need for affordable housing in the area and use this information to inform decision making on new developments.

¹ As defined in the *Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995*

5 Employment

Brimscombe and Thrupp is an important employment area within the district with a wide stock of commercial and industrial buildings, many of which are vacant or derelict. We will seek opportunities to use these sites to: provide new jobs which meet the needs and skills of local people; reduce the number of people travelling out of the area for work; and improve the local commercial/business spend within the parish.

It is also important that existing jobs are protected. Where existing employment sites are to be used for new mixed-use developments, a minimum of two new jobs should be provided in addition to those currently on site for each new dwelling.

To improve employment opportunities we will encourage the provision of:

- facilities for home workers
- suitable premises for light industry
- office space as part of mixed-use developments
- suitable facilities for the creative industries
- increased broadband capacity

The canal regeneration will stimulate demand for tourist facilities, for example places to eat and drink, which will generate employment opportunities.

6 Canal regeneration and Brimscombe Port

We will work to ensure that the canal regeneration is used to revitalise the area. Brimscombe Port is a key regeneration site with the potential to become a vibrant heart for the community. We will work closely with Stroud District Council and potential developers to ensure that the needs of the community are recognised and met in any development plans. Key ingredients for this site are: high-quality, sustainable development with mixed employment, retail and residential use, including:

- a new community-owned social enterprise building to replace the current Social Centre (see below)
- a significant proportion of affordable housing
- housing for older people
- affordable employment space (e.g. low-rent small workshops and studios)
- services for boat-owners and visitors
- parking
- high-quality civic spaces and wildlife areas
- safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and boats which is segregated from vehicular access
- safe and proportionate access to the Port from the A419

We will seek urgent agreement of the following issues which are of paramount priority for the local community:

- the size of the area of water (70% is the preferred option)
- rebuilding Brimscombe Bridge

- a new design of aqueduct to enable the canal to cross the River Frome

7 Community building

There is a strong desire from residents that the development at the Port should include a significant element of community use. At the heart of the site there should be a new multi-use building to be developed, owned and run by the community as a social enterprise, offering a range of facilities and services.

Potential uses for the new building include: café, access to education and ICT, workspaces, healthcare facilities and meeting rooms. It should also include some outdoor space including parking, a children's play area and outdoor seating. The building will become a hub for the community, open in the daytime and evenings, and accessible to all.

8 Community Development Trust

To run the community building project we will establish a new Community Development Trust. Capital funding will come from the sale of the existing Social Centre site, significant contributions from developers, and grants. The completed building will be self-supporting with income coming from the café, room rental and feed-in tariffs.

9 Road safety, accessibility and parking

The speed and volume of traffic, especially on the A419, are a major concern. We will work with Highways and other agencies to improve road safety and accessibility. In particular we will campaign for improved pedestrian crossings on the A419 and improvements to the Toadsmoor Lane junction.

Parking is also a significant problem, especially on narrow lanes. We will not support new developments or extensions to existing properties that will either create or exacerbate parking problems, because they provide insufficient off-street parking.

We will seek opportunities to promote alternatives to the use of private motor vehicles, including public and community transport schemes, for example a local car club. We will also investigate the possibility of reopening Brimscombe station.

10 Crime and anti-social behaviour

Although we live in a low crime area vandalism, car crime and theft are worries for some households and businesses (2006 survey). We will work with the neighbourhood warden and police to improve community safety and promote membership of Neighbourhood Watch.

New developments can contribute to the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour through their design, layout and construction. The provision of community and youth facilities and involvement in the Port can be used to reduce anti-social behaviour. We will also develop projects to reduce litter.

11 Heritage, landscape and biodiversity

People who live and work in the Brimscombe and Thrupp area value the countryside and scenery very highly. Much of the parish lies within either the Cotswolds AONB or the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area.

We will not support development on greenfield sites. We will also seek to preserve the many important historic buildings, especially those connected with our industrial heritage. We will create a Village Design Statement to describe the distinctive characteristics of the parish and provide design guidance for future development.

Biodiversity

A key issue is the preservation and protection of the local environment for the sake of biodiversity. We will seek to protect sites identified as important for biodiversity and advocate the creation of new wildlife areas where opportunities arise.

Derelict industrial sites are often important habitats, so we will ask developers to provide an Environmental Impact Assessment for major developments on brownfield sites. Where the benefits to the public of the development outweigh any adverse effect upon the nature conservation interest of the site we will seek to minimise harm and ensure that compensatory measures, such as habitat creation or enhancement, are included. There may also be opportunities to create new wildlife corridors, particularly associated the canal and river, and to link to Strategic Nature Areas.

Localism Agenda

During the consultation period there has been much speculation about the new government's Localism Bill, the aim of which is to "shift power from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils"².

Of particular relevance to Brimscombe and Thrupp will be the proposals for:

- **Neighbourhood planning** – the Bill introduces a new right for communities to draw up a "neighbourhood development plan" which could say where the community think new houses, businesses and shops should go – and what they should look like.
- **Community right to build** – the Bill will give groups of local people the ability to bring forward small developments.
- **Requirement to consult communities before submitting very large planning applications** – the Bill introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for very large developments.
- **Strengthening enforcement rules** - the Bill will strengthen planning authorities' powers to tackle abuses of the planning system, such as making deliberately misleading planning applications.
- **Reforming the community infrastructure levy** – to make it more flexible.

² A plain English guide to the Localism Bill, www.communities.gov.uk

The Bill is currently progressing through Parliament, so in the meantime the existing legislation will prevail, but it will be important to monitor the Bill and ensure that its implications are considered in any decision making.

Action Plan

Key Aim	Action	Who	Completed by
1 Sustainability	1.1 We will consider the environmental, economic, and social implication of the decisions we make to ensure the future wellbeing of our area.	Parish Council	On-going
	1.2 Develop and support projects aimed at conserving energy or producing renewable energy.	Parish Council Neighbouring parishes	End 2011
	1.3 Encourage developers to incorporate the highest possible levels of energy efficiency into new buildings where this can be done without compromising affordability.	Parish Council Developers	On-going
2 Brownfield sites	2.1 Encourage and support development of appropriate brownfield sites, and not greenfield sites.	Parish Council	On-going
	2.2 Conduct a detailed survey of potential development sites to better understand their size, condition, ownership and planning status.	Parish Council	Mar 2011
3 Development/ infrastructure	3.1 Seek to ensure that new developments are supported by appropriate infrastructure improvements and that flood risk issues are addressed.	Parish Council Stroud DC Gloucestershire CC	On-going
	3.2 We will continue to maintain a watching brief in respect of flood issues, reporting any problems to the necessary authorities.	Parish Council	On-going
	3.3 Promote the existing community infrastructure including schools, shops and services.	Parish Council	End 2011
	3.4 Work to improve and extend the range of community facilities to include: medical services, outdoor public spaces including children's play areas, and activities for children and young people.	Parish Council Stroud DC Gloucestershire CC	On-going
	3.5 Negotiate with Gloucestershire County Council to bring the playing fields on the A419, next to the football club, into community ownership and use.	Parish Council Gloucestershire CC	End 2011
	3.6 Support our local schools and seek opportunities for local adult education.	Parish Council	On-going

Key Aim	Action	Who	Completed by
4 Housing	4.1 Consult with Stroud District Council to better understand the local need for affordable housing.	Parish Council Stroud District Council	Jan 2011
	4.2 Seek opportunities to provide affordable housing to meet local needs.	Parish Council	On-going
5 Employment	5.1 Seek opportunities to use vacant or derelict commercial and industrial buildings to provide jobs which meet the needs and skills of local people.	Parish Council	On-going
	5.2 To protect existing jobs, where existing employment sites are to be used for new mixed-use developments a minimum of two new jobs should be provided in addition to those currently on site for each new dwelling.	Parish Council	On-going
	5.3 To improve employment opportunities we will encourage the provision of: facilities for home workers; suitable premises for light industry; office space as part of mixed-use developments; suitable facilities for the creative industries; and increased broadband capacity.	Parish Council Potential Developers Stroud District Council BT	On-going
6 Canal and Brimscombe Port	6.1 Work in partnership with the District Council and developers to ensure that the needs of the community are recognised in any development plans for the canal and Brimscombe Port to ensure that the canal regeneration is used to revitalise the parish.	Parish Council Stroud DC Developers	On-going
	a. Work closely with the Canal Project Design Team to agree an outline scheme	Parish Council Canal Project Design Team	Jan 2011
	b. Partner the District Council in pre-outline planning application public engagement	Parish Council Stroud DC	Jan 2011
	c. Work with Stroud District Council to select a preferred developer	Parish Council Stroud DC	Mid 2011
	d. Work with the selected developer to prepare a detailed scheme	Parish Council Developers	End 2011
7 Community Use	7.1 Develop outline plans for a new community building at Brimscombe Port.	New Community Development Trust	End 2011

Key Aim	Action	Who	Completed by
8 Brimscombe and Thrupp Community Development Trust	8.1 Establish a Community Development Trust to develop a new community building at Brimscombe Port.	Parish Council Trustees of Brimscombe and Thrupp Social Centre	Mar 2011
9 Road safety, accessibility and parking	9.1 Work with Highways and other agencies to improve road safety and accessibility.	Parish Council Gloucestershire Highways	On-going
	9.2 Negotiate with Gloucestershire Highways for the installation of a new pedestrian crossing on A419 by Brewery Lane/Hope Mills Lane.	Parish Council Gloucestershire Highways	End 2011
	9.3 Negotiate with Gloucestershire Highways for improvements to the junction of Toadsmoor Road and the A419.	Parish Council Gloucestershire Highways	End 2011
	9.4 Ensure that new developments provide sufficient off-street parking.	Parish Council	On-going
	9.5 Promote alternatives to the use of private motor vehicles, including public and community transport schemes.	Parish Council	On-going
10 Crime and anti-social behaviour	10.1 Review the number and location of litter bins in the parish.	Parish Council Neighbourhood Warden Stroud DC	End 2011
	10.2 Ensure adequate new bins are provided with new developments.	Parish Council	On-going
	10.3 Organise an annual community Litter Pick.	Parish Council	Spring 2011
	10.4 Develop projects with local schools and businesses to raise awareness of litter problems.	Parish Council	End 2011
	10.5 Work with the neighbourhood warden and police to improve community safety.	Parish Council Neighbourhood Warden Police	On-going
	10.6 Promote membership of Neighbourhood Watch within the parish.	Parish Council	31/3/2011

Key Aim	Action	Who	Completed by
	10.7 Encourage developers to use site and building design to deter crime and anti-social behaviour.	Parish Council Developers	On-going
11 Heritage, landscape and biodiversity	11.1 We will protect our countryside and scenery, by not supporting development on greenfield sites.	Parish Council Cotswold Conservation Board	On-going
	11.2 We will seek to preserve important historic buildings, especially those connected with our industrial heritage.	Parish Council Cotswold Conservation Board	On-going
	11.3 Protect sites identified as important for biodiversity.	Parish Council Cotswold Conservation Board	On-going
	11.4 Advocate the creation of new wildlife areas where opportunities arise.	Parish Council Cotswold Conservation Board	On-going
	11.5 Developers to provide an Environmental Impact Assessment for major developments on brownfield sites.	Parish Council	On-going
	11.6 Create a Village Design Statement to describe the distinctive characteristics of the parish and provide design guidance for future development.	Parish Council	End 2011
12 General aims	12.1 Consult with residents and neighbouring parishes on moving the boundary of Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish so that it includes the whole of Brimscombe village.	Parish Council and neighbouring Parish Councils	End 2013
	12.2 We will monitor progress of the new Localism Bill to ensure that its implications are considered in any decision making.	Parish Council	On-going

References

A plain English guide to the Localism Bill, www.communities.gov.uk

Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council, 2010, *Parish Appraisal*

Stroud District Council, 2008, *Cotswold Canals Brimscombe Area Action Plan, Issues and Options Consultation Feedback: Document Response Overview*

Stroud District Council, *Local Plan 2005*

Stroud District Council, *Local Plan 2005 Proposals Map*

Thrupp Parish Council, 2003, *Regenerating Brimscombe Port and the Canal. The Wishes of Thrupp Parish Council and local residents*

Acknowledgements

Parish Plan consultation and writing by Brimscombe Hill Limited www.brimscombehill.co.uk

Parish maps provided by Stroud District Council under license

Grant funding provided by Stroud District Council