

# PLAYFORD & BEALINGS

THREE PARISHES

## Great Bealings, Little Bealings and Playford Parish Plan



## Report and Action Plan



Sponsored by:



The Admiral's Head  
Freehouse and Restaurant  
Sandy Lane, Little Bealings



April 2009

### **Cover Photographs**

The photographs on the cover are of the village signs of the 3 parishes. Great Bealings and Little Bealings are both sides of the same sign and were carved by Maureen Midwinter. The Great Bealings side shows St Mary's church, the hump back bridge and cows grazing on the water meadow. The Little Bealings side shows All Saints church, sheep grazing and examples of the ancient artefacts found in the village.

Erected in commemoration of the Queen's Silver Jubilee, the Playford sign sits on top of the main village notice board. It depicts a ploughman with two Suffolk Punch horses, a breed now on the Rare Breeds Survival Trust's critical list. Herman Biddell of Hill Farm was responsible for compiling the first volume of the stud book in 1880 and his brother Manfred of Lux Farm owned a breeding establishment of some 46 of the horses at the time of his death in 1894.

## Contents

1	Introduction.....	5
2	Steering Group Members.....	5
3	Letters of Support.....	6
4	Support from the Parish Councils .....	6
5	Description of the Parishes .....	7
5.1	History.....	7
5.1.1	The Churches.....	7
5.1.2	Buildings etc.....	8
5.1.3	Roads and Railways etc.....	10
5.1.4	Residents .....	11
5.2	The Parishes Today.....	13
5.2.1	Great Bealings .....	14
5.2.2	Little Bealings.....	14
5.2.3	Playford .....	15
5.2.4	All parishes.....	15
6	Objectives of the Plan.....	16
7	Links to Local Authority Development Plans.....	16
8	Chronology and Methodology .....	17
9	Survey Results.....	19
9.1	Household Survey.....	19
9.2	Residents' Survey .....	23
9.2.1	About You .....	23
9.2.2	Housing and Development .....	26
9.2.3	Local Services (e.g. electricity, gas, recycling, fire, ambulance etc).....	27
9.2.4	Security of Persons and Property.....	28
9.2.5	Issues for People with mobility difficulties.....	28
9.2.6	Issues for Young People (12-17) .....	29
9.2.7	Other Comments .....	29
9.3	Young Residents' Survey.....	29
9.3.1	About You .....	29
9.3.2	What you feel about living here.....	30
9.3.3	Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.....	31
9.3.4	Issues for You.....	31
9.3.5	Other Comments .....	31
9.4	Stakeholders Survey .....	31
9.4.1	Utilities .....	31
9.4.2	Safety.....	31
9.4.3	Social Life .....	32
9.4.4	Waste Collection.....	32
9.4.5	Communication.....	32
9.5	Analysis of common areas from the survey.....	33
9.5.1	About your travel .....	33
9.5.2	Roads and Traffic.....	34
9.5.3	Public Transport.....	37
9.5.4	Schools .....	37
9.5.5	Use of Footpaths/bridleways/cycle paths.....	39
9.5.6	Natural Environment (e.g. wildlife, trees, rivers, farms) .....	40
9.5.7	Village Halls and Churches .....	41

9.5.8	Pollution .....	42
10	Where Next .....	42
11	Action Plan Summary.....	42
12	Appendices.....	44
12.1	Appendix A – Detailed answers from the Residents’ Survey.....	44
12.2	Appendix B – Detailed answers from the Young Residents’ Survey.....	44
12.3	Appendix C – Detailed answers from the Household Survey.....	44

## 1 Introduction

Parish Plans were announced in November 2000 in the Government's Rural White Paper "Our Countryside – The Future". Their purpose was stated to be:

“... set out a vision of what is important, how new development can best be fitted in, the design and quality standards it should meet, how to preserve valued local features and to map out the facilities which the community needs to safeguard for the future.”

It was also said that plans should “identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled ...”

In its guidance, the government says:

“A Parish Plan is a statement of how the community sees itself developing over the next few years. It:

- reflects the views of all sections of the community;
- identifies which features and local characteristics people value;
- identifies local problems and opportunities;
- spells out how residents want the community to develop in the future;
- prepares a plan of action to achieve this vision.”

This is a Parish Plan for three small villages in Suffolk – Great Bealings, Little Bealings and Playford. The reasons why the parishes joined together can be found in the section on “Chronology and Methodology” on page 17.

This Parish Plan will deliver the views of the village residents, together with those working and providing services locally (the stakeholders), on a variety of aspects of living in the villages, together with a list of actions aimed at bringing about desired improvements to our village environments. There is a summary of the planned actions starting on page 42.

Editorial note: in this report, when providing information relating to each village, we have generally followed the order Great Bealings, Little Bealings, Playford. This is alphabetical and is based on the naming of the local benefice.

## 2 Steering Group Members

The Steering Group (called the Joint Parish Plan Steering Group, JPPSG) comprised 5 members from each Parish (including 2 representatives from each Parish Council), a total of 15 members in all. Meetings of the JPPSG were chaired by a chairman from each parish in rotation.

The following were the members of the JPPSG during the final phase of the Parish Plan activity:

<b>Great Bealings</b>	<b>Little Bealings</b>	<b>Playford</b>
Eric Barnett (Chairman)	Sarah Wilson (Chairman)	Anne Seward (Chairman)
Phil Holmes (Secretary)	Ferial Evans	Eileen Stennett
Jonathan Keer	Ann Beck	John Day
Chris Chestnutt	Peter Carr	Joan Metcalfe (Treasurer)
Paul Norris	Hilary Wilkinson	Tracy Hanson

Other people were members of the JPPSG at various times, but had to stand down for various reasons. These include Robin Sadler, Colin Hopkins, Robert Tate and Tom Norfolk. Minutes were taken by Carol Ramsden.

The secretary was Phil Holmes. Any communications relating to this Parish Plan should be directed to him at:

Paddock Hill  
Grundisburgh Road  
Great Bealings  
Woodbridge  
IP13 6PE

Tel 01473 735223

email: [email@philholmes.net](mailto:email@philholmes.net)

### **3 Letters of Support**

Letters of support were received via email from Peter Bellfield (local County Councillor) and Ivan Jowers (local District Councillor).

### **4 Support from the Parish Councils**

The parish councils have been enthusiastic supporters of the creation of the Parish Plan. The initial public meeting, where it was agreed to develop a plan, was called by the Parish Councils. They continued their backing by nominating members of the councils to sit on the Steering Group. They also provided tangible support by providing 5% of the budget for the plan – a sum of approximately £70 from each council.

The Parish Councils will each have a responsibility to ensure that some of the actions arising from the plan are implemented.

## 5 Description of the Parishes

### 5.1 History

A volunteer from each parish has written a short history of their own village. These have been combined into the summary below.

**Our three villages are similar geographically.** We share water meadows, heath land, fertile fields and dry sandy areas. Early settlements grew up close to our then navigable rivers, The Lark and The Fynn. Barrows and other archaeological finds date from the Bronze Age (1700 BC) and Iron Age. Roman artefacts have been found but it is the extent of Anglo Saxon artefacts that indicate the origin of the three parishes. This is confirmed by the Domesday survey of 1086, although in Little Bealings there is also reference to Danish invaders.

**The names of our villages have changed over the years.** In the Domesday Book **Playford** appears as **Plegeforda** - old English for “the ford where sports were held”. Only recently the deserted village of Nekemere (the Domesday ‘Necchmar’) was discovered, close to Lux Farm. The earliest recorded name for **Little Bealings** was **Parva Belinges** which is thought to be derived from the old English words for a glade or piece of dry land in marshy countryside. **Great Bealings** is believed to be of Saxon origin, meaning the area where the Beda or Bela people lived. It was known as **Belinges Magna** until 1674 when the current spelling appeared, although Magna remained until much more recently.

#### 5.1.1 The Churches

**Great Bealings** The village is geographically split into two areas, with the church set in isolation above the water meadows and marshland. The church has some remnants from the 13th century, but is mainly 14th and 15th century including the tower with its flushwork decoration. Inside there are monuments to John Clench and Thomas Seckford amongst others. Seckford was born in Woodbridge in 1515 and was a senior member of the court of Queen Elizabeth I. He also founded seven almshouses in Woodbridge. John Clench was the son of the great Elizabethan Judge John Clench, and died in Great Bealings in 1628. Canon Moore (son of Edward Moore of Bealings House) was rector for forty years and was responsible for the restoration of the church in 1842 -1851 making it much as we know it today. Pew ends were then carved by Henry Ringham and were so well done that many people think they are 15th century. Stained glass includes a west window by H.Hughes (1879), a chancel south window by Mayer of Munich (1886) and a chancel north window by Ward & Hughes (1882). The pulpit is Jacobean with back panel and tester. The North door has tracery and three small figures (a rarity).



*St Mary's church, Great Bealings*

**Little Bealings** The village church of All Saints was established and built, possibly on the site of an older building, at the end of the 13th century. The Bishop of Norwich installed the first rector in 1296. This early church consisted of the chancel and small nave. The tower and the porch were built later in the 15th century. The north aisle was added in the middle of the 19th century. The font, made in the 15th century, was badly mutilated sometime in the 1640s during the Commonwealth period.



*All Saints church, Little Bealings*

**Playford** No visible evidence remains of the church recorded in Domesday, the present building dating from the 13th century. It consists of a medieval nave, south porch-tower and Victorian chancel built in early English



*St Mary's church, Playford*

style. Its oldest features are a blocked north doorway of c.1300 and a chancel arch from c.1370. The nicely traceried perpendicular south and west windows are a later addition. The south porch-tower, one of only twenty-two in Suffolk, was built by the generosity of Sir George Felbrigge (Esquire at Arms to Edward III) and Margery (d. 1409) his second wife, who left 5 marks for its "making". A canopied niche contains a modern figure of Mary while the two medieval bells are most probably contemporary with the tower. In 1859 the singing gallery was taken down and the

village musician who played the fiddle was replaced by a portable hurdy-gurdy. A military brass of Sir George Felbrigge, one of the finest in Suffolk, adorns the chancel. Deal box pews were removed from the nave and a new trussed roof replaced a whitewashed barrel ceiling for Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Among the church's valued possessions are an exquisite standing cup of 1619, willed by Lady Elizabeth Felton, and two Charles I pewter flagons. The churchyard is approached through an imposing lychgate and avenue of limes.

### 5.1.2 Buildings etc.

**Great Bealings** Seckford Hall was the seat of the Seckford family from the time of Edward I to Charles I. It was rebuilt in 1530 as a country residence by Thomas Seckford and described by Norman Scarfe as having the most romantic 16c façade in England. It was then rescued from decay in the late 1940s by Sir Ralph Harwood who turned it into a first class hotel.

Bealings House sits in splendid isolation and is a red brick mid Georgian building of seven bays with parapet and pitched roof. Its doorway has Ionic columns and pediment. The Lodge, listed Grade II, is essentially unchanged since 1849. Its origins are probably a farmhouse, of the 17th or 18th century. The Croft, a Victorian house, was lived in by Admiral Pelham Aldrich and The Old Rectory, with many distinguished occupants, is early Victorian and sits high overlooking the church.



Annesley House, originally mid Victorian, was partially demolished and rebuilt much larger for Colonel and Mrs Downing in 1912 to the designs of well known Suffolk architect Harold Hooper. The roadside gateway is a copy of Cardinal Wolsey's gateway in Ipswich.

The characteristic hump back bridge was built in 1841. The village has had at least two pubs, the Boot in Boot Street and the Live and let Live in Lower Street. It is thought that two windmills existed in Great Bealings during the 1800s.

**Little Bealings** Wills and documents from the 14th and 15th centuries show a prosperous village rejoicing in more settled times. It was an area of small farms (dairy and arable), woodland harvested for building and rivers and marshes used for fishing and reed gathering. We learn from a will of Dame Elizabeth Wyngfield that a watermill was then working in the village. There are still a few houses left in the village from earlier times, notably Home Farm and Grove Farmhouse in the Street. Manor House and The Grove, although much altered, date from Tudor times.

In 1901, The Grove Estate was sold upon the death of Mr Naunton-Waller and some parcels of land and dwellings became owner occupied. The village shop and cottage were bought by Mr Littleford who continued to run this business for the next thirty or so years. The higher expectations of those people coming into the village and the education of the village people saw the need for a Reading Room to be built in 1913 - now a private residence. A village hall was erected after World War I in Sandy Lane and provided a focus for the village - as did the public house The Admiral's Head. In 1938 the Angela Cobbold Hall in the Street was erected in memory of Angela Cobbold who did much charity work in the village. After her tragic death, her mother and brother gave the hall to the church to be used for religious education purposes. It has had many uses over the years, dances during World War II and a doctor's surgery. In the early 1950s the village hall was deemed too small and the land was sold. Later a new hall was built on the sand quarry site and serves both Great and Little Bealings. Land at the rear of the hall was made into a playing field which now houses the John Belstead Field. This was opened in the spring of 2008.

**Playford** Playford Hall is a Grade II\* moated Elizabethan manor house with contemporary barn built by Sir Anthony Felton in c.1590. The east wing was demolished in the early 18th century. Playford Mill, mentioned in Domesday Book, ceased working in c.1874 when the 18th century buildings were converted to farm cottages. With a population never exceeding 300 the village supported few other trades: a smithy by The Brook survives only in 18th century records; a brick kiln was still working in 1874; the last beer house was demolished in 1892 and the last shop closed in 1998. Copyhold in Church Lane is a vernacular house of the 15th or early 16th century. Two other dwellings of possibly similar date were pulled down in the 1960s when the village was redeveloped. The red brick cottages dotted around the parish date from the 1880s when the Bristol Estate upgraded its housing stock for agricultural labourers. The School, which had been housed in a converted cottage at the top of Hill Farm Road built in 1816 out of materials from the former barracks in Woodbridge Road, was closed in 1877 and transferred to Little



*Playford Hall: moated manor house of c.1590*

Bealings. The red brick cottages dotted around the parish date from the 1880s when the Bristol Estate upgraded its housing stock for agricultural labourers. The School, which had been housed in a converted cottage at the top of Hill Farm Road built in 1816 out of materials from the former barracks in Woodbridge Road, was closed in 1877 and transferred to Little

Bealings. The Vicarage, of white Suffolk brick, was built in 1845 for the curate at a time when the living was joined with that of Rushmere. Playford Mount, a Grade II listed Gothic style house, was built in 1867 by E C Hakewill (1816-72) for his own occupation. Hakewill was one of the foremost church architects in Suffolk in Victorian times. The village hall was built in 1896 and was extensively modernised and enlarged in 2003. It was originally given by Mary Kate Stevenson who was from a family of wealthy coal owners in County Durham and was the wife of the Liberal MP

### 5.1.3 Roads and Railways etc.

**Little Bealings** The owners of The Grove were one of the major landowners and in 1859 the east coast railway line to Woodbridge and Lowestoft was built across this estate land. Until 1956 Little Bealings had its own railway station. This was closed as part of the 1950s rail closure programme, prior to the “Beeching Axe”.

The coming of the railway, with easier commuting, attracted wealthier people to the area and larger houses were built in some parts of the village. It remained, however, a very rural, agrarian society.

The 20th century brought radical changes to Little Bealings as elsewhere. The onset of developments in transport, higher expectations and two World Wars have shaped the village both literally and economically into what it is today.



*The staff of Bealings station in its heyday*

Between the two World Wars much of the land of the southern perimeter of Little Bealings, which had been heathland and woodland, was developed for building substantial residential properties. Martlesham and Playford roads were transformed. Behind these houses much of the land was used for sand and gravel extraction.

Mechanical farming methods and the shortage of labour during and after the two World Wars swept away centuries of traditional farming methods and the social structure of the village. Farmhouses were sold as private homes, hedges ripped out to make way for farming on an almost industrial scale. Single trees stand in fields show the ancient hedgerow boundaries long gone.

**Playford** Three former hedged lanes have been all but lost. In 1708 Thomas Felton of Playford Hall ‘inclosed to himself the common horseway’ leading from The Brook to Rushmere Street, so diverting users to the less direct route to Ipswich that is used today; the track to Tuddenham over the Warren and that to Boot Street in Great Bealings from the top of Church Hill are both indicated on Hodskinson’s 1783 map of Suffolk, the latter still in use around 1810 when Lord Bristol’s carriage is recorded as being ‘fearfully scratched’. The Ipswich to Lowestoft railway line, opened in 1859, cut through the centre of the parish in the river valley. The crossing gates on the Ipswich road were replaced by a bridge in 1871 leaving the former route still visible on the eastern side of the present approach.

### 5.1.4 Residents

Men from the villages fought in both world wars and each has a war memorial near their church. In 1987, the area was severely affected by the great storm with the villages virtually cut off and houses being without power for up to 12 days. A great test of village community spirit!

**Great Bealings** Admiral Pelham Aldrich, buried in the churchyard, was Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Docks and was also on several surveying expeditions around the world. Lord Hatherley, a former Lord Chancellor, is also buried in the churchyard.

Major Edward Moor bought Bealings House on his retirement from the army, in 1806. He had served in India, being wounded three times. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society and an author on Indian mythology.

He constructed the stone folly to the front of the house reputed to contain his collection of heathen idols so that they might come to no harm. He also wrote the mystery, "Bealings Bells", in 1834.

The writer Lady Winifred Fortescue (nee Beech) was born in the Old Rectory in 1888 where her father was then rector of Great Bealings. In her autobiography "There's Rosemary There's Rue" she describes her early life in the village and the people who lived there.

More recently, the Old Rectory was home of the late Lord Belstead, who was a local farmer, but also Leader of the House of Lords, Northern Ireland minister, Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk and a major benefactor for the new sports field and playground. His grave is in the churchyard.

**Little Bealings** The Whites Directory of 1844 tells of a village of gentlefolk, tradespeople, shopkeepers and farmers, also a publican and a Dame School. The 1881 census lists occupations, apart from labourers, of workers in industries such as brickmaking, malting and coprolite extraction. Others were listed as shepherds, gamekeepers, thatchers, gardeners, a blacksmith, wheelwright, shopkeepers, postmaster, schoolteacher, stationmaster, signalmen, porters and farm bailiffs. The women and girls were employed as cooks, maids, domestic servants, laundresses and dressmakers - a very different situation from today. 19th century Little Bealings had small mixed farms, small holdings for vegetables, fruit and pig production as well as service occupations for the community. In response to the 1870 Education Act, Bealings school was opened in 1877, producing for the first time numerate and literate children. The village was almost self sufficient and people tended to stay put.

Little Bealings changed dramatically in the 1960s. Some very old cottages in the Street were demolished and land formally used as allotments in Sandy Lane was developed for housing. Richard's Drive and Michael's Mount came into being and greatly enlarged the population. In the early 1980s the village shop and Post Office closed, the school almost closed and the Admiral's Head had a makeover.



*The War Memorial in Great Bealings*

**Playford** Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), the slave trade abolitionist, lived at Playford Hall from 1816 until his death and is buried in the churchyard. Insufficient credit has been given to Clarkson for his life's work: it was he who initiated the task, produced the necessary evidence and provided the momentum while Wilberforce fought for the cause in Parliament.

Sir George Biddell Airy (1801-92) was seventh Astronomer Royal from 1835 to 1881. Today he might also have been called Government Chief Scientist for among his many accomplishments was the establishment of the Greenwich Meridian in 1884. There are craters on Mars and the moon named after him.

Arthur Biddell (1783-1860) of Hill House, was a pre-eminent Suffolk farmer, an industrious land surveyor at the time of the tithe commutations and an inventor of agricultural machinery which was manufactured by his in-laws the Ransomes of Ipswich.

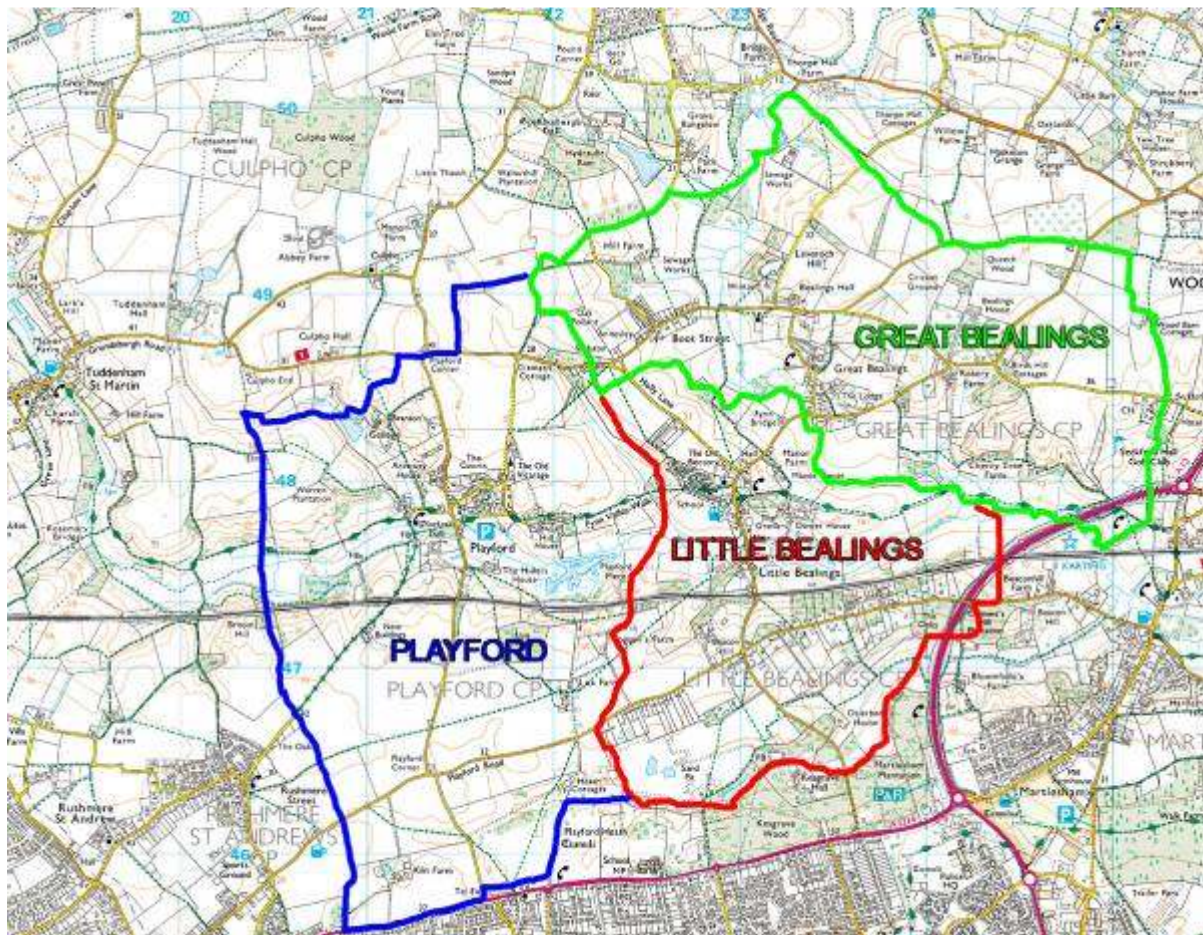
Francis Seymour Stevenson (1862-1938) of Playford Mount was Liberal MP for the Eye Division 1885-1906. His over enthusiasm for the construction of the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway to help his rural constituents during the agricultural depression caused both his own bankruptcy and that of the railway for which he had to resign his seat. In 1895 he became the first chairman of Playford Parish Council.

**Today**, our three villages are three thriving communities. The new Playford Parish Hall and the new Bealings playing field are testament to the efforts of many for the good of all of us who live here. In Little Bealings, the school and the pub are now flourishing and are excellent facilities for all three villages, which, though they have seen many, many changes over the hundreds of years people have settled this land, have retained the warmth of very welcoming and positive communities.



*Thomas Clarkson's memorial in Playford churchyard*

## 5.2 The Parishes Today



*Map of the locality, showing the boundaries of the three parishes*

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An idea of the size of the villages can be seen from the numbers of residents and households for each parish in the table below. The household figures were supplied by Suffolk Coastal District Council from their database at February 2006, whilst the figures for residents came from the Suffolk County Council estimates for mid 2005<sup>1</sup>. The figures from the 2001 Census<sup>2</sup> are also given for comparison.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/38314C3E-02A0-4515-92FE-8909C6FDB3A3/0/Parishestimates01to05.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/A546F6B2-3218-4537-9398-384E6BA430C5/0/CensusParishdata.pdf>

Parish	Population		Households	
	SCC figures	2001 Census	SCDC figures	2001 Census
Great Bealings	310	290	120	114
Little Bealings	470	445	185	175
Playford	220	204	90	88

The villages of Great Bealings, Little Bealings and Playford are tucked away between Ipswich and Woodbridge. They all enjoy a rural setting in the beautiful River Fynn and River Lark valleys with protected landscape areas, but provide easy access to the A12 and to the employment, shops, services and social facilities of Martlesham, Kesgrave, Ipswich and Woodbridge. Each retains its own church, individuality and character, but they also share many services, including the school, the pub and a bus service from Ipswich to Woodbridge that passes through all three villages. Car users have the option of using the Park and Ride in nearby Martlesham.

A mobile police station visits the villages regularly and is sited by the Angela Cobbold Memorial Hall in Little Bealings.

### 5.2.1 Great Bealings

The majority of the population of Great Bealings lives in two discrete hamlets - Boot Street and Lower Street. The housing in the parish was built mostly after the second World War and a large proportion of it consists of detached bungalows and houses set in reasonably sized plots. There are also many historic and architecturally fine dwellings and St Mary's church. Seckford Hall Hotel and Howard Construction provide some local employment but otherwise residents commute out of the parish, mostly to Ipswich and Woodbridge.

Following the recent closure of the post office and village shop there are no retail or similar fixed facilities or services within the parish.

### 5.2.2 Little Bealings

The two main residential areas of Little Bealings are in and around The Street and along the Playford and Martlesham Roads. The former Victorian railway station in The Street now enjoys a renaissance as the Mallard House Business Centre, offering some local employment. The Admiral's Head independent public house and restaurant is also located in The Street and is the only pub in the three parishes. Sandy Lane, off The Street, is a small community of mainly detached bungalows built in the 1960s and is also home to Bealings County Primary School.

In 2008 a school bus for pupils at Kesgrave High School was introduced.

All Saints church is served by the office and social facilities of the Angela Cobbold Memorial Hall. This Hall is also home to 1st Bealings Girl Guides. In addition, Bealings Village Hall provides a meeting place for the benefit of local residents. The Village Hall, like many of the local clubs, is shared between Great and Little Bealings, but located in Little Bealings. Local

fund raising and the hard work of a Project Team now means that the new John Belstead Playing Field provides leisure and sports facilities for both Great and Little Bealings residents, including a wide variety of children's play equipment, a tennis court and a boules area.

Bealings Bowls Club enjoys its own home in The Street and attracts players from outside the villages. The Club plays in four leagues between April and September.

### Bealings Village Hall

A variety of clubs and societies, both from within and outside the villages, meet regularly at the Bealings Village Hall. These include the Bealings Women's Institute which meets at the Village Hall eleven times a year, often with a pre-meeting lunch. Bealings Carpet Bowls Club also meets in the Village Hall regularly, with an enthusiastic membership playing in a Summer League and other competitions. Bealings Badminton Club moved from the School to the Village Hall when the Hall opened in 1957 and continues to be popular. The club meets on Thursday evenings from September until April. Other activities, such as keep fit, country dancing, drama and art classes also take place at the Hall. The Hall has a Snooker Room and a Committee Room, where Great and Little Bealings Parish Councils hold their meetings.

### 5.2.3 Playford

In terms of population, Playford is the smallest of the three villages with most of the houses clustered between St Mary's church and the Parish Hall.

The excellent and very well used Parish Hall provides art classes, a playgroup, bridge club, weekly yoga and monthly whist drives and hosts the annual Harvest Supper. Playford Women's Institute meets there on the first Tuesday of every month. The Parish Hall committee promotes community with, for example, Pub Nights, a summer Family Barbecue and a regular film for children in the run-up to Christmas. On the field outside there is a children's play area, a small football pitch and a boules piste. For other facilities, residents visit Bealings Village Hall and Playing Field.

### 5.2.4 All parishes

#### Mobile Library

Orwell Mobile Library 2 visits the three villages on alternate Tuesdays as shown below:

Playford: Telephone kiosk	12.25pm - 12.40pm
Great Bealings: Boot Street	12.50pm - 1.05pm
Great Bealings: Lower Road	1.10pm - 1.25pm
Little Bealings: Admiral's Head	1.35pm - 2.00pm

#### The Benefice Newsletter

Great and Little Bealings were joined by Playford and Culpho to form a single benefice in 1971 and a newsletter was developed as an information link for the new relationship. Although published by the Benefice, it has developed a far wider remit, carrying information

and items of interest to all four parishes. In 2006 it was agreed that increased funding from the Parish Councils would enable it to be delivered free to every household. It still relies on volunteers to produce and distribute it, but is a very important means of sharing information throughout the parishes.

## **6 Objectives of the Plan**

- To obtain opinions from the local community on issues important to them
- To stimulate thought on how residents would like to see the villages develop
- To give residents an historical and present-day cameo of each village
- To identify what the community wants to change
- To identify what the community does not want to change
- To poll the views of the younger residents of the village
- To foster community spirit
- To inform the local councils of any issues raised in the consultation that are not consistent with their local policies and plans and which need to be addressed
- To put actions in place to address our issues
- To identify a lead responsibility and partners for each action.

## **7 Links to Local Authority Development Plans**

At the moment Suffolk Coastal District Council are in the process of producing a Local Development Framework (LDF) which will replace the old system of 'Local Plans'.

Individual communities have been encouraged to prepare Parish Plans and SCDC has said that realistic plans can help influence the Local Development Framework and help it meet the needs of individual communities. They further stated that "Parish and Town Councils can lead the preparation of such plans but they need to demonstrate that they have the support and involvement of the community at large."

The LDF, when completed, will consist of a suite of documents that together will guide the future development of the district and be used in the determination of planning applications. The first and the key document to be produced is the 'Core Strategy (including Development Control policies)'. This document has already been the subject of the first stages of the consultation process in a document entitled 'Core Strategy Issues and Options' in February 2007 and a 'Further Issues and options' document on potential areas for growth to the area east of Ipswich and at Felixstowe/Walton and the Trimley Villages in February 2008.

It is proposed that most new development will be directed to sustainable locations in accordance with a settlement hierarchy consisting of: Major centres, Market towns, Key Service centres, Local Service centres, Other Villages and the Countryside. While the preferred options document may have changes to this hierarchy, in terms of where each settlement fits in, the settlement classification and attributes should be the same. In the draft LDF, Playford is classified as an 'Other village', Great Bealings a 'Local Service Centre' and Little Bealings a 'Local Service Centre'.



The LDF is developing a strategy for the provision of housing in that part of the county east of Ipswich up until 2021. By that time approximately 1,000 additional houses will be required in this area. All three parishes are agreed that the preservation of the rural nature of these parishes and their current environment should be preserved and not threatened by any of these developments. They also agree that there should be no developments on the north side of the A1214 in Playford.

The original proposals of the Core Strategy Group considered five areas for this housing, one of which included that referred to in Playford. However, after consultation, it has been agreed that the major development should only take place in the area of Martlesham around the BT site. If this policy is adhered to, there should be no threat of inappropriate development in our three parishes.

For the purposes of any further developments, Little Bealings and Playford are happy with their proposed classification. Great Bealings has asked to be reclassified as an 'Other Village'. For more details, refer to the SCDC Local Development Framework website.

Planning Policy Statement 12, issued July 2008, refers to the role of local parish and community plans. It says:

“An opportunity is provided for local parish planning to be more influential, whether in the shape of a parish plan or through a different model, provided that this planning involves the LPA from the outset and works with the LPA on the process. PPS12 permits the implementation of Supplementary Planning Documents (detailed planning documents to underpin the Development Plan Documents) which can be informed by community plans. Community level planning is recognised as beneficial to community involvement, a sense of belonging and ownership. In any event, LPAs are urged to ‘pay close attention’ to non-statutory community plans as part of their community involvement.”

## **8 Chronology and Methodology**

On 2 April 2007, nearly 100 residents from Great Bealings, Little Bealings and Playford gathered in the Angela Cobbold Hall to learn about the Parish Plan process - and to make the important decision of whether the three parishes should go ahead and produce one - or more - Parish Plans.

After listening to a presentation by Suffolk ACRE's Rural Services Officer, the meeting debated whether to develop a single plan for all the villages or to have a separate plan for each village. On a vote, it was agreed to go ahead with creating a single shared parish plan with a joint steering group to carry out consultation and present findings.

A steering group of 15 people from the 3 parishes was formed, tasked with gaining a budget to allow a Parish Plan to be created, consulting with parish residents and then creating the plan itself. It was formally called the “Joint Parish Plan Steering Group” or JPPSG.

The JPPSG decided that the key issues of the residents would be found by inviting them to exhibitions to be held in the village halls and to write their views on display boards based on to a set of “Themes”. These views were then crystallised in a focus group and used to drive the creation of the surveys to be used to establish the residents’ views. It was also decided to have separate surveys for the adult residents and the young residents, together with a separate survey for each household, aimed at establishing demographics.

The surveys that were arrived at by this method were quite exhaustive, with 31 questions in the household survey, 197 questions in the residents' survey and 121 questions in the young residents' survey. This is considerably more than is often the case with parish plans.

Surveys were hand-delivered by volunteers to each household within the 3 parishes and the same volunteer called to collect the results. By using volunteers in this way, the steering group was hoping to get 70-80% returns.

Data was entered into a custom designed web application by volunteers and the data was analysed using database and custom software.

A separate Stakeholders Working Group was set up, tasked with using focussed interviews with representatives of groups involved in the villages, in order to understand the viewpoints of those groups.

The outline calendar of events is below (note that there were meetings of the steering group typically every three weeks and most of these are not mentioned. Minutes of these are available on the Internet<sup>3</sup>):

2 April 2007	Open Meeting in Village Hall
22 May 2007	Inaugural Meeting of Steering Group Officers (except secretary) elected Decision to apply for funding
19 June 2007	Appointment of secretary
25 September 2007	Initial application for funding submitted
25 October 2007	Grant of £3,200 approved by Suffolk ACRE
3 and 10 November 2007	Consultation exhibitions held in Bealings Village Hall and Playford Parish Hall
20 November 2007	Consultation focus group
8 January 2008	Initial draft of surveys
28 May 2008	Final version of surveys ready for printing
30 May and 4 June 2008	Volunteer distributors briefings
June – September 2008	Distribution and collection of surveys
July – October 2008	Data entry

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.philholmes.me.uk/greatbealings/Documents/ParishPlan/ParishPlanMinutes.htm>

25 October 2008	Data analysis workshop
18 March 2009	Draft report ready
20 April 2009	Report printed
25 April 2009	Exhibition

## 9 Survey Results

The following sections give a summary of the results of the surveys. The full data is given in appendices at the end. For the residents' surveys, the results are separated into the same sections as used in the surveys themselves. Where the Data Analysis workshop concluded that something could or should be done as a result of the information from the surveys, this is identified in the text as a recommended "action". These are summarised as a list on page 42.

The household survey has its own section, but where questions about the same theme were asked of residents, young residents or stakeholders the results from this are summarised in a single section starting on page 33. Information unique to each survey is in its own section.

### 9.1 Household Survey

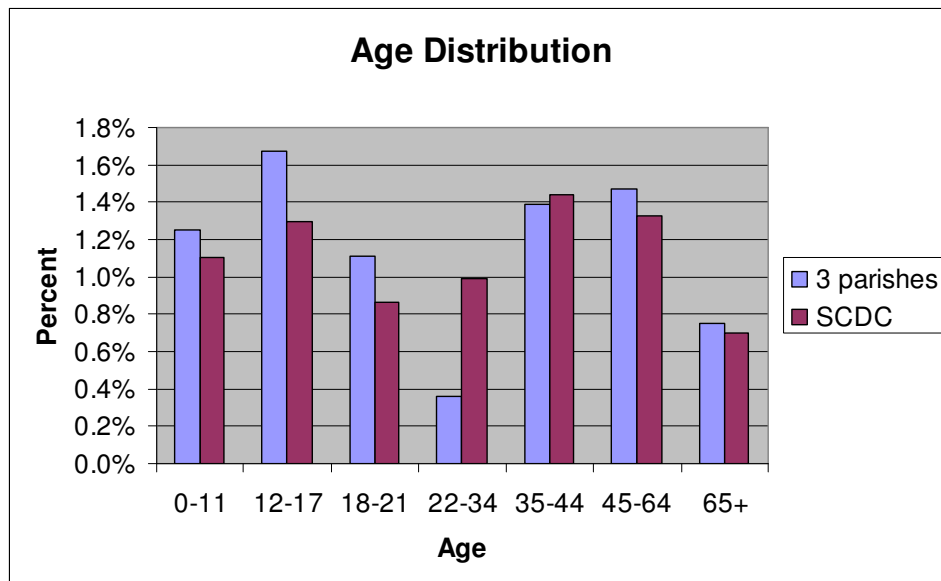
273 completed household surveys were returned from a total of 397 households – a 69% return rate.

We first asked the number of people in the household in specific age ranges. The results are below.

Age Range	Number in range	Percent in range
0-11	61	15.1%
12-17	51	10.0%
18-21	26	4.4%
22-34	31	4.7%
35-44	65	13.9%
45-64	136	29.4%
65+	103	22.5%

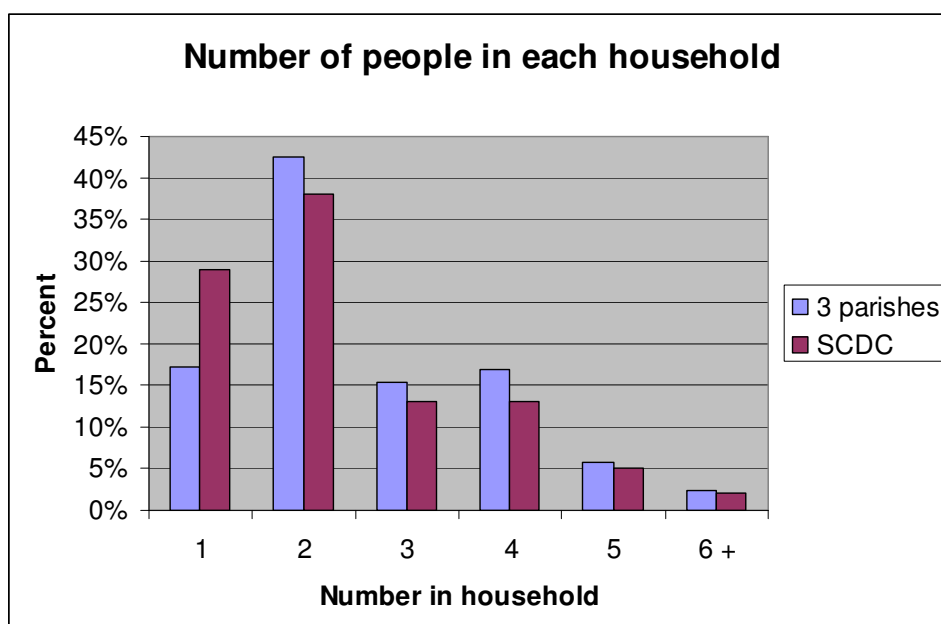
Initially it would appear that all ages below 45 are under-represented in the villages. However, a closer inspection shows that some of the age ranges are quite wide (e.g. 45-64 has 20 years between the lower and upper limits) and others are narrow (18-21 has only 4 years). The bar chart below takes the percentage in each age range and divides by the number of years in each range. This gives a better view of the age profile. It also compares this with data for Suffolk Coastal District Council taken from the 2001 census<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Census data obtained from <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/>



As we can see, this shows that the most under-represented age range is 22 to 34. We assume that the reason for this is that either younger people can't afford to set up home in the villages, so leave for other locations or that they don't return after going to University or distant work places. As they become older and more affluent, they can afford to move in and hence the higher proportion of above-35s.

We can also see the number of people in each household in the graph below.

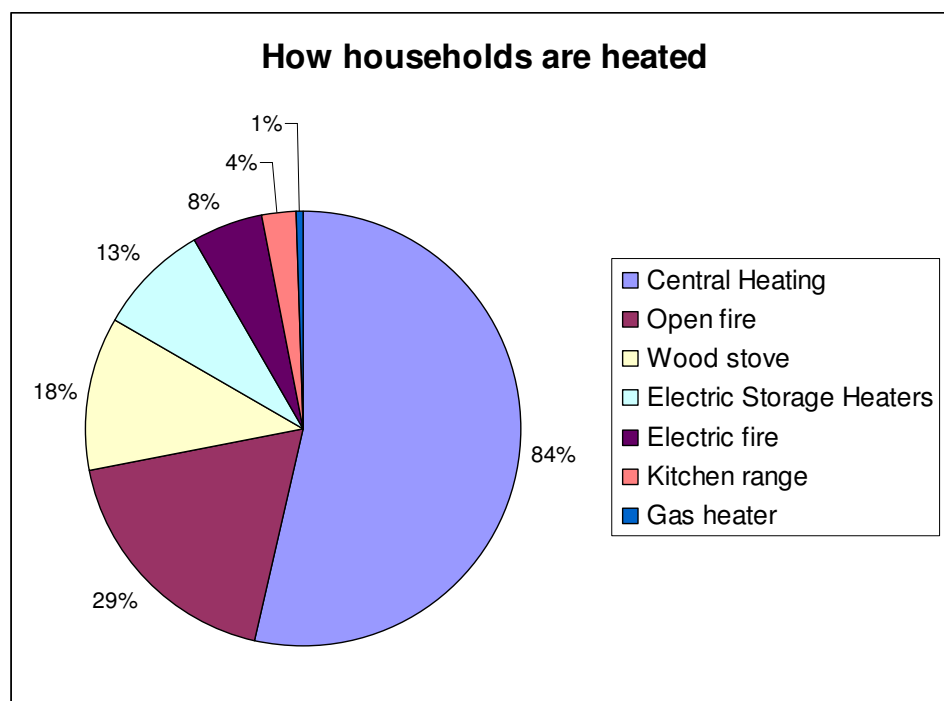


Comparing the survey data with the 2001 census data for SCDC<sup>5</sup>, we find that the parishes have significantly fewer single person households and slightly more multi-occupancy households.

We also asked what type of housing people lived in – mortgaged/owned, rented, etc. and whether the house was detached, semi-detached, etc. We found that 86% was either mortgaged or owned outright, 7% was rented privately, 3% was rented from a housing association and 2% was occupied as a part of employment.

Detached properties comprised 66% of the housing, with 21% semi-detached. 26% are bungalows. According to a survey by Halifax in 2005<sup>6</sup>, bungalows make up only 2% of UK housing stock, so we are clearly well served by single storey living accommodation.

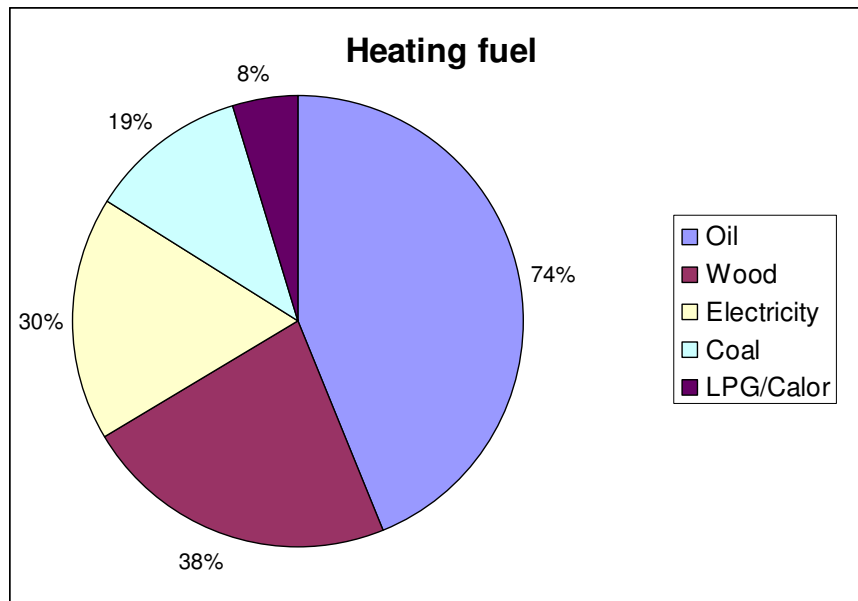
Householders were asked how they heated their homes in winter and a summary is in the pie chart below (the percentages add up to more than 100%, since many people use more than one method):



The fuel used is shown in the pie chart below (this also adds to greater than 100%, since many households use more than one fuel):

<sup>5</sup> Census data obtained from <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.hbosplc.com/media/pressreleases/articles/halifax/2005-02-10-HAPPIESTHO.asp?section=Halifax>



It's clear that oil is the major heating source for the houses in the villages and this, together with comments from householders, leads to an action arising from the survey.

**Action 1**      Investigate scope for co-operative oil purchase aiming to reduce oil price and the number of vehicle journeys.

Householders were then asked which mains services they receive. Well in excess of 90% receive mains water, telephone and electricity. Only 37% receive mains sewerage and no-one has mains gas. Of those who do not receive mains sewerage, 40% said they would like to. 46% of respondents said they would like to receive mains gas. Suffolk ACRE has told us that Suffolk Coastal District Council hold a list of Parishes wanting mains drainage.

**Action 2**      Parish Councils to inform SCDC of residents' desire for development of mains services.

Householders were asked about their computing facilities. 85% told us they own a computer and 77% said that they have broadband internet access. This compares with the UK figures of 65% who owned a computer in 2006<sup>7</sup> and 56% who have broadband internet access<sup>8</sup>.

Questions about vehicle ownership showed that, on average, village households have 1.8 cars and 1.4 bicycles. Just over half the households have 2 cars, but 5% of households have 6 or more bikes! Comparable car ownership figures from the 2001 census showed 1.3 cars per household in the SCDC area and 1.1 cars per household in England as a whole.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=868>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/iahi0808.pdf>

The next set of questions covered home insulation. This shows that, of those who knew, 69% of households were of cavity wall construction. Of those, 74% had cavity wall insulation installed and 26% did not. 60% said that their house had less than 9” of loft insulation, which is below the current government recommendation of 270 mm (10.6”)<sup>9</sup>.

Action 3 Liaise with SCDC to improve household insulation and encourage householders to take advantage of grants, etc.

Finally, residents were asked if they would help with a number of community activities. 49% were willing to offer help to mobility-impaired villagers to get prescriptions, 31% would help with shopping and 29% were willing to help collect litter from the roadside. 20 people were also interested in joining a “Walking Bus” scheme to get children to school. The names of those interested/willing to help are on file so that they can be asked if appropriate.

## 9.2 Residents’ Survey

The volunteers who delivered the surveys to householders left one Residents’ Survey for each person in the household aged 18 or over.

### 9.2.1 About You

The residents’ survey began by asking which village the respondent lived in, in order to allow us to analyse the results by village and thus establish where there were significant differences between each location. The total of responses from each village is shown in the table below:

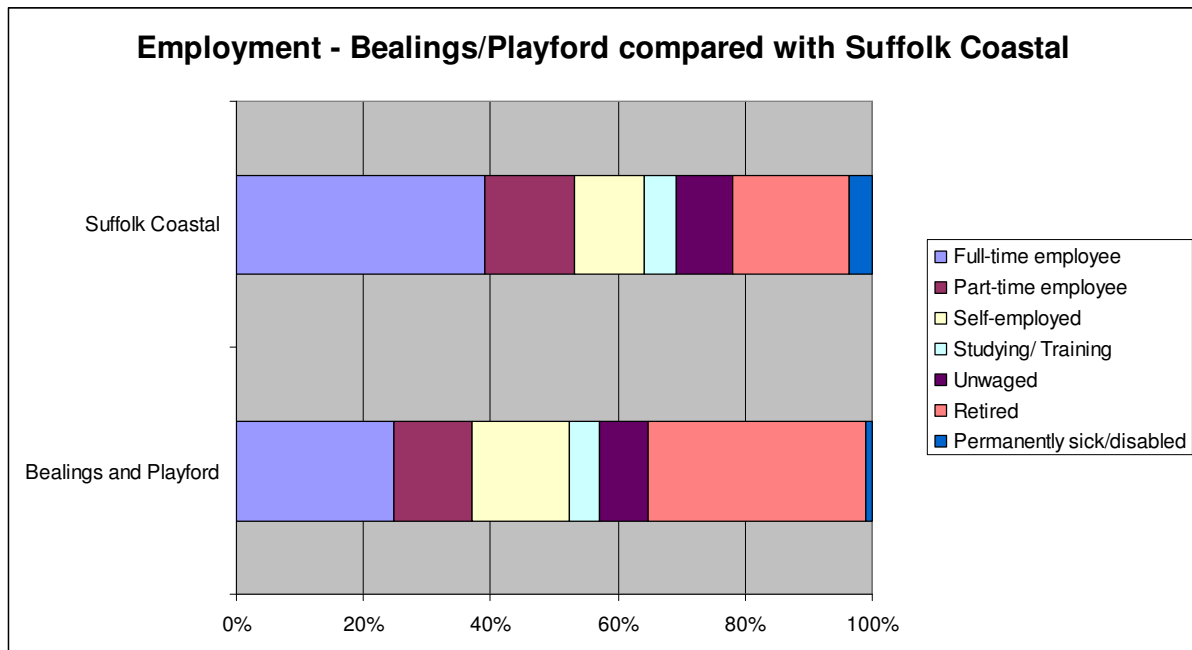
Great Bealings	Little Bealings	Playford
138	256	126

In total 531 surveys were returned (this is higher than the sum of the figures above, since some residents did not answer the question about their village). It is not possible to be precise about the percentage return for residents since we don’t have an exact figure for the number of adults in the villages. However, the demographic information from the household survey allows us to estimate that there are 1.94 adults per house. Given the knowledge that there are 397 properties, then the return of 531 surveys is a 69% return, exactly the same as for the household survey.

We started by asking the respondent’s gender and found that 53% were female and 47% male, very close to the regional figures of 52%/48%.

We then asked about employment status. The results are shown in the diagram below, contrasted with those from Suffolk Coastal as a whole (taken from the 2001 Census results).

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Home-improvements/Home-insulation-glazing/Loft-insulation>



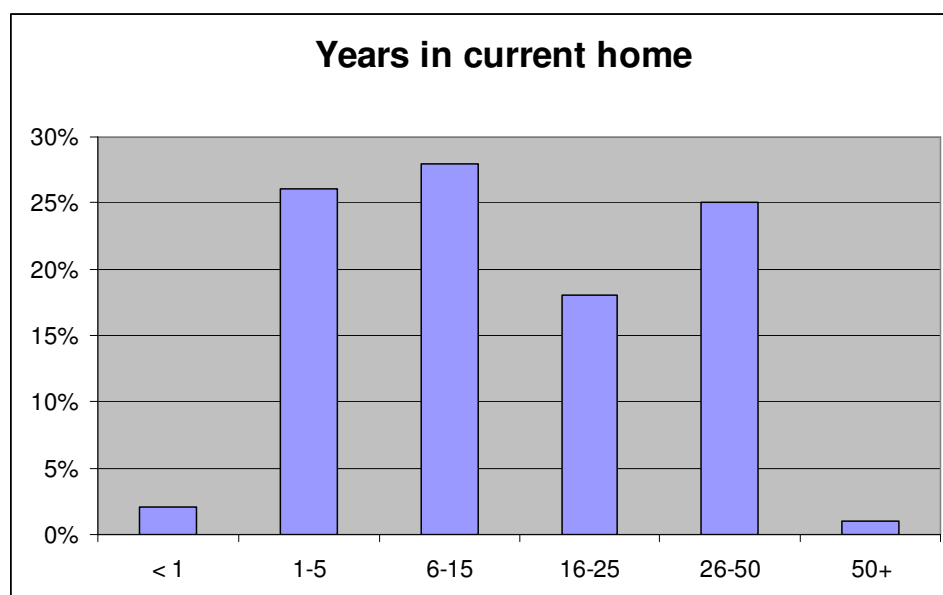
As can be seen, the 3 villages have substantially fewer people in full-time employment than is normal for Suffolk Coastal. There are, however, almost twice as many retired people than the average for the district.

We asked whether respondents considered themselves disabled. 23 residents told us that they did, which is 5% of the residents of the villages. This is much lower than the rest of Suffolk, where the County Council reports that 12.6% of *working age* people have a disability<sup>10</sup>.

We then asked how long residents had lived in their current home and received the responses in the chart below.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/2DA30BDF-FC2A-4211-8DD2-2F950E67B483/0/200708BVPIfinalPDFversion.pdf>





As we see, over a ¼ of the residents have lived here for over a quarter of a century – so we have a pretty stable population!

We then looked at communications with the villagers and started by asking how often they read the Benefice newsletter.

Every month	Most issues	Occasionally	Never
58%	16%	16%	10%

This shows a high percentage of residents rely on the newsletter for local news and emphasises that it can be a very good way of communicating things to them such as local events, Parish Council news, ways of reporting problems, etc.

We also asked how often they looked at the villages' websites.

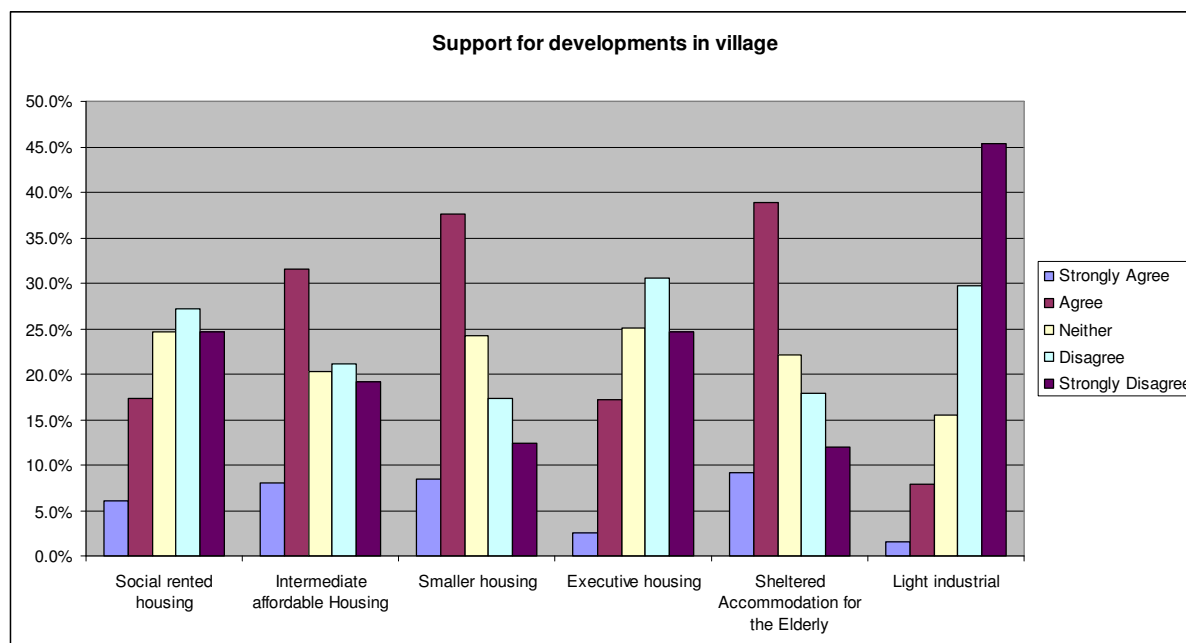
Once a week	Once a month	Less often	Never
4 (1%)	21 (4%)	117 (23%)	372 (72%)

So it's clear that, at present, the websites are less effective at communicating with villagers and that this needs improving.

**Action 4**      Work with Benefice Newsletter to improve communication e.g. of Village Hall events, Parish Council communication, bus timetables, fly tipping/road repair/footpath maintenance reporting, car sharing, crop spraying, young people's events. Work with PCs to improve and promote websites. Consider using the Suffolk Association of Local Councils' "e-communities" initiative as a communications mechanism.

## 9.2.2 Housing and Development

This section started by asking residents what sort of development they supported in or adjacent to their village. There was most support for smaller housing and sheltered accommodation for the elderly. 45% strongly opposed light industrial and a further 30% opposed it. The results for this are illustrated in the chart below.



When asked whether they had a *need* for housing developments, 19 residents strongly agreed that they had a need for “Smaller Housing” and 17 for “Sheltered Accommodation for the Elderly”.

**Action 5** Parish Councils to consider data from Parish Plan in development planning policy and keep under review the need for further housing surveys.

There was a strong demand to retain green fields between Kesgrave and Playford/Bealings, with 73% strongly agreeing with this. Of all the questions in the survey, this was the one most strongly agreed with.

**Action 6** Work with SCDC and PCs to progress retention of green fields between Kesgrave and Playford/Bealings.

Comments on the surveys showed a strong resistance to development of any kind in the villages, although there was also some support for limited housing development, in particular affordable housing or units for older people, if need could be shown. Industrial development of any kind was opposed.

### 9.2.3 Local Services (e.g. electricity, gas, recycling, fire, ambulance etc)

There was strong demand for better provision of recycling bins for plastic/glass/metal, etc., with 77% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this requirement. It is worth noting that since the survey (and incidental to it), the local council has introduced improved recycling collections for some of the 3 parishes, although this does not include glass.

**Action 7** Investigate recycling sites and liaise with SCDC concerning wider provision.

The other questions generating the strongest agreement were for electricity and phone cables to be underground (62% agree/strongly agree) and support for a community village shop (run by volunteers) (52% agree/strongly agree – numerically over 100 villagers strongly agreed with this suggestion).

**Action 8** Pursue placing cables underground with service providers.

**Action 9** Explore community village shop with interested residents.

Support for improved mobile phone coverage was (not surprisingly) strongly related to postcode. For example, in postcode IP16 6PG (Grundisburgh Road, Great Bealings) 66% (6 out of 9 respondents) strongly agreed that they need improved mobile phone coverage. However, in IP13 6PL (Holly Close, Little Bealings) 71% (5 out of 7) disagreed that they need better coverage. This is covered in more detail in the Young Residents' survey – see Action 15.

Other questions that the residents supported were for improved notice of events in the Benefice Newsletter (see Action 4 on page 25) and keeping public phone boxes open/working. However, on the latter issue, BT has shown that the Great Bealings phone box, for example, had zero revenue in the previous year (i.e. no-one used it to make a paying call). The steering group therefore felt they should not pursue this further.

There was little support for:

- another pub in the 3 parishes
- village allotments
- visiting Doctors' Surgery/nurse in the village
- community internet access



***Residents want cables put underground***

- a community wind turbine for electricity
- a “Carbon Footprint” audit of fuel used in village

Comments mentioned a desire to improve ecology-related items such as recycling bins, solar panels on community buildings and a water turbine for electricity. A fuel collective to reduce the number of deliveries and improve discounts was also suggested (see Action 1).

#### 9.2.4 Security of Persons and Property

There was strong demand for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme to be publicised or re-invigorated, with 81% of respondents supporting this. 69% of villagers also believe that there should be a police officer regularly patrolling the village.

Only 18% of villagers found the mobile police van useful, with this percentage dropping to just 9% in Playford. Comments frequently mentioned a lack of knowledge of the mobile van.



*There was strong demand for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme to be re-invigorated*

Action 10	Work with police, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and local residents to reinvigorated Neighbourhood Watch and improve understanding of police presence.
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There was general support for better lighting in the village hall car parks, although this is mainly an issue for Great Bealings residents, with 59% in favour, whereas in Playford there is just 29% in favour. Almost half of the residents of all parishes thought that there should be warning notices to secure cars at the village hall.

Action 11	Work with Village Hall Management Committees to improve lighting and warning notices.
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#### 9.2.5 Issues for People with mobility difficulties

We then asked whether residents had mobility difficulties and 28 said that they did. We asked these residents to say whether they would like any particular forms of help<sup>†</sup>. Most respondents did not require help, but there was a significant number of people who said that

<sup>†</sup> A number of people who said they did not have mobility difficulties also answered questions which were only intended for those who did. These answers were deleted from the database prior to this analysis.

they would like extra help with some activities – gardening/mowing being the most requested, with 18 people saying they needed this. Others would like help with shopping and housekeeping. A local lunch club or keep-fit club were also popular suggestions.

Action 12 Work with residents, Suffolk ACRE and local charities (e.g. Age Concern) to exchange information and arrange services for people with mobility problems.

## 9.2.6 Issues for Young People (12-17)

Finally, residents were asked what they believed were issues for the young people in the villages. 83% believe that cycling/walking in the village is dangerous for children and 82% think that young people need safe foot/cycle paths to the playing field. Both of these issues are most strongly felt by residents of the Bealings. These issues are covered under Action 26 and Action 27.

There was a strong feeling that village teams (e.g. football) should be encouraged, with 84% of villagers supporting this.

Action 13 Work with those interested to set up and run local teams.

66% felt that more activities for young people should be held in the village hall, with 35% believing that a film club would be a good option.

Action 14 Develop existing Playford provision for film club.

## 9.2.7 Other Comments

The residents made a number of general comments and the list of these can be found in Appendix A.

## 9.3 *Young Residents' Survey*

Our volunteer distributors also asked how many young people there were in the household. For the purposes of the survey, we defined a young person as being between 12 and 17 years of age. The volunteers left a special “Young Residents’ Survey” for each young person to complete and return. We received 68 completed surveys, which, based on the demographic data we got from the household survey, is a return rate of about 66% - slightly less than for the Residents’ Survey.

### 9.3.1 About You

The young residents’ survey began by asking which village the respondent lived in, in order to allow analysis of the results by village and thus establish where there were significant differences between each location. The total of responses from each village is shown in the table below:

Great Bealings	Little Bealings	Playford
23 (34%)	29 (43%)	16 (24%)

Of those responding, 55% were female and 45% male.

Their ages are shown in the table below:

12-14	15-16	17
54%	37%	9%

93% of the respondents are currently attending school, with a further 6% at college. 7% said that they have a part-time job.

All of the respondents have access to a computer at home and only one said that they could not access the internet at home.

We asked the young residents how often they read the Benefice newsletter and how often they looked at the villages' websites:

	Every month	Most issues	Occasionally	Never
How often do you read a copy of the Benefice Newsletter?	9%	7%	26%	57%

	Once a week	Once a month	Less often	Never
How often do you look at the village website?	0%	0%	16%	84%

From these results it's clear that the Benefice Newsletter is currently better than the websites as a means of communicating with the younger residents of the village – the same result as for the adults. However, neither is particularly effective.

### 9.3.2 What you feel about living here

We asked the young residents whether they agreed with a number of statements about living in the village and whether they liked that aspect of living there. 97% said that they feel safe in their home and that Bealings has a good playing field. 95% agreed that there are good country walks and that we are surrounded by unspoilt countryside. However, only 45% agreed that there is a good Mobile Library service and just 32% agree that there is a good bus service. About half of the respondents did not like the fact that they did not have lots of friends living nearby. Their comments were that they dislike the speed and volume of traffic in the villages and the lack of a shop or post office. They also commented that they would like more buses. These viewpoints confirm other survey data and are covered in Action 18 and Action 20

### 9.3.3 Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

When asked about climate change issues, the young residents agreed that there should be solar panels on homes for hot water/electricity and solar panels or wind turbines on schools/colleges/workplaces. They also believed that people should walk, cycle or use public transport more and use their cars less.

### 9.3.4 Issues for You

When asked about other issues, it is perhaps not surprising that the statement which they agreed with most strongly was “We need better mobile phone coverage in the village”, with 73% agreeing.

Action 15      Work with service providers to improve mobile phone coverage.

They also wanted public phone boxes kept open and more activities for young people at the Village Hall and Playing Field.

### 9.3.5 Other Comments

The young residents made a number of general comments and the list of these can be found in Appendix B.

## 9.4 Stakeholders Survey

Over 50 interviews were conducted by members of the Stakeholders Working Group - by phone call, email or personal meeting.

Some areas of concern were mentioned by several stakeholders (e.g. traffic problems, parking at Bealings School) as reported in the text below. **Unless otherwise stated, all comments come from individual stakeholders.**

Generally, the stakeholders were very happy to be working in, accessing or providing facilities in the Parishes and did not have any major criticisms of the services provided. Many people mentioned the lovely rural environment and good community spirit. The village halls and the playing field received universal praise.

### 9.4.1 Utilities

The utilities interviewed (Ambulance and Water) had no detrimental future plans and in the case of the Ambulance service, the response rate is planned to be shortened further. The Post Office reported that there may be some changes in delivery times and possible cancellation of Saturday collections.

### 9.4.2 Safety

On the whole, people feel the villages are safe to live in. There have, however, been a few thefts from cars parked outside village halls, as well as theft from inside the halls, but the Police report large numbers of cars are left unlocked or with items left visible. They are trying to increase the availability of their mobile van.

Other concerns mentioned the lack of a road name/sign on the road from Little to Great Bealings (Holly Lane) which can cause delays in reaching the correct house; there is very poor access for emergency vehicles to Great Bealings church.

Action 16	Great Bealings PCC to consider emergency access to church.
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New Neighbourhood Watch schemes are being explored as the existing systems are no longer functional.

### **9.4.3 Social Life**

The Little Bealings Bowling Club would like more members. There was a comment that there are no Brownies or Cubs Groups in Bealings or a Youth Club for older children. The W.I. would welcome new members and guest speakers. We were reminded that the Benefice magazine can be used for articles and free advertisements for local clubs and societies. One stakeholder reported the disappointing response to the letter fund-raising for the playing field.

### **9.4.4 Waste Collection**

Great Bealings received their new recycling bins in July 2008. Little Bealings and Playford will not get theirs until 2010 as they are last on the Suffolk Coastal list. There are 3 colours: blue lids for recyclable material, grey lids for other household waste and brown bins for garden and food waste. Suffolk Coastal are happy to deal with any issues or concerns.

### **9.4.5 Communication**

Several stakeholders mentioned that mobile phone reception across the three villages is very patchy and Freeview is not available everywhere. See Action 15. A broadband centre was suggested for Bealings.

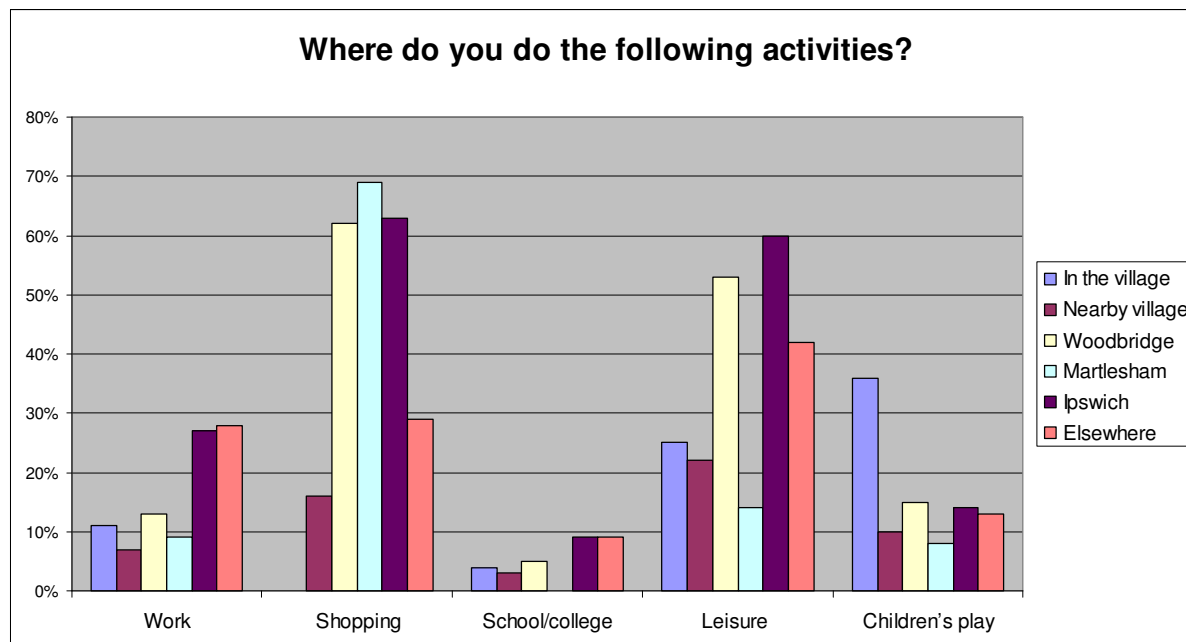
Digital Radio and Television is also patchy.



## 9.5 Analysis of common areas from the survey

### 9.5.1 About your travel

We asked residents where they go for a range of activities:



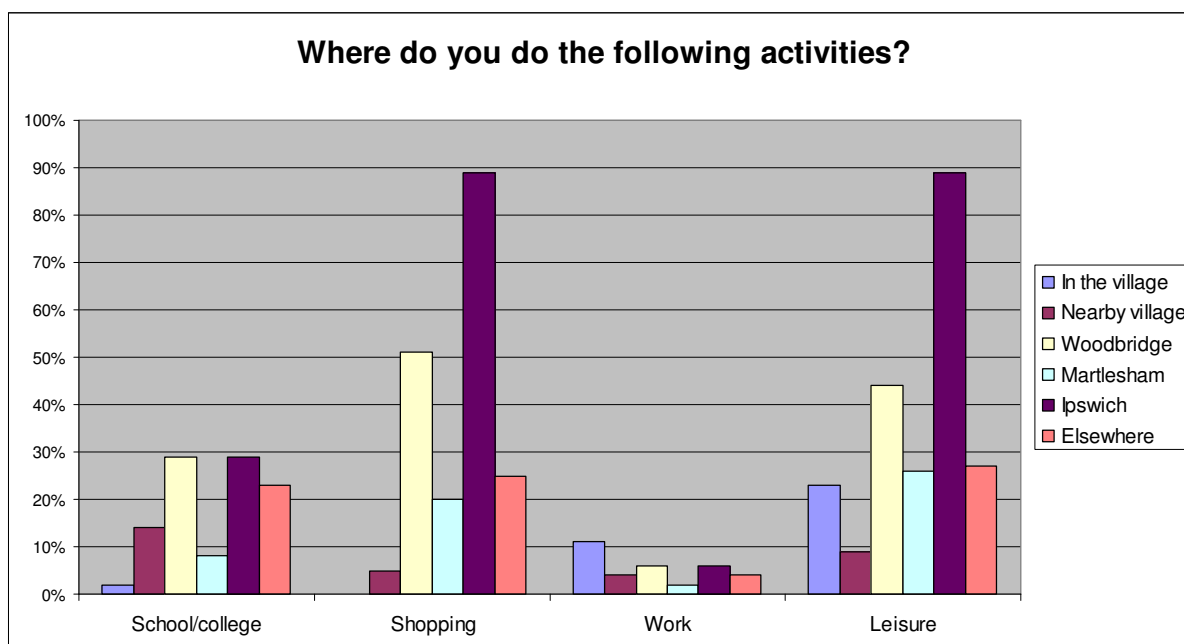
As we see, most people work “elsewhere” or in Ipswich. 22% work in either Woodbridge or Martlesham combined. Ipswich is also the most popular place for leisure activities, with Woodbridge a close second. Over 60% of the residents shop in Ipswich, Woodbridge and Martlesham. However, most children’s play takes place in the local village.

We found that 183 residents use their car to get to work every day, with a further 66 using it once a week or more. In contrast, only 8 use the bus and 13 cycle. However, 35 walk to work and 55 work from home.

The car is also the most common way of shopping, with 446 using it once a week or more. The bus is used by 29 people, 5 cycle and 14 walk.

Not surprisingly, the car also dominates travel to leisure activities, with 434 people using it once a week or more. The bus is used for leisure travel once a week or more by 17 people, with 31 cycling and 116 walking. The car remains the dominant form of travel for getting to school or college.

We also asked the young residents where they go for their activities:



As we see, Ipswich is by far the most popular place young residents go for shopping and leisure activities, with Woodbridge the next most common.

We found that 37 young residents use a car to get to school every day, with a further 26 using a bus. 3 said that they walk every day and only 1 uses a bicycle.

This pattern of travel is repeated for all the other activities that they do, with a car being by far the most common way of getting around, followed by the bus and then by the other forms of transport. See Action 20 for an action on buses.

## 9.5.2 Roads and Traffic

Residents were asked 23 general questions about traffic and young residents were asked 14. The detail of their answers is given in the appendices, but the key points arising are that 56% of the residents “Strongly Agreed” that traffic goes too fast through their village. Another 32% agreed with the statement. More people in Great Bealings were concerned with traffic speeds (70% strongly agreed) than Little Bealings (58%) or Playford (37%). 55% also “Strongly Agreed” that too much traffic uses the roads through their village as a shortcut at rush hour. Once again, this was most strongly felt in Great Bealings (69%) as opposed to Little Bealings (59%) and Playford (33%).



***Residents believe that traffic goes too fast through their village***

The young residents agree that traffic goes too fast through their villages, although to a lesser extent, with only 47% of young residents strongly agreeing with this sentiment. They felt strongly that speed limits should be more strictly enforced (42% strongly agreed), that “Too much traffic uses the roads through my village as a shortcut at

rush hour” (37% strongly agree) and that there's too much traffic for safe cycling (36% strongly agree). There was little support for methods of enforcing speed limits such as speed bumps, flashing signs or speed guns (a quote from one comment “Please don’t give villagers speed guns, there are some fools in this village”)

Bealings residents similarly felt that there was too much traffic for safe walking or cycling and that speed limits should be more strictly enforced. Other means of slowing traffic (speed bumps, pinch points) were not supported and the idea that the parishes should buy a speed gun to be used by villagers to enforce speed limits met with general disagreement. The idea of using flashing “slow down” signs had a little agreement, but the most popular potential traffic management measures were to implement a 20 mph limit by Bealings School and to raise the speed limit on the A1214 in Kesgrave. The 20 mph limit by the school also drew strong support from comments made. A number of residents made adverse comment about the give-way system around Clematis Cottage, Playford.

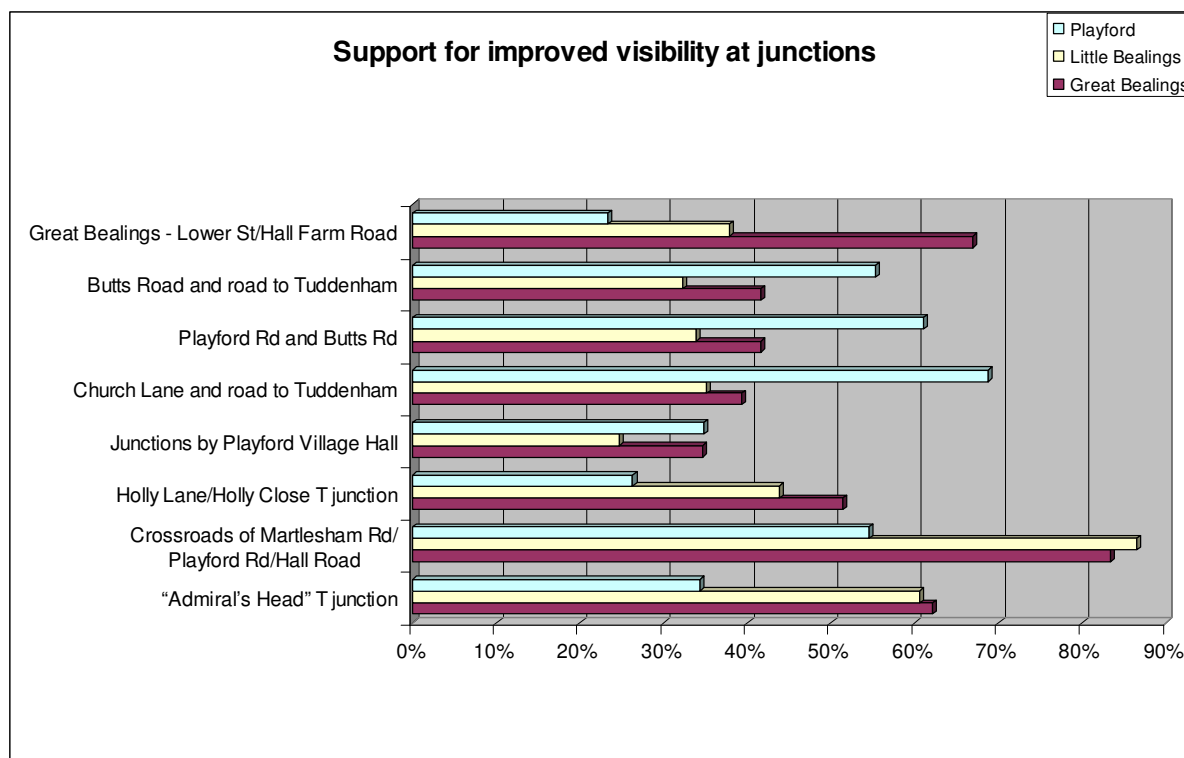
Residents also agreed with the statements “Roadside verges are not mown often enough”, “Road edges and verges are excessively worn away” and “Road surfaces should be kept in better repair”. Comments relating to the need to maintain verges and hedges better were also very common.

Action 17	Improve knowledge of road problem reporting system; see Action 4 above.
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Residents were asked whether they thought specific roads should have 30 mph limits imposed on them or extended. Not surprisingly, they were in favour of extending/introducing all those suggested. The one with the highest level of approval was the limit on Boot Street/Hall Farm Road, Great Bealings. Comments also suggested a weight restriction on the Bealings bridge or on Boot Street.

Action 18	Investigate speed in Boot Street, the use of a 20mph speed limit near the school and whether the 30 mph limit can be extended on Hall Farm Road, Great Bealings.
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The suggestion that visibility/sight lines at junctions/cross roads need improving met with widespread support, with 78% of residents agreeing that the crossroads of Martlesham Rd/Playford Rd/Hall Road needs improvement. A chart showing the percentage of people who agreed with the need for improved visibility at local junctions is shown below, analysed by village.



The cross roads at Martlesham Road was also mentioned in comments as being particularly dangerous.

**Action 19** Little Bealings/Great Bealings: work with SCC/BT to improve Hall Road junction. Playford: work with SCC to improve Church Lane/Bealings Road junction.

The speed of traffic is a problem expressed by nearly every stakeholder. The Police are also concerned about this problem and are exploring various strategies. There were comments from stakeholders about large buses with very few passengers and lorries on roads unsuitable for HGVs but directed there by SatNav. There were reports of damage to verges caused by large vehicles – not just by farm vehicles – builders, waste collection and large delivery vans are equally culpable. The Highways Department is exploring ways of improving the flow of traffic along the A1214.

Stakeholders also say that there are continuing problems with maintenance of verges and hedges and bordering trees. The latter are the responsibility of individual land owners. Workers from the Probation Service (Unpaid Work - Community Payback) were reported to provide a good service in Playford.

### 9.5.3 Public Transport

Residents were asked if they would regularly catch a train to/from Bealings Station (which would require re-opening) and 46% either agreed or strongly agreed that they would. Re-opening the station would clearly be expensive and cause disruption to the businesses there and so the steering group believed that the support was not sufficiently overwhelming to make this an immediate priority.

There was strong support for the statement “Bus timetables should be better publicised” with 74% of residents agreeing and 80% of the young residents. There was also support for the view that buses are too large. Residents and young residents also said they would use buses more if they were more frequent.

Action 20 Explore the reliability and timing of buses - especially for young people and local employees - and size of buses with bus companies.

Whilst support for a car-sharing scheme was low in percentage terms (only 11% said they would use one), nevertheless this comes to 48 people – enough to make a scheme potentially viable.

Action 21 Work with interested residents to set up a car sharing scheme.

A couple of employers had problems with recruitment due to the rural nature of the parishes and limited bus services. This was particularly difficult for the pub, as there is no bus service late in the evening. Mallard House employers expressed concern over the lack of buses early in the morning and at the end of the working day. There is some interest in the railway station at Little Bealings being re-instated with a suggestion that one of the units at Mallard House could be transformed into a shop or tea room to serve the villages.

Comments from residents mainly dealt with the need for more buses, especially at the start and end of the day, the need for buses to be smaller and the difficulty of finding timetables.

### 9.5.4 Schools

When asked about local school provision, residents expressed the strongest views about giving priority at local schools to local children – indeed, for both primary and secondary schools, only 1% disagreed that this should be the policy, with 50% strongly agreeing. Young residents were also strongly in favour of giving priority at local schools to local children with less than 10% disagreeing that this should be the policy for both primary and secondary schools. Comments on the surveys also supported this view.

Action 22 Advise MP and SCC of the desire to give priority at local schools to local children.

There was also strong support for reducing the use of cars to take children to school and improving the car parking near Bealings School. 82% of residents agreed that children should be encouraged to walk/cycle to and from school rather than travel by car, whilst 76%

agreed that a cycle path should be developed from Playford to Bealings School. 76% wanted a safe parking area for parents with children at the school and 82% agreed that there should be a safe walking route from the parking area to the school. Comments about the need for improved parking and better footpaths/cycleways were frequent, together with views that it is not safe for children to walk to school at present.

The young residents also gave strong support for reducing the use of cars to take children to school and improving the car parking near Bealings School. Their strongest support was reserved for the statement “Free school buses to all schools should be available”.

Action 23	Work with School, SCC and others to address issues of concern over children’s travel to Bealings School.
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Action 24	Advise MP and SCC of the strength of support for free school buses.
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Stakeholders were concerned that there is no public transport for children at the school and that the “tactless” behaviour of some parents has led to permission to park in the pub car-park being withdrawn. Many stakeholders felt that parking around the school is chaotic and dangerous. It was reported that a new cycle path is being organised from Playford to the school. Suffolk County Council has a Travel Plan where they have looked at alternative cycle paths, footpaths etc. The Head Teacher believes that the school and Parish Council should work together to put pressure on SCC to improve road-signs, slow down traffic, install speed cameras etc. The back door to the school is now open, providing access from the footpath through the churchyard.



***Residents believe that local children should have priority at the school***

The Head Teacher and pupils are very interested in allotments/growing their own food/sharing produce/saving energy/green issues/recycling/solar panels. The children can also monitor wildlife or help with litter-picking etc.

It was suggested that one of the school buildings could be used for a drop-in cafe during the daytime (but not lunchtime), run by volunteers. This could provide some sort of “village centre”.

There is a vacancy for a Community Governor at the moment and the school is always looking for various volunteers. It was suggested that the Benefice Magazine could be used for publicising any vacancies.

The school Christmas production is very popular – open to everyone not just parents – but there are sometimes problems with booking the village hall for this event.

### 9.5.5 Use of Footpaths/bridleways/cycle paths

The survey showed that villagers use the footpaths around the villages to a considerable extent. 60% said that they regularly walk on public footpaths and a further 44% said they also walk their dogs on footpaths. 14% cycle off road and 5% ride a horse. 69% of respondents thought that footpaths should be better maintained and 60% believed that it's necessary to improve the ease of use of new gates for disabled users.



Action 25	Discuss scope for improvements to footpaths and gates with SCC and PCs.
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The survey found that young residents frequently use the footpaths around the villages, with 50% saying that they use them regularly. 43% said they walk their dogs on the footpaths and a further 34% cycle off road. Only 1 respondent said they ride a horse off road.

A key issue for Great Bealings residents was the lack of a footpath from Boot Street to Bealings Playing Field, where 78% agreed that one should be provided.

Action 26	Investigate provision of a footpath from Boot Street to Bealings Playing Field with SCC and landowners.
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61% of Playford residents agreed that the footpath from Playford to Bealings School should be improved and there was also widespread support for more cycle paths to Bealings School and Kesgrave High, with 70% supporting this requirement. Young residents gave their strongest support to the statement that “There need to be more cycle paths to Bealings School and Kesgrave High”, with only 2 answers disagreeing with this.

Action 27	Investigate provision of more cycle paths to Bealings School and Kesgrave High and improvements to footpath from Playford to Bealings School with SCC and landowners.
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On the whole, stakeholders felt that footpaths were well maintained. It seems that there is no single defined process for maintenance and reporting of problems on footpaths across all three villages which may create some confusion.

They said that there is some misuse of footpaths by horses and motorbikes and dog fouling can be an issue. There is a need to establish responsibility for hedgerows and trees to ensure they are maintained and not in a dangerous condition.

There is a potential problem with byways – current laws theoretically allow use by inappropriate vehicles (4x4s). This is a national problem but there is particular concern in Playford at the moment.

Written comments from residents emphasised how important footpaths are and the need to maintain them and have them wide enough to be used comfortably. Footpaths and cycle paths were mentioned as being necessary because of the dangers of the local roads.



*Flytipping and litter were major concerns*

### 9.5.6 Natural Environment (e.g. wildlife, trees, rivers, farms)

When asked about the environment, villagers' biggest concerns were with litter on or beside country roads and fly tipping of waste on verges or in fields or in woods, with 89% concerned about general litter and 92% agreeing that fly tipping is a problem.

Action 28	Organise litter pick with SCDC support or with the support of the Probation Service; see Action 4 above for improvements to reporting.
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72% were also concerned about the loss of wildlife in the villages.

Action 29	Investigate loss of wildlife in the villages with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and landowners, including the possibility of a Biodiversity Action Plan. Consider investigating the successful work in Parham.
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Villagers showed considerable concern about crop spraying taking place without prior notice to local householders, with 62% agreeing that it concerned them. Spraying was also commented on as being a problem for bee keepers and for health of residents.

Action 30	Discuss how to improve notice of spraying with local farmers; see Action 4 above.
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The young residents' biggest concerns about the environment were the same as the adults - litter on or beside country roads and fly tipping of waste on verges or in fields or in woods. 70% were concerned about general litter and 78% agreed that fly tipping is a problem. 59%



were concerned about the loss of wildlife in the villages. Comments from residents bemoaned the amount of fast food packaging in the verges and the general decline in the maintenance of hedgerows and trees.

### 9.5.7 Village Halls and Churches

There was a general consensus that more/better notice boards for village events are needed, with 45% agreeing with this. It was seen as a biggest problem by Great Bealings residents. The young residents shared the view of the adults that more/better notice boards for village events are needed, with 64% agreeing with this.

Action 31	Work with PCs to improve notice boards, in particular Great Bealings; see Action 4.
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From the responses, it was apparent that most people see the village church as important to them as an historic building (88% agreement) and as a focal point for the community (73%). Over 170 people said that it was important to them for worship. Young residents also agreed with the adults that the village church is most important to them as an historic building (68% agreement) as opposed to for worship (24% agreed).



*Playford Parish Hall and play equipment - facilities at the village halls were greatly appreciated*

Residents' comments suggested that they would like the services to be more family and child friendly and that they would like to see other events like music in the church. There was also support for the Playford "pub nights".

Stakeholders noted that services rotate around the 3 churches and elderly people can find it difficult to travel to another village. Finance is a worry for day-to-day bills and more volunteers would be appreciated to maintain churchyards etc. Several stakeholders mentioned the increase in community spirit since the current incumbent joined us. It was hoped that greater links with Bealings School could be fostered to encourage participation by younger people.

Workers from the Probation Service help with maintenance at Little Bealings church which is extremely useful and other organisations could also benefit from this facility.

Many stakeholders expressed their great satisfaction with the facilities provided at the village halls and at the new Playing Field. There were a couple of concerns mentioned by individual stakeholders. There was a suggestion that floodlights be installed at the new playing field to get better usage but they would need to be on a timer to protect local residents. Some of the tennis equipment is getting damaged or lost as courts are multi-use and equipment such as tennis nets must be put up and taken down regularly.

The heating in Bealings Village Hall can be inadequate on very cold days. Car parking space is a problem due to parents parking for the school and the poor surface means flooding in bad weather. Finances are always a concern.

### 9.5.8 Pollution

Residents were asked what sort of things they were disturbed by. Residents of Little Bealings are particularly affected by noise from helicopters, with 51% saying this is a problem for them.

Action 32 Advise SCDC of concern over noise from helicopters.

Apart from that concern, the occupants of our parishes had no real other issues concerning noise, smells or light pollution. Their comments centred mainly on the noise from the aggregate site on the A12 and noise from passing traffic.

Young residents identified very little and expressed no specific concerns.

## 10 Where Next

The JPPSG is recommending that a group (to be called the Action Monitoring Group or AMG) is established. This will be responsible for ensuring that the actions proposed below are developed into a full Action Plan, including priority, responsible organisation, etc., using a template developed by Rural Action East and the other Eastern Rural Community Councils (including Suffolk ACRE). The AMG will be a joint group from across the parishes, reporting to the Parish Councils. It will meet less frequently than the JPPSG and will ensure that the Action Plan is progressed.

## 11 Recommended Actions

- Action 1 Investigate scope for co-operative oil purchase aiming to reduce oil price and the number of vehicle journeys.
- Action 2 Parish Councils to inform SCDC of residents' desire for development of mains services.
- Action 3 Liaise with SCDC to improve household insulation and encourage householders to take advantage of grants, etc.
- Action 4 Work with Benefice Newsletter to improve communication e.g. of Village Hall events, Parish Council communication, bus timetables, fly tipping/road

- repair/footpath maintenance reporting, car sharing, crop spraying, young people's events. Work with PCs to improve and promote websites. Consider using the Suffolk Association of Local Councils' "e-communities" initiative as a communications mechanism.
- Action 5 Parish Councils to consider data from Parish Plan in development planning policy and keep under review the need for further housing surveys.
- Action 6 Work with SCDC and PCs to progress retention of green fields between Kesgrave and Playford/Bealings.
- Action 7 Investigate recycling sites and liaise with SCDC concerning wider provision.
- Action 8 Pursue placing cables underground with service providers.
- Action 9 Explore community village shop with interested residents.
- Action 10 Work with police, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and local residents to reinvigorate Neighbourhood Watch and improve understanding of police presence.
- Action 11 Work with Village Hall Management Committees to improve lighting and warning notices.
- Action 12 Work with residents, Suffolk ACRE and local charities (e.g. Age Concern) to exchange information and arrange services for people with mobility problems.
- Action 13 Work with those interested to set up and run local teams.
- Action 14 Develop existing Playford provision for film club.
- Action 15 Work with service providers to improve mobile phone coverage.
- Action 16 Great Bealings PCC to consider emergency access to church.
- Action 17 Improve knowledge of road problem reporting system; see Action 4 above
- Action 18 Investigate speed in Boot Street, the use of a 20mph speed limit near the school and whether the 30 mph limit can be extended on Hall Farm Road, Great Bealings.
- Action 19 Little Bealings/Great Bealings: work with SCC/BT to improve Hall Road junction. Playford: work with SCC to improve Church Lane/Bealings Road junction.
- Action 20 Explore the reliability and timing of buses - especially for young people and local employees - and size of buses with bus companies.
- Action 21 Work with interested residents to set up a car sharing scheme.
- Action 22 Advise MP and SCC of the desire to give priority at local schools to local children.
- Action 23 Work with School, SCC and others to address issues of concern over children's travel to Bealings School.
- Action 24 Advise MP and SCC of the strength of support for free school buses.
- Action 25 Discuss scope for improvements to footpaths and gates with SCC and PCs.
- Action 26 Investigate provision of a footpath from Boot Street to Bealings Playing Field with SCC and landowners.

- Action 27 Investigate provision of more cycle paths to Bealings School and Kesgrave High and improvements to footpath from Playford to Bealings School with SCC and landowners.
- Action 28 Organise litter pick with SCDC support or with the support of the Probation Service; see Action 4 above for improvements to reporting
- Action 29 Investigate loss of wildlife in the villages with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and landowners, including the possibility of a Biodiversity Action Plan. Consider investigating the successful work in Parham.
- Action 30 Discuss how to improve notice of spraying with local farmers; see Action 4 above
- Action 31 Work with PCs to improve notice boards, in particular Great Bealings; see Action 4.
- Action 32 Advise SCDC of concern over noise from helicopters

## 12 Appendices

The following appendices are available, detailing the full data and comments from the surveys. Owing to the cost and volume, they are not being generally distributed with the Plan, but are available on request from the secretary in either paper or electronic form.

### **12.1 Appendix A – Detailed answers from the Residents’ Survey**

### **12.2 Appendix B – Detailed answers from the Young Residents’ Survey**

### **12.3 Appendix C – Detailed answers from the Household Survey**