



CLARE PARISH COUNCIL
REVIEW OF 4 YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN
April 2012 – March 2016

INTRODUCTION

In Spring 2011, the newly-elected Parish Councillors agreed they should produce a Development Plan covering work over the four year period 2012-2016. This was a new initiative for the Council. It is not mandatory and is something that many parish councils across the country do not produce. The councillors involved were :

*Derek Blake
Margaret Godwin
Phil Gryce
Keith Haisman
Gayle Mallows
Keith Mison
Allan Parsley
Peter Phillips
Leslie Warmington*

Councillors were conscious that much of their work would be concerned with operational oversight of functions such as street-cleaning and cemetery maintenance, as well as supporting the activities of community groups across the Town. They were also very aware that they would have to play a much greater role in responding to initiatives taken by other organisations, most notably Suffolk County Council's plans to divest itself of the Country Park and the Library, and BT's proposal for a windfarm.

The Development Plan was seen as a means by which the council could be proactive, rather than reactive, in determining and addressing the key priorities for the Town and its parishioners. It built on the Community Plan produced some 18 months previously and summarised the contribution the Parish Council believed it could make to the future well-being and development of the Town. It evolved through a series of discussions during the summer and autumn, and following consultation with organisations and parishioners, its implementation began in April 2012.

In working on the Plan, councillors were mindful of the need to preserve the very best of Clare, whilst acknowledging the changing nature of life in the 21st Century and the opportunities and pressures that it brings. Proposed actions were grouped under four main headings which reflected these influences and summarised the nature of the work, as follows:-

Sustaining a thriving yet traditional Town

planning, supporting businesses, affordable housing, education

Improving our Infrastructure

parking, highways, utilities, access for the elderly, disabled and pushchairs

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment and Amenities

Country Park, Library, green spaces, re-cycling

Supporting Community Involvement

Youth and elderly provision, community groups, events

In producing the Plan, councillors were conscious that they would not have the resources to undertake all of the work on their own. Indeed, they recognised that it would not be appropriate for them to do so as they represented only one organisation amongst many in the Town. Rather, they saw their role as facilitators and enablers, acting as a catalyst to help get initiatives that people support off the ground. They realised that real progress could only be made on a number of the issues if individuals and groups stepped forward and helped to make the Town's plans a reality.

The plan was adopted following consultation with all parishioners. It was published on the website and progress was reported upon in the Council Annual Reports.

1. Sustaining a thriving yet traditional Town
 planning, supporting businesses, affordable housing, education

Aim 1A	
To accurately assess the current need and future needs for affordable housing in Clare and to set in place plans for gradually meeting the demand without changing the character of the town.	
Action	1) To research how accurate results based on hard evidence can be established 2) To create a Town Plan, being mindful of Vision 2031. 3) To respond to planning applications as appropriate.
Review	1) The Community Plan Survey gave clear evidence that affordable housing was a major priority for many parishioners. Councillors worked to maximise affordable housing as new developments came on line. They also lobbied successfully to ensure that policies were put in place so that affordable houses were allocated to people who were from Clare or who were closely associated with the town. Two major opportunities presented themselves. 1a) Land became available to the north of Lutus Close. CTC interviewed a number of housing association companies and appointed Hastoe to build 11 properties on the site. Original architectural plans were rejected by CTC as they didn't match the historic character of Clare. Revised plans matched the CTC vision and were praised by SEBC as being exemplary for design and environmental conservation. Buildings completed 2015 and occupied by local people. 1b) CTC were closely involved in development planning at an early stage for the new development of 60 houses on Stoke Road and used its influence to increase the number of affordable housing units from 6 to 14. 1c) CTC worked hard to establish an agreement with local housing associations that would give Clare people, and those associated with Clare, priority in housing allocation. 2) Community Plan developed by CTC praised for its high quality by planning inspectors and SEBC. Used by CTC to back presentations and submissions relating to Vision 2031, and clearly carried weight. Councillors attended courses on developing a full Local Plan. Limited time and impact of significant workload created by other projects meant that this Action had to be deferred. (Noted that full Local Plan is still required if Clare is to have any significant impact on the development of the town and its ability to safeguard its future in terms of impact from plans for adjacent communities e.g. Haverhill.) 3) Planning policies changed rapidly during this period and Councillors ensured that they kept abreast of, and responded to, major developments at national and local level. In-depth responses to major policy changes included Local Plan 2016 and Rural Vision 2031 submissions. Minor local planning applications were made in a timely fashion and are reference to Forest Heath Development Policy Numbers. Notable response to major planning issues included : 3a) Original plans put forward by Charles Church for the Stoke Road development were robustly rejected on the grounds that they did not match the high architectural quality required to fit into our historic town. The location of the frontage to the estate, along Nethergate Street with its many listed buildings, made this of critical importance. A local architect was therefore employed to produce plans of a high and fitting standard which were accepted by the Town Council. Many additional meetings were held with the developers, Clare Society and SEBC planners to discuss finer details of planning, flood amelioration and boundary issues with The Granary. 3b) Applications for wind turbine development were rigorously challenged on grounds of H&S for local residents and visual amenity close to National Heritage buildings and landmarks. CTC lobbied for a 2km buffer zone between turbines and residential housing. Applications for 8 turbines at Leys Farm were withdrawn and whilst a single turbine was built at Maple Hill, CTC successfully campaigned to ensure that building materials and heavy equipment did not come through the town. Strong presentations made to SEBC to reject the turbine application were unsuccessful but SEBC policy was altered shortly afterwards. (Noted that the turbine creates noise and light pollution for nearby homes and television interference.) 3c) Responses by CTC to major planning proposals, included within Local plan 2016 and Vision 2031, were detailed and carefully argued for the benefit of the town. There was significant success in reducing the large number of houses put forward by SEBC from 195 to 130 and the quality of architecture was dramatically improved for the Stoke Road development. Although CTC councillors facilitated public meetings and made representation to the Independent Planning Inspector, we were less successful in lobbying for a sensitively designed central development behind the Swan which would have maximised pathways, created a centralised carpark for the town and

	<p>encouraged footfall to local shops. (Noted that it will be important to have a high level of input into planning for the Cavendish Road development, particularly in terms of road safety and suitable architecture.)</p> <p>3d) A highly significant planning development related to the changed relationship between CTC, SEBC planners and local developers. CTC deliberately opted for Clare to be considered a town so that it gave Clare greater negotiating power. Planners, developers and major utilities providers were invited to give presentations to the council and CTC was included in all major discussions as a key participant and one that needed to be listened to. An example of this was the devolvement of Section 106 money to the community of Clare. This was ground breaking as S106 money from previous developments (e.g. The Heights) went directly to county and borough coffers, with none of it being used directly for the benefit Clare . (Noted that S106 funds are time limited and must be used within 5 years or they return to the developer. CTC needs to be proactive in their use. Also noted that the strength of CTC's involvement in major planning issues (e.g. Haverhill One) has been diluted during the last year.)</p>
<p>Aim 1B</p> <p>To ensure that new building developments are in keeping with the historic nature of Clare.</p>	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To create a sample book to aid developers and planners to match works with existing materials, colours, styles etc. Photograph examples through Clare: windows, bricks, pargetting, doorways etc. 2) To rigorously match planning applications to sample book.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Significant evidence has been gathered for the sample book and this now needs to be collated. Specific councillors have developed a great interest in, and an in-depth knowledge of the way in which building developments and alterations should comply with the historic nature of this conservation area. 2) In depth site visits are made for all applications affecting heritage buildings and plans are rigorously investigated. Good relationships have been developed with Christine Leveson, SEBC Heritage Officer, and a watching brief is kept to ensure that local residents and developers are mindful of appropriate planning guidelines. (Noted : sample book needs to be collated to support future councillors.)
<p>Aim 1C</p> <p>To evaluate how Clare is viewed by the outside world.</p>	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To use website to gain feedback. 2) To survey visitors through hotels, cafes, visitors centre, businesses.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Councillors have been highly conscious of the need to deliver positive messages about the town whenever opportunities arose, (e.g. through media reports and responses to consultation documents) so that people were encouraged to visit the town and boost the economy. Key messages included Clare being <i>a thriving yet traditional Town, a vibrant and attractive place to live or visit, somewhere that offered culture, character and heritage.</i> The website was seen as an important vehicle for selling a positive message but was failing to engage people. Significant work has been carried out on a new web site by councillors over time. The newest iteration of these is waiting to be 'signed off' and formally launched. However there are still some key issues that need to be resolved ahead of the launch, notably how the day-to-day management of the site will be handled and how/when the current web-site contract can be terminated. (Noted that a decision on these issues is a high priority for the new development plan.) 2) This aspect of the aim deferred.
<p>Aim 1D</p> <p>To investigate the need for creating employment and small business opportunities in Clare</p>	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Empirical Research. 2) Dialogue with local businesses and local people. 3) Full survey of all businesses – footfall, needs, employment prospects, gaps in market.

	<p>4) Ascertain willingness to employ work experience students, 5) Investigate options for joint buying syndicates 6) Support people working from home e.g. broadband</p>
Review	<p>1-6) Whilst councillors were keen to include an aim that might have helped to support businesses in the town, it quickly became evident that the 4 year plan was not the vehicle for achieving this. The closing of the Clare Business Association removed the most suitable liaison group, councillor energies were needed for other projects and, understandably, businesses were keen to follow pathways independent of each other.</p> <p>Some minor developments incorporated the inclusion of home studies/offices in the Charles Church development plans to encourage home workers. Additionally, the roll-out of broadband at regional level was closely monitored and the development of land behind the Swan (which would have included office space and a central car park) was lobbied for, albeit unsuccessfully. Councillor concerns that Clare is in danger of becoming a dormitory town for Haverhill are still very real.</p> <p>(Noted that commercial and business groups within a community are actively encouraged to be a part of the development of Local Plans.)</p>
<p>Aim 1E Support Schools in their work to become/stay outstanding.</p>	
Action	<p>1) Establish link councillors. 2) Ask schools what support they would like. 3) Celebrate schools and their achievements on web-site.</p>
Review	<p>1 – 3) Although link-councillors were not formally established by CTC, there has been a strong involvement of individual councillors. Three worked as part of the initial group of trustees (and then governors) establishing the secondary school within the town, two remain on the Governing Body as founding trustees. Several governors became closely involved with the primary school visiting on many occasions to support the school with parking issues, to follow up on joint projects or to celebrate events such as the Queen’s Jubilee.</p> <p>(Note : Discussion required on whether or not link councillors should be established to visit the schools and support them with their work.)</p>

2.Improving our Infrastructure

parking, highways, utilities, access for the elderly, disabled and pushchairs

<p>Aim 2A To improve parking</p>	
Action	<p>1) Work with Parking group to identify all parking spaces, their ownership, appropriateness of markings and legal stance. 2) To carry out a full survey on parking patterns for all who visit Clare. 3) To work with schools to reduce number of parents driving children to school. 4) To consider incentives for greater use of the Country Park 5) To consider greater enforcement/use of Parking Warden. 6) To petition for marked bays 7) To investigate disabled and residents' spaces 8) To lobby for a new car park</p>
Review	<p>1) A parking survey was carried out by two councillors in the early days of the development plan. All parking spaces were identified although ownership was less easy to ascertain. Markings were a huge issue as they were indistinct or did not comply with new regulations. Police reported the impossibility of enforcing parking restrictions given the state of the lines and, in spite of intensive lobbying by CTC, there was little or no response from Suffolk Highways to improve the situation.</p> <p>2) As above</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The primary school was visited on several occasions amid significant H&S concerns over parking around the primary school, but also, the need to keep children safe whilst walking to school. Officers from SCC Highways were taken to both schools and met with pupils. Surveys by pupils at Stour Valley were used by CTC in planning submissions to SEBC and SCC. Developing a walking-bus for the primary school was considered but the dependence on volunteers made it difficult to implement. CTC lobbied for a pedestrian crossing on Cavendish Road for Stour Valley (considered by SCC to be too expensive) and a crossing patrol on Callis Street for the primary school (considered unlikely to be used as parents weren't crossing the road on the day it was monitored - as it was too dangerous) CTC bought hi-viz vests for every child at the primary school. Walking routes were investigated showing that many involved dangerous pinch points such as Bell Corner. CTC included improved walking safety for children and parents as part of its submission for developing land behind the Swan but the submission was turned down. 4) Parking at the Country Park was initially within the remit of SEBC, now it is with the CCCP trustees and therefore beyond CTC control. 5) Historically, the Parking Wardens did have some impact on parking within the town, however, these were phased out by SCC and responsibility given to the police and PCSOs who have now been relocated or phased out. 6) CTC lobbied for marked bays but were turned down on cost. In a 'Catch 22' situation, disabled and residents' spaces were turned down because there are no formally marked bays. 7) As above 8) A new, central car park was included as part of Vision 2013 submissions which went before an independent Planning Inspector but were rejected on the grounds that the CCCP car park was available and the land behind the Swan was of historical importance and should not be built on.
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Aim 2B

To improve **road safety**

Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To work with HGV group to reduce number of HGVs travelling through Clare. 2) To lobby SCC to ensure that all road marking are clearly visible. 3) To petition to have current road hatching in Stoke Road removed as dangerous. 4) To employ two road crossing attendants (lollipop) 5) To petition for a pedestrian crossing in the centre of Clare. 6) To petition SCC to extend speed limits on fringes of town. 7) To use Speedwatch cameras. S106 8) To improve walking routes for school children.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) CTC have continuously lobbied for HGVs to be reduced or removed from Clare Town centre. Surveys have been carried out; submissions made to SCC; HGV businesses have been visited, lobbied and written to; the Road Haulage Association has sent representatives to talk to CTC; and meetings have been held with local businesses. Progress was particularly difficult in the early years as SCC Highways would not recognise that there was an issue until Cllr Evans joined SCC. Her support has been invaluable and she is now working with the Stour Valley Action Group. 2) Some success has been achieved on improving road markings at junctions and removing hatching on Stoke Road, particularly following the re-surfacing. 3) As above 4) See section above re. employing road crossing attendants. 5) CTC lobbied for a pedestrian crossing in central Clare but SCC advised that poor sight lines for drivers made the suggestion unworkable. 6) Progress towards extending speed limits at the edge of the town are slow but ongoing 7) Requests have gone out for local people to man Speedwatch cameras but no volunteers have been forthcoming. However, submissions by CTC for S106 highway money to be used on vehicle activated signs have been successful and these should be installed soon. 8) See Aim 2A, review section 3 for information on walking routes for children.

Aim 2C	
To improve access for the elderly, disabled and push-chairs.	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Survey residents to ascertain their needs. 2) Improve access onto buses. 3) To survey access to local amenities and make suitable and affordable recommendations as appropriate. 4) To promote safety and well-being of elderly and disabled e.g. lighting, security advice, etc. 5) Establish internet café/support classes. 6) Petition to keep bank and post office services. Completed.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) CTC councillors undertook a ‘climate walk’ of the town to ascertain difficulties faced by the elderly, disabled, people on disability scooters and people with push chairs. As a result, bike racks were installed in central Clare (although this took a long time to achieve) and kerbs dropped in certain areas. It was noted that access to certain buildings was made difficult by their historic nature and planning restrictions but, where possible, businesses and organisations had put in ramps. 2) The bus-stop in central Clare was recreated and improved to allow for disabled access. 3) See (1) above. 4) Significant work in the area of promoting safety and well-being for the elderly is carried out by CLASP and links to this excellent organisation have been maintained through a link councillor. Additionally, safety related items have been included in Chevron with information on how other agencies can support our more vulnerable citizens e.g. the fire service testing of electric blankets. 5) Support classes for internet use have been offered by other organisations e.g. the library or local individuals, but there has been little or no take up. 6) The services provided by the bank and the post office have been carefully monitored and CTC have lobbied to make sure that they stay in Clare. <p>(Noted: page on web-site needed showing disabled accessibility to shops and town features. Booklet of advice on security, support, emotional well-being etc. would be helpful for all households.)</p>
Aim 2D	
To improve utilities provision	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To draw up a report on state of water, gas, electricity, flood prevention, broadband provision. 2) Engage with appropriate bodies to ensure improvements.
Review	<p>Utilities provision and identification of responsibilities proved to be highly complex due to the historic nature of some of the infrastructure, changes of responsibility over time and the difficulty of obtaining accurate maps. Investigations showed, for example, that stretches of pipe work moving foul water from one point to another within the town could be part-owned by different authorities such as Anglian Water and the Environment Agency: it is not easy to identify who owns which bit even with maps available. Tracks of road drainage, grass verges, lamp posts etc. do not all belong to the same provider with the result that some things are occasionally maintained by groups who don’t actually own them. The possible location of where pipes lie can be unknown to the utility companies themselves - as seen in the gas pipe replacement work on Cavendish Road.</p> <p>However the Town Council endeavoured to engage with all of the different utility providers during the four year period 2012 to 2016. In 2012, in depth, positive discussions were held with Anglian Water, SEBC and Clare Society. These covered basic infrastructure – background, existing problems and future capacity, the Pumping Station on Stoke Road and flood prevention and sewage proposals for the Stoke Road/Land East of the Granary development. An insight was gained into how the rest of the town was served and a map provided for storage in the council office.</p> <p>Broadband upgrading has been monitored and other initiatives have been undertaken, including moving the power supply in Bridewell Street and improving the drainage at Poslingford Corner and along the route to Chilton Street.</p> <p>Overall, it is clear that this is an action that will be on-going but may never be finally achieved as utility provision, and responsibility for that provision, are constantly changing.</p>

3. Protecting and Enhancing the Environment
Country Park, Library, green spaces, re-cycling

Aim 3A	
To draw on the skills and talents of the Clare community to develop a robust and creative business plan for the development of Clare Community Country Park .	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To survey parishioners on their views regarding the Country Park. Cllrs delivered to every house in Clare 2) To establish a key team to draw up initial business plan. 3) To survey the buildings and establish costings for bringing them up to standard. 4) To negotiate with SCC on appropriate funding to remediate previous neglect. 5) To achieve full ownership of land and buildings. 6) To establish interim letting arrangements.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Survey results were professionally evaluated and the report produced identified parishioners' priorities for the Park and their future ambitions. The report was used to inform Business Case submitted to SCC in July 2012. 2) Two Town Councillors were nominated as the CTC representatives to lead the work on drawing up the Business Case and they worked closely with Geoffrey Bray who subsequently became Chair of the Trustees. 3) Surveys of the station buildings were undertaken by Savills on a pro bono basis. Their report formed the basis on which the financial negotiations with SCC took place. 4) SCC accepted CTC as their preferred partner for the transfer of ownership in September 2012. Negotiations then took a further two and a half years before our due diligence requirements were met on all aspects of the Park and an acceptable financial settlement was agreed to cover the previous neglect across the whole Park. A 3-day public consultation on the transaction was held between 31 July and 1 August 2014 followed by a Public Meeting on 7 August 2014. Again parishioners were asked for their written feedback and the results were professionally collated showing a significant majority of parishioners in favour of the transfer of ownership of the Park on the terms outlined. Further negotiations led to the settlement from SCC being improved through the intervention of SCC's Chief Executive. The CTC decision to agree to the transfer of ownership was taken at a special CTC meeting on 3 March 2015. 5) The land and buildings were finally transferred to CTC on 26 March 2015 and on the same date a 30-year lease and a Management Agreement were signed with Clare Castle Country Park Trust CIO to enable them to manage the day-to-day running of all aspects of the Park. 6) Once the buildings had been renovated, tenants were identified for the house and also for the office. Both tenants have renewable short term contracts.
Aim 3B	
To work with SCC, SEBC and a group of potential Trustees to ensure that the CCCP plan is effectively launched and thereafter to support the Trustees, other organisations and the people of Clare to ensure that it is successfully implemented.	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establish full board of Trustees to work alongside initial Trustee group, agree ethos, aims and objectives, management and financial regulations and guidelines, structures and audit arrangements. 2) To establish a management group to run park. 3) To support the development of 'Support' committee to establish development plans for running events and raising funds. 4) Create a volunteer force to improve the country park 5) Identify a training programme, advertise for volunteers, seed fund tools
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The initial trustees were in office from the date of transfer of ownership of the Park, 26 March 2015, until December 2015 when elections were held and nominations agreed for the 4 categories of Trustee. The initial trustees had established the aims and ethos, business plan, operational plan and internal regulations in accordance with good business practice. The new Trustees took up office on 1 January 2015 and an appropriate induction programme has been put in place. 2) Each Trustee has a specific role and responsibilities and each Trustee has built their working groups to achieve their agreed aims. 3) While the Trustees may hold a small number of events for their own fundraising purposes, community groups e.g. the CCA, are encouraged via newsletters, the Trust website and Facebook page to make full use of the Park's facilities. 4) Via newsletters, the Trust website, Facebook page and public meetings a volunteer group has been created with over 100 members. There are 3 volunteer sessions each

	<p>month and volunteers number 15-20 for each session, which is proving to be an efficient number of volunteers to manage.</p> <p>5) Training and tools are provided as necessary with special attention being paid to Health & Safety.</p>
<p>Aim 3C</p> <p>To work with the Country Park Trustees and SEBC to ensure the highest standards of care and development within the green spaces of the park.</p>	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To support appointment of SEBC to look after green spaces. 2) To receive feedback from SEBC on suitable improvements to green spaces and build them into long term plans as appropriate. 3) To incorporate suitable suggestions for improvement made by parishioners.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) SEBC has been contracted to deliver an agreed scheme of work which is reviewed with them on a regular basis. 2) During review meetings SEBC offer suggestions for improvements to the Park which are then costed and considered for inclusion in future works. 3) A meeting of Park supporters was held on 26 August 2015 in order to generate ideas for the future development of the Park. These ideas have been prioritised for feasibility and affordability and become part of the Trust's plan.
<p>Aim 3D</p> <p>To maintain and further develop the Nuttery and cemetery grounds.</p>	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To ensure that strong support is given to KM and the volunteers who work in the Nuttery. 2) To establish working parties to work on cemetery grounds, preparing land, planting shrubs, laurel hedge and wild flower area. 3) To communicate with relatives at an early stage to ensure that they feel supported in their desire to celebrate their loved ones whilst also understanding the requirements of a lawn cemetery.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Nuttery is a significant asset of the town and the work done by KM and volunteers has continued to be outstanding. The Town Council have greatly appreciated the time and dedication of this team and provided support as necessary. 2) Considerable work was undertaken with regard to the cemetery as part of the development plan. The duties of all councillors as members of the Burial Authority were clarified, a full review of policies and practice was undertaken, rules were revised to give more control, closer co-operation and clarity were established with local funeral directors and the financial management changed to ensure that the cemetery became self-funding. The appointment of KM as a Cemetery Manager to oversee work within the cemetery, liaise with outside professionals and operatives, support families and promote safety made a huge contribution towards the success of the new arrangements and the proper management and development of the cemetery itself. 3) The appointment of the RFO and the Clerk to the Council as administrators of the Burial Authority tightened the record keeping and ensured strong support for the Cemetery Manager and a high level of care for the bereaved. This continues to be the case. <p>(Note : section on new web-site needed devoted to cemetery information.)</p>
<p>Aim 3E</p> <p>To support the continued presence of a library within Clare.</p>	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establish links with new SCC library organisation. 2) To identify possible new sites for library within Clare.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The appointment of a nominated councillor has ensured close links with the library which is flourishing under the new county-wide arrangements. 2) The lease has been renewed.

Aim 3F To develop a local recycling scheme	
Action	1) Examine possibility of diverting brown bin collection to site on allotments; liaise with Combined Charities of Clare Common Trust; seek external funding
Review	1) Councillors have visited recycling centres on several occasions and provided advice for parishioners. Diverting brown bin collections to a site within Clare was investigated but CCCT were unwilling to have it on their land. Other sites were considered by the Environment Committee and considered to be impracticable.

4. Supporting Community Involvement
Youth and elderly provision, community groups, events

Aim 4A To gain a greater understanding of the current position regarding demographics and to understand the needs and wishes of all parishioners in Clare and the surrounding areas, notably young families, youth groups and our more senior residents.	
Action	1) To carry out demographic research to gain a picture of underlying trends. 2) To survey groups and organisations on the ways in which they could be better supported and could support others. 3) To establish bi-annual meetings between Parish Council and School Voice from Clare Primary, SVCS, Samuel Ward reps (Clare based) and Sudbury Upper reps (Clare based) to include development plan meetings every 4 years. NAH
Review	1) Councillors have used Suffolk Oracle for researching underlying trends where necessary. 2) Through the Finance Committee, the Council now has a better understanding of how groups are constituted, their plans, and financial situations. They have offered advice to groups on finance. Councillors have attended Community Action Suffolk meetings and Emergency Planning updates, and provided and produced brochures of advice. Other work has included First Aid training courses and the movement of the defibrillator to the Co-op. 3) Deferred to a future plan.
Aim 4B To further improve communication with the community, providing more up-to-date information to people about the Parish Council's targets, local issues, events and campaigns.	
Action	1) To establish new format for newsletter and increase to 12/year. 2) To establish new web-site 3) To carry out minor consultations as appropriate and provide feedback to parishioners affected by smaller initiatives. 4) To carry out major consultations by surveying and providing feedback to whole parish.
Review	1) Very full parish annual reports were sent out during this period – a significant development as they did not exist before. A new form of newsletter was created –The Chevron. This is delivered to every house in Clare every two months to provide news, advice and information on forthcoming events. It also provides a conduit for other organisations to include items of news or to have fliers and information delivered. This was particularly important during the period covering the divestment of the Country Park. Other means of communication have included posters and pop-ups. 2) See review of Aim 1c above. 3) The feasibility of carrying out minor consultations was discussed and evaluated. On reflection, councillors felt that it might be divisive 4) Major consultations carried out included the divestment of the Country Park, traffic/HGV surveys, the impact of Vision 2031/development of land behind the Swan and the 4 Year Plan itself.

Aim 4C	
To encourage parishioners , including younger people to play an active role in developing initiatives and projects.	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To support all youth groups with how they can establish their projects e.g. to develop skate park, to extend youth club hours, to establish groups of volunteers for the country park. 2) To encourage the formation of an independent group to support young families, if this is desired.
Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Town Council worked with a group of youngsters who formed CYAC, helping to facilitate the building of a BMX track and encouraging the youth group to take ownership of looking after the facility. This worked well for a short period. Regrettably, it was not possible to re-establish the Youth Club as SCC no longer employed youth workers and it was difficult to provide adult cover for activities. However, younger volunteers have been encouraged to join activities in the Country Park. 2) This area has been well-covered by other organisations e.g. Wrap Around Club and the Library.
Aim 4D	
To create a greater sense of community engagement across Clare by staging “whole community” events that are open to all to help organise and attend,	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To devise and run a series of events for the whole community each year, for instance an annual fete, an annual duck race and twice yearly quiz nights. These events would be run by the whole community and everyone would be invited to get involved.
Review	<p>Events have included :</p> <p>Celebrating the Queen’s Jubilee with a tea party for older residents, a whole community event in the park, lighting the beacon, school competition and gifts for school children.</p> <p>Pumpkins in the Park is particularly popular providing special Halloween events for children</p> <p>Magna Carta Celebrations included – dressing the town with bunting and pennants in Clare colours, walks to and from Castle Hedingham, work with schools, the creation and procession of school flags, bell ringing, a choral evening, displays in the Museum, lectures from expert historians, a Tastes of 1215 evening, a Medieval Banquet, a procession through Clare, a costume competition and a Medieval Fair with a re-enactment group present.</p> <p>The Council have also financially supported other activities run by other organisations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Christmas Lights Switch-on The Treble C Choir Rainbows Clare in Bloom Forest Schools The Scouts Budding Artists The Swimming Club Clare Community Association

Aim 4E	
To develop a programme where younger parishioners are involved in community projects/supporting other groups e.g. the elderly, CLASP, Country Park	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Check CRB regulations. 2) Liaise with other organisations to identify possible projects. 3) Check local, regional, national and government schemes that recognise and reward achievement in the local community. 4) Encourage youngsters to organise charity fundraising event each year, to involve families as well. Funds to be split between Clare projects and charities of young people's choice.
Review	This was an area that councillors were unable to focus on due to the high demand of other priorities.
Aim 4F	
To engage with people when they first move to Clare by issuing welcome packs to new residents .	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To update Clare directory and use the website mailing list function – people not forthcoming with information. CAB doing something and CCA 2) To establish welcome packs for new residents. – under progress
Review	Initial work has begun on these but there is much more to do.