

Stogursey Parish Plan



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STOGURSEY PARISH PLAN INDEX

Introduction	page 2
History of Stogursey	page 3
Population	page 4
Heritage and Tourism	page 5
Environment and Community Services	page 6
Amenities	page 8
Transport	page 9
Employment and Training	page 9
Crime and Safety	page 10
Education and Learning	page 11
Recreation and Fundraising	page 12
Consulting the Community (1)	page 13
Consulting the Community (2)	page 14
Conclusions	page 15
Next Steps	page 15
Appendix 1 First questionnaire	page 17
Appendix 1a Comments from First questionnaire	page 19
Appendix 2 Second questionnaire	page 25
Appendix 2a Specific Comments from Second questionnaire	page 26
Appendix 2b Other Comments from Second questionnaire	page 28
Appendix 3 Community Benefits questionnaire	page 29
Thanks and Acknowledgments	page 30

INTRODUCTION

This Parish Plan for Stogursey is the culmination of eighteen months work by local volunteers. We hope it reflects the views and aspirations for our beautiful community, and that it will act as a stimulus and focus for action.

The idea for the plan came from a local resident who raised it at the Parish Council in 2009. Parish plans have been promoted by recent governments as a means for engaging local residents in taking an active role in their neighbourhood and for helping orientate Parish Councils to the needs, ideas and ambitions of those they represent.

The initial suggestion generated sufficient interest and enough volunteers to form a steering group. We set ourselves the task of identifying the existing facilities, assets and events in Stogursey, of recording these, and next, of asking the opinions of residents of what is good about living in the parish and what could make life better. Sue Goss organised the first meeting, provided the spark of inspiration that set us off, administered our meetings and kept us motivated. Cara Lynch-Blosse engaged the school and our children in a host of activities. Ann Sparkes facilitated many of the community events while Peter Farmery, Allan Searle and Chris Morgan provided astute advice, wise counsel and reminders of our deadlines. Steve Stoneham managed our money (blood...stone...) superbly. Jane Taunton collected, collated and wrote up all the audit information, scrupulously proof-reading the final document after we had dithered about tweaking it. Additional volunteers helped us with the door-to-door questionnaire when we realized the scale of the task we had set ourselves and without these last we would never have succeeded.

We are all locals, volunteers. Working together for the first time has not always been easy; we have valued the comments, encouragement and support of our neighbours. We are proud to publish the Plan and in submitting it to the Parish Council we hope to stimulate the parish and its council with realistic proposals for the community.

Ralph Hammond
Lesley Flash

Stogursey Parish Plan Steering Group, Co-Chairs
October 2010

HISTORY OF STOGURSEY

Stogursey Parish lies between the coast and the Quantock Hills (first AONB). The Parish consists of Stogursey and the hamlets of Burton, Knighton, Shurton, Wick and Stolford. Although the early history of a settlement at Stogursey is unclear, there is evidence of later prehistoric and Roman activity nearby.

After the Norman Conquest William the Conqueror gave Stoke (or Stocche as it is called in the Domesday Book 1086) to William of Falaise. St Andrews Church was built at the end of the 11th century and handed over to the prior and monks of the Benedictine Priory of Lonlay in Normandy. A descendant of William of Falaise married William de Curci and by the end of the 12th century the village was called Stoke Curci, changed over the centuries to Stogursey. The Castle was built by William de Curci in the 12th century.

By the 13th century Stogursey was a borough with its own seal and its own jury at the Circuit Court. From 1306 it was taxed as borough and by 1361 was recorded as a parliamentary borough. Stogursey's economy was based on agriculture. Prosperity was hampered by conflicts and rebellion during the Middle Ages. The Castle and the wealthy alien Priory were often at odds with one another and by the early 15th century the Priory was dissolved and together with its lands put into the hands of the Crown. The Castle was involved in national politics and became a Lancastrian base. It was besieged and burnt in 1457 and was rebuilt as an administrative centre for what was only a minor estate. By the 17th century it had become a farm.

During the Middle Ages Stogursey declined and the market lost its importance, though its 2 annual fairs in May and September continued to the mid 19th century. It was last recorded as a borough in 1833. It lost out through its unfavourable position off the beaten track along the foot of the Quantocks, especially to Bridgwater, which had the advantage of river and coastal trade.

The construction of the nuclear power stations at Hinkley Point in the 1960s-70s undoubtedly brought better paid work to the locality. It also brought in newcomers from far and wide, some of whom settled in the village. The developers built the houses in Burgage Road, many of which are still inhabited by former employees. The community still has unhappy memories of the social disorderliness that accompanied the building phase of the power-stations although since completion relationships with the energy companies have improved.

The Parish is about to experience a second 'Norman' Invasion, if EdF gets the go ahead to build 2 more nuclear reactors bordering on Shurton and Burton hamlets. It is hoped that the inconvenience that will be caused during the construction period will be mitigated by support from EdF for village projects and that there will be long term benefits from this development. EdF has acknowledged that its proposed developments will have a massive adverse impact on the parish and has initiated discussions of possible mitigation.

POPULATION

The population census figures from the beginning of the 19th century show that there was a steady rise in the population until it started to decrease in 1881. It continued to decrease through the 20th century, with a slight rise at the 1931 census, until the 1961 census which coincided with the construction of Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station. By then the population had risen to 1,391, then decreased gradually to 1,191 at the 1991 census. It had risen to 1,273 by the latest census in 2001. The 2011 census may show a further rise in population reflecting recent new housing developments in the village. The 2001 census showed, according to the categories used in the census, that the largest age group was the 45-64 year olds. This is in line with the demographic across the West Somerset District.

Population of Stogursey Parish

1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
1168	1208	1362	1496	1467	1472	1455	1489	1,262	1,116
1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
1,034	928	886	899	860	1,391	1,350	1,196	1,191	1,273



HERITAGE and TOURISM

Stogursey is designated an Outstanding Heritage Settlement. The Norman pattern of the centre of the village has been preserved and there is a wealth of listed, historic buildings, both public and private, ranging from the 11th to the 19th century, most notably the Norman Church of St Andrew which has fine examples of Norman stone-work and of 16th century carved pew-ends as well as other relics. Stogursey Parish has been the subject of a study by the Somerset Vernacular Buildings Group (SVBG). Over a period of 3 years they have surveyed 120 houses and farms, dating from the 15th to the mid 19th century. Their findings will be published in autumn 2010.

The centre of the village is Stogursey Conservation Area, which places some constraints on alterations and development within its boundaries and on its edge. Much restoration has been carried out in recent years. Stogursey Castle was bought by the Landmark Trust in 1981 and the main restoration including the gatehouse was completed in 1984, although work continued on the walls until 1987. The gatehouse is now let out by the Trust as holiday accommodation. St Andrews Well and its approach were restored in 1979. Restoration of the Pound was completed in 2001 and the Gravel in 2009.

Fairfield House, one mile west of Stogursey off the Stringston Road, includes a medieval west wing with remains of a 15th century carved roof. The rest of the house is Elizabethan, apart from a Georgian style alteration at the back. It is thought that there was a village of Fairfield to the east of the house. The gardens are open twice in the spring under the National Open Gardens Scheme. The house is open three afternoons a week for twelve weeks from Easter. A five-year educational project to investigate the archeology and landscape history of Fairfield House (funded by Somerset County Council and more recently the Heritage Lottery Fund) has been carried out with the support of the owner, Lady Gass. Stogursey C of E Primary School was among the schools taking part in the project.



ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Street cleaning and refuse collection:

Streets are swept on an 8 weekly cycle, which does not include the hamlets. Parish Councillors voluntarily go round the village picking up litter on a regular basis.

Refuse collection and recycling:

There is currently a weekly refuse collection and fortnightly collection of green waste and the emptying of recycling boxes: paper, card, glass bottles and jars, tin cans and foil. West Somerset District Council is committed to introducing Sort It Plus from March 2012, but hoping to have it up and running by late 2011: wheelie bins with fortnightly emptying are to be offered, with boxes for food waste, and plastic bottles are to be added to recyclables.

Parking:

Stogursey has no public car park; the Church has a few spaces and there are two sets of garages to rent: Magna Housing Association in Burgage Road (54); St Andrews Rd Garages, privately owned (22 +5 spaces). Residents' parking in the centre of the village is mainly on the street.

Housing:

Magna Housing Group has 113 properties in Stogursey Parish. There are two recent housing developments in the village, a small development of 17 houses at Lonlay Mews off Burgage Road and Lonlay Meadow, on the eastern edge of the village, where 59 houses are planned and 39 have been built, including units with low cost housing status. Construction has been suspended for some time but Strongvox say they intend to resume construction in the future. Magna Housing Group owns 23 units in the development

Accommodation for the elderly:

There are two Almshouses in the village. There are also 34 sheltered bungalows for the elderly in St Audries Close; the landlord is Magna Housing Group. The warden is now based off site. The nearest care home for the elderly is at Stockland Bristol.

Fairfield Estate (Lady Gass) rents out thirty properties, including farms, in the Parish. These are distinguished by maroon gloss paint to exterior woodwork.

Mobile library (Bridgwater Zone 1):

Every 3 weeks on Tuesday mornings stopping at 5 points in the parish during the morning. The nearest local library building is in Nether Stowey.

Drop in Surgeries:

Cannington Health Centre is on Monday afternoon and Thursday morning in the Church Rooms and the Quantock Medical Centre (Nether Stowey) is on Monday and Friday mornings in the Common Room, St Audries Close.

Charities:

There are four charities, all established in the 18th century. The biggest charity is the Almshouses founded by William Paulett in the 15th century. Originally built where the Gravel now lies, they were rebuilt in the 16th century, demolished in 1869 and replaced by new ones in Lime Street. There is also an almshouse in St Andrews Road, originally built for 3 men in 1821. Morgan's Charity is a bequest of land at Zine Farm, Stolford. Beneficiaries are the incumbent for preaching a sermon on Good Friday ad infinitum and 'Ten poor Housekeepers'. Mascol's Bread Charity distributed bread amongst 30 poor families but now gifts in cash or kind are given annually to 2 people.

Parish Council:

The Council meets on the 2nd Tuesday in month, preceded by 15 minute public forum. Minutes are posted in the Post Office and on the Parish Council notice-boards in the main village and in each of the surrounding hamlets. A monthly summary is published in Stogursey News. The Parish Clerk circulates minutes and agendas by email to those members of the public who request it. Minutes are also available to be read in the Post Office.

Stogursey News

The monthly Parish Magazine is produced and distributed by volunteers to every household in the parish; printing is undertaken by Hinkley 'A' station as a gesture of goodwill towards the host community. The magazine offers a calendar of what's on, reports, letters and advertisements.

Public Venues:

The Victory Hall is used for educational and recreational purposes. The role of the trustees is to maintain the building in a good state of repair for the people of Stogursey Parish. Currently an extension of the car park is proposed, which will be on the green area in front of the Youth Club to the side of the main building. Plastic matting will allow the grass to continue to grow.

The Church Rooms in the centre of the village are used for Church functions and are available for hire for community use. Successful fundraising enabled extensive refurbishment, which was completed in 2009. St. Audries Centre is also used as a public venue including use as a Polling Station.

AMENITIES

The Victory Hall and the Church Rooms can be hired for use by the general public, as can rooms at the Greyhound Pub in Stogursey and Shurton Inn in the hamlet of Shurton. There are only the two pubs and both serve food. At the time of writing the Shurton Inn is to be closed indefinitely.

There is a Post Office with attached shop which sells gifts, cards, hardware, gardening products and cleaning materials and there is a Corner Shop for newspapers and provisions. The newspaper delivery covers a wide area including beyond the parish. There is gift and toy shop with a cafe; an arts, crafts and jewelry shop (at the time of writing applying for change of use to residential), and an antiquarian bookseller. There is also a picture-framer. The nearest Post Offices and shops outside the village are at Combwich (4 miles), Cannington (5 miles) and Nether Stowey (3 miles)

There are three vehicle businesses, one for car sales and servicing, one an MOT/Garage Workshop; and one a Vehicle Repairs Workshop.

Some houses will provide Bed and Breakfast and the recently renovated Acland Hood Arms offers self catering accommodation.

The Gravel is a public open space which was successfully used for Stogursey Church Festival this year. It is also used for the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial and for Carol singing at Christmas. The Parish Council maintains flower boxes on the Gravel and hanging baskets in the streets to enhance the appearance of the village.

There are ten allotments at Burgage Road and a waiting list of five. More land is needed

St Andrew's Church is in the Benefice of the Quantock Coast (Rector Philip Rahilly). The churchyard and burial ground lie alongside. More land is needed to extend the burial ground but it has not yet been identified or made available.

There is a small playground for children under 5 years and another general playground at Burgage Road. This is in poor repair. At the time of writing the Parish Council is in the process of agreeing to lease the land with the ultimate objective of improving play facilities for the children of the village.

There is a weekly drop-in coffee morning from 10am on Fridays in the Church Rooms to which everyone is welcome. There is a free book exchange and an informal exchange of produce and other surplus.

There are no restaurants and no public lavatories.

TRANSPORT

First operates an approximately 2 hourly service east to Bridgwater and west to Williton and/or Watchet. There is no bus before 8 am and no bus after early evening. There are later evening buses on Sunday and public holidays between Bridgwater and Watchet which stop at Stogursey. There is no direct Sunday service to Williton. There is one daily bus to Taunton and back Monday to Friday, with an additional bus in both directions on Thursday. Stogursey's hamlets are served by one bus per day to and from Bridgwater on college days.

In effect the bus services are inadequate for workers with early or late starts and finishes, nor do they serve those wishing to travel outside the village for evening social events, although curfew hours are extended on Sundays!

The Slinky Bus service must be booked in advance. Since July 2010 use is restricted to within the West Somerset area between 9 am and 6pm with no service at weekends. To give an example of the effect of the restrictions, Slinky Bus can no longer be used for journeys to and from the local medical centres or Bridgwater Hospital since they are not in West Somerset District. At the time of writing a Friday shopping service to Bridgwater, booked in advance, is on trial.

There are no cycle paths on C182 Hinkley Point Road or A39.

Cycling proficiency for children is offered every year after school by Stogursey School and is very popular.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Since the 1960s, with the construction of Hinkley Point Power Station, many newcomers have settled in the village. As country living has become more popular and car-ownership more wide-spread a significant number of residents now travel outside the immediate area for work. There are a number of small employers and self employed tradesmen who advertise in Stogursey News. There are also several residents who work or run small businesses from home who do not advertise in the News because they draw their clients as much from outside the parish as within.

The nearest training courses are at Bridgwater College and its Cannington branch.

Figures for most types of farming are not made available to the public 'to prevent disclosure of information about individual holdings'. In 2005 there were 44 working farms in the parish, ranging from 5 farms at over 100 hectares to the majority (39) at 20 hectares. Types included: cereals, horticulture, specialist pigs, specialist poultry, dairy, lowland grazing livestock, mixed farming. There were 18 full time farmers, 37 part-time. These figures include all principal farmers, spouses and business partners. There were 19 farm labourers .

CRIME AND SAFETY

Crime is tackled locally by a Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). This is a partnership of the police, local authorities and other organisations whose aim is to tackle crime and disorder on a local level. Figures are available for West Somerset District, not for Stogursey alone. The figures below are per thousand.

	West Somerset	UK Average
Population	35,000	
Households	16,000	
Violence against the person	10.4	15.0
Sexual offences	0.6	0.9
Robbery offences	0.1	1.0
Burglary dwelling offences	1.8	4.3
Theft of motor vehicle offences	1.3	2.3
Theft from vehicle offences	3.5	6.3

It can be seen that crime is generally low compared to the English average. The figures for violence against the person are higher than the other figures, though still low, and these do include domestic violence.

Avon and Somerset Police Authority distributes a bulletin to all households in the Minehead, Williton and Exmoor Area, in which the latest initiatives are publicised. The public are also invited to make views known through PACT (Partners and Communities Together). 8 areas of Stogursey take part in Neighbourhood Watch. Under the Data Protection Act, their identities cannot be disclosed.

Stogursey has a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) who is based at Williton Police Station. In the summer of 2010 an additional beat office was set up in the Youth Club building at Victory Hall.

EDUCATION and LEARNING

Stogursey Pre-School was held in the Victory Hall until the mid 1990s when it was moved to the temporary classrooms in Stogursey C of E Primary School to give the children a smoother transition to school. It was known as The Wishing Well Nursery for some years. A maximum of 16 children have been able to attend, from the age of 3 to school age. It had 14 children on roll in July 2010. The aim of the pre-school was to give children the chance to mix with other children of a similar age and develop social and emotional skills. Unfortunately, The Wishing Well Nursery has had to close as the accommodation no longer met Health and Safety standards. This means that nursery age children will have to be taken to Nether Stowey or to Otterhampton, which obviously puts parents without transport at a disadvantage. It also means that Stogursey School enrolments are at risk of dropping as parents may decide to continue their children's education at primary schools outside the village. At the time of writing efforts are being made to restore the Pre-School and to provide weekly activities for young children in the village during the interval.

The group known as Toddlers meets on Thursday mornings in the Church Rooms, with activities such as play, making things, painting and music. Another group with a Christian focus, Tiny Tots, meets in the Church on Tuesday mornings. It is open to pre-school children and offers activities appropriate to the age-group. Newcomers are welcome to both groups.

Stogursey Voluntary Aided C of E Primary School has a long history going back to the early 17th century when the parish clerk taught 3 or 4 small children. By the mid 18th century two licensed teachers were teaching 20 poor children and were paid £2 a year from offerings at Communion services. They received extra pay for teaching sewing. The existing Stogursey School was built in 1860 by Sir Peregrine Acland and given to the community in gratitude for the recovery of his daughter Isabel from a serious illness.

Stogursey School now has a roll of about 70. It is trying to raise funds to improve facilities, particularly to rent part of the Glebe Field as an additional area for outside activities. This will need fencing and groundwork at a cost of approximately £100K. Pupils are taught in three classes: Oak Class, Years 1 and 2; Hazel Class, Years 2,3 and 4; Willow Class, Years 4, 5 and 6.

Friends of Stogursey Primary School (FOSS) is an organisation which is of great value to the School. Parents of pupils are automatically members and membership is open to anyone interested in the welfare of the school. Its Committee is elected at the annual AGM. Its main function is to raise money to provide 'extras' for the School. It also acts as an important link between home and school and organises a number of events each year.

Pupils of secondary age go to schools in Bridgwater, mainly Haygrove School, a specialist Language College. There is a dedicated bus-service for their transport.

RECREATION and FUNDRAISING

There are many footpaths out of and around the village, generally in a good condition. They are regularly checked by a member of the Parish Council. There are a number of closures and diversions in place for Health and Safety reasons on land at Hinkley Point owned by EDF. If EDF's plan to build two new reactors gets the go ahead there will be permanent closures and footpaths will be diverted around the perimeter of the site. Benhole Lane will be improved in the area of Bum Brook. Rights of way will be provided across restored land on completion of construction. The coastal footpath will be diverted inland for construction of a new seawall. On completion it will become an integral part of the sea wall.

There are numerous groups reflecting varied interests in the village community. Perhaps the most notable is the Twinning Association. Stogursey is twinned with Lonlay l'Abbaye in Normandy. This is a link which can be traced to the early 12th century when a community of monks from Lonlay built a priory here. The Twinning Association will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2011, when it will be Stogursey's turn to host the Lonlay Twinning Association.

Stogursey It's a Knockout Fun Day has been organised for the past 10 years on the Victory Hall Playing Field on August Bank Holiday Sunday. It is opened by a well known television celebrity. So far £53,000 has been raised for charity. 2009 was the best year, raising over £6,000. Whilst it is a very popular event, younger people are not coming forward to take over the running and 2010 will be the last year as the organisers, Allen and Sarah Loveday, are stepping down. However, they will still be busy fundraising and supporting other village events and have a great deal of expertise to be drawn on. Conscious of what the community stands to lose by the retirement of the Lovedays, at the time of writing parishioners are discussing how they can fill the gap that will be left in the village calendar.

The Youth Club meets on Mondays and Thursdays for all ages (10-19 year-olds); the Church Youth Group meets fortnightly on Friday evenings in the Church Rooms and is open to 11-16 year olds.

Victory Hall Playing Field is open for recreation. It is the home-ground of Stogursey AFC and is used for soccer fixtures and village events, including the Flower Show and It's a Knockout.

The tennis courts are available for hire and are currently used weekly by Over Stowey Tennis Club. There is a dog exercise area to the side of the Victory Hall. Apart from meetings, Victory Hall is used for regular social activities such as bingo, short mat bowling, line dancing and the 50+ exercise group.

St Andrews Church is the venue for concerts organised by St Audries Trust. Musicians of international repute perform here. The concerts are well attended, with audiences drawn from well beyond Stogursey itself.

Kennels of the local West Somerset Vale Hunt are situated at Farrington Hill, within the Parish.

CONSULTING the COMMUNITY (I)

Forty to fifty people attended the initial Parish Plan meeting at the Victory Hall and their suggestions for community consultation were invited. From this gathering a Steering Group Committee was formed. The intention was to use a variety of methods to engage the community in the plan process and to involve volunteers in sub-groups to develop ideas. The first step was to circulate in the Stogursey News a questionnaire based on suggestions gathered at the first meeting (Appendix 1 *page 21*). Residents were asked to indicate whether or not they were in favour of the suggestions and to note additional comments (Appendix 1a *page 23*)

The return from this approach was disappointing in view of the number of households reached by the Stogursey News. The Steering Group therefore decided to go door-to-door with a simpler questionnaire based on the results of the first and concentrating on achievable local issues under broadly the same headings (Appendix 2 *page 25*) and noting comments (Appendix 2a *page 18* and Appendix 2b *page 28*) This proved to be an ambitious undertaking and members were only partially successful in reaching every household so responses were also gathered at village events and finally invited one last time in the Stogursey News, the whole process having taken about a year. Altogether about 15% of the parish responded to the second questionnaire, which is a significant return, all challenges considered. Although we were sorry not to have achieved more the consistency with which residents answered our questions leads us to think that even had we managed 100% the results would be much the same.

During the year of data collection the Steering Group initiated or participated in a number of village events to continue to raise awareness of the plan process viz: Carol Singing on the Gravel, a Cheese and Wine evening for representatives of local societies, Stogursey Village Festival and Stogursey Flower Show. They were also a presence at consultation events organized by EdF although at the time of writing it would seem there may not be significant correlation between the company proposals for community benefit and the needs or wishes of the parish (Appendix 3 *page 30*)

NB: Appendix Texts have been edited for ease and speed of reference; individual comments which are broadly the same are represented by the single most comprehensive of those remarks; collections of comments have been grouped roughly into areas of common interest.

CONSULTING the COMMUNITY (2)

In 1996 the Parish Council organized a day of consultation with the community called “Stogursey Now and in the Future.” The report is available from the Council.

Several of the issues then identified have been addressed in the years since; several continue to appear on the Council’s monthly agenda as works in progress; some remain pending. Many of the general observations made then are similar to or the same as those offered in 2010, and there is a sprinkling of discontent and scepticism in both collections of opinion.

In 2010 it was noticeable that many respondents found the quality of life in the parish rewardingly peaceful and considered the community well provided with opportunities and amenities.

The most consistent comment from the community in 1996 and 2010 is the need for public lavatories and the hope of establishing a village centre. In 2010 the need for lavatories was emphasized by respondents from the outlying hamlets who pointed out that their advancing years made such provision imperative if they were to continue to regard Stogursey as their first point of activity and trade. The demographic of West Somerset would indicate that the need has become - in a word - pressing.

2010 ushers in a coalition central government and enormous cuts in local government budgets. In spite of the proposed nuclear new-build at Hinkley C site it is by no means certain that any money will be available from the government or the developers to support local initiatives. Much is going to be required of voluntary effort and sceptics suggest that it will not be forth-coming or that, if the effort were made, the results would be sabotaged by apathy or vandalism. Some respondents felt that the community at large should support the existing societies and activities rather than seek to introduce change.

Those who view the Plan in a more positive light emphasise the need to involve the young of the village in provision for their own needs. Some respondents offer their active support; several wonder where to find the leadership for the ideas put forward.

There is pride in the heritage of the village but a cautious attitude towards exploiting it for tourism and wariness in encouraging plans that are too elaborate or ambitious under any of the headings. Some respondents note that similar ideas have been tried and failed in the past. The hamlets, especially Stolford and Wick, regard themselves as out on a limb and find it difficult to keep abreast of parish affairs. And yet, one of the overwhelming responses to the Plan was that it was a good idea which would help to draw the community together. Many residents clearly wish to feel themselves part of the community but are not quite sure how to go about it.

The next step for the Parish Plan, beyond those developments which must and should be led by the Parish Council, needs to be to find ways for members of the community to encourage one another to participate in the continuance and development of the life of the parish.

CONCLUSIONS

In the process of promoting the Parish Plan it became clear that communication among residents of the Parish to a specific end is random and partial. Some do not read the Stogursey News cover to cover; some do not consult the parish notice-boards or the shop windows; word of mouth circulates only among friendship groups, clusters of dwellings are scattered over the geographic area and people are busy about their own lives. Even the EdF consultations, of major local significance, did not initially draw very large attendance at their meetings and displays unless residents were specially invited or aroused.

If the Plan is to respond to the expressed desire of the residents to feel part of the community and to interact as such then there need to be consistent and easily accessible ways, consciously applied and maintained, of communicating with one another. While it is democratically ideal that we are free to inform and involve ourselves as we wish through the systems that already exist, it is more realistic to accept that any community initiative needs to reach out and to try new approaches towards doing the old familiar things and that it takes time for a response to develop, if it does so at all.

Setting aside those developments within the community which require funding there is much that could yet be done with good-will. The Church sets an excellent example but unfortunately the majority of the parishioners no longer go to services regularly and so do without what used to be a vital link to one another. That said, events and societies organized by the Church and independently by parish volunteers are usually well attended. The tradition of being an active community still exists, thanks to the efforts of a tireless few, but those few have been heard to say that they need more support and fresh volunteers or they will lose heart.

The Steering Committee needs now to disperse and form satellite groups which can give their attention to exploring the feasibility of both the funded and unfunded priorities of the Plan. Of necessity this will require wider involvement by the community and effective communication across the Parish in ways which have yet to be discussed at the time of going to press.

NEXT STEPS

Our second questionnaire was intended to focus on the things the community could do for itself with the support of the Parish Council and as far as possible without needing large sums of money

Least Strongly Supported Issues:

Some questions received markedly less consistent approval than those which follow on the next page (see Appendix 2 for details) It was widely felt that the question of a Youth Shelter and a Youth Recreation Area should be left to the Youth Council when formed; meanwhile the Parish Council has already negotiated the lease of land to provide a skateboard ramp. There already is a small playground for very young children and for the time being this must suffice. Opinion was evenly divided on the advisability of having a village cider press, especially since there are farmers and other parishioners who already have the equipment for juicing. Perhaps this is an opportunity for those willing to organize an Apple Festival as one of the Village Events the community would like to see!

More Village Events and Festivals

92% of respondents are in favour, but to bring this about will require the involvement of all members of the community whether as organizers or participants, and of course taste and opinion varies as to which events are most desirable. However, it is clearly a strongly felt need. Activities in which all can join for relaxation must surely serve to bring the community together in other ways.

Action:	Parish Plan Volunteers and Parish Council as relevant
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A Village Centre For a Museum, Visitor Information, Public Loos etc

85% of respondents wanted there to be a centre. Visions of the purpose it could serve varied; some emphasized the social possibilities, some communication, others information but everybody wanted there to be a public lavatory.

Action	Parish Council
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A Market on the Gravel at Weekends

80% of respondents are in favour although opinion tends to agree that weekly, even monthly, could be too frequent. Clearly if there is to be a market the support of local businesses, including the shops, is essential and they should be involved at every step so that their trade does not suffer. It might well be sensible to begin by developing elements of a market at suitable Village Events and Festivals.

Action:	Parish Council, Stogursey Businesses and Parish Plan Volunteers
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A Youth Council

74% of respondents are in favour, believing it is highly necessary for the youth of the village to be enabled and encouraged to manage their own affairs. It is the case, however, that most respondents were adults. The young people of the parish need to be engaged directly in further research to establish what provision they would like and how best it should be managed. Meanwhile the Parish Council has already approached local colleges to offer a shadowing scheme for young people interested in learning more about civics.

Action:	Parish Council and Parish Plan Volunteers
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Improved Parking Facilities in Stogursey

66% of respondents (mostly residents in the main village) think that there is a problem and suggestions as to how to resolve it vary. Many cannot think of any solution at all; others suggest solutions which could become contentious. At the time of writing additional parking space is being made available at the Victory Hall.

Action:	Parish Council
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APPENDIX I: FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE those in favour

Nuclear New Build: Opportunities/Challenges.

Minimise the visual and noise impact on local hamlets/Minimum intrusion.	90%
Protect the environment and habitat.	87%
Impact on the local community, especially the school, with the influx of new families.	87%
Fully-informed, sensitive co-operation to minimise the industrialisation of coastline.	82%
Cancel the plans-build a windfarm!	44%

Local Economy

Encourage visitors with a local museum and local walking maps	82%
Stogursey and hamlets business directory to include homeworkers	79%
Support local shops and enterprises; use Gravel for a market area	74%
Community farm-orchard/fruit and veg.	72%
Establish a community volunteers/helpers directory.	69%
New building and better facilities for The Wishing Well Nursery.	44%
Lett's scheme or similar	33%
Pool the three shops into one to offer better opening hours and wider selection	30%
Parish office/CVS centre/support centre for local businesses under one roof.	26%

Leisure Activities

Age 3-6 play area improvements (Burgage Rd. needs work).	85%
Rounders on playing field for the whole community to join in.	82%
Football pitch to be converted to cricket pitch in the off season	77%
Local walking routes	74%
Better facilities for 11-18 yrs informal meeting places,skateboard /roller park.	69%
Extend children's recreational facilities adjacent to the school	67%
School/village mini-bus	67%
Museum	51%

Our Community: Change or No Change

Parish Plan-good opportunity for the community to “gel”	95%
Enhance the Gravel area-more plants/trees	88%
A parish website.	87%
More community wide events/competitions throughout the year	77%
Social evenings to welcome newcomers.	74%
A heritage museum possibly /a parish office to become a focal point for the community	69%
Effect of Hinkley New Build on the community	49%
Move towards becoming a “Transition Town “- more environmentally friendly	44%

Transport

Solve frequent flooding problem which cuts off Burton and Shurton residents-	95%
Bus to run later in the evening-currently none after 6pm.	87%
More and better sign-posted public rights of way to encourage walkers.	77%
Better bus service	74%
Timetable to connect with rail and coach connections	74%
Improve cycling options-encourage cycling & on the school run in particular	69%
Community/village bus	69%
Car share scheme	56%

Policing

Increased policing by real police officers not support officers with no police powers.	88%
MOD/Nuclear constabulary provide a good visible deterrent	72%
Continue the good work of the PCSO	72%

Housing

Effect of the Hinkley development-clarification required from EDF re building plans	77%
No more new-builds-can't sell those already built!	74%
Broken promises from developers-how can we ensure that this does not happen again	72%
More starter homes/low rent homes for young people	64%

APPENDIX 1a: COMMENTS from FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

- 20 mph outside the school
- A community cider press
- A composting area for garden waste
- An area in the church or church rooms outlining our history
- Annual awards to recognise individuals who do much for community
- Better publicity of events , resources, activities
- Boules on the gravel, arranged by Twinning Assoc
- Buses to run down Farringdon Lane
- Car park (esp. if encouraging tourists/visitors)
- Consider the needs of the elderly and disabled
- Enter Britain in Bloom which now places emphasis on community involvement
- Eradicate Japanese knotweed
- Get the mill working again& use adjacent area for car-parking; grind flour and bake bread
- Get the shops together so that we & they benefit from custom
- Give clear guidance to planners and developers about what makes our community special, what needs to be protected and how, and what should be encouraged.
- Have a 'Youth Shelter' for youngsters to meet and chill out
- Have a community meeting space for information, produce exchange etc
- Have a free food party but no-one can cash their ticket until they have answered the basic questionnaire.
- Have a produce/market exchange on the Gravel
- I would love a Baker's van & other delivery for meat and fish
- Improve Broadband
- Improve the school field facilities, an outdoor classroom, forest school, allotment plot.
- Keep It's a Knockout
- Leaflet the school bus to get the opinions of our children
- More bins in the village
- More information w. photo and phone number of district & parish councillors
- Produce a local map of walking routes
- Public toilets please
- Replace plastic street names and have cast-iron instead
- Roads into Stogursey not suitable for any more new homes
- Subsidise training for e.g. first aid, cyclist proficiency
- Traffic calming measures to reduce speed of vehicles
- Tree lined streets & telephone wires underground
- Turn out every other streetlight after midnight
- Village history on website
- Volunteers Directory should include requests for help
- We should get together & sing to make us a community again
- Wraparound care for children
- Young persons council



APPENDIX 2: SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE those in favour

Respondents were asked if they thought the ideas good, bad or indifferent and comments on each item were invited.

Question	
Do you think parking is a problem in Stogursey?	66%
<i>What do you think could be done about it? (see Appendix 2a)</i>	
<i>What do you think about the following ideas:</i>	
Having more Village Events and Festivals? (e.g. village rounders, parish run, fancy dress parade through the village, bike ride, cultural weekend festival)	92%
A Village Centre for a museum, visitor information, public loos etc	85%
A Market on the Gravel at weekends?	80%
A Youth Council	74%
A Separate Play-Area for 3-6 year olds	54%
A Village Cider Press	53%
A Youth Shelter	48%
A Youth Recreation Area	46%



APPENDIX 2a: SPECIFIC COMMENTS from SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE

Parking:

- Double yellow lines
- Build more garages
- Wouldn't like yellow lines
- Encourage cycling, cycle paths
- Residents' only parking
- More considerate parking
- Those who have garages should use them
- It may cause a reaction if residents are deprived of 'their' spaces close to home
- Keep some spaces yellow-boxed for occasional use by tractors etc
- Too many cars for the Lonlay Mews area
- Use vicar's garden
- Buy St. Andrew's garages
- Public car-park needed
- Cut into some of the green areas to make more spaces
- Give people a small grant to put a parking space in their own gardens

Cider Press:

- A good balance of tradition and food safety necessary.
- I don't like cider
- If it is run by locals
- Not a priority, but you could combine it with a gardening club
- This is what Somerset is famous for
- Very seasonal.
- What a stupid idea! Apple juice would be better

Market:

- Can't see that it would benefit stall-holders
- Depends on the number of stalls and what they sell at what cost
- During spring and summer
- Every two months
- Fresh local produce
- Good for local produce and local suppliers
- Is the village large enough for such an event?
- It would affect shops in the village and they need no more competition
- More country things to make and do
- Once a month
- Only if it is a market for fresh produce - not a car-boot sale
- Quarterly
- Special Christmas market
- There's not enough parking space
- Would give us more to do at weekends

Village Centre:

Do not want village to become too touristy
Don't want the village to become busier than it is
I'm not sure there would be much demand
Room that could be used to display photos, art etc
Use the Church Rooms
We need information boards
With a drop-in area, a café and leaflets
Would need to be manned and monitored

Children's Playground:

It needs to be properly supervised
We have one already

Youth Shelter:

People wouldn't want it in the centre of the village and that's where the youngster's like to meet
They will continue to use their chosen place
We would continue to use the bus shelter

Youth Council:

As long as they don't rule the roost
It will be more of a success if they make the effort themselves

Youth Recreation:

Allocate responsibility to the 16 yrs+ group
Open to abuse
We have two or three already
Who will supervise it?



APPENDIX 2b: OTHER COMMENTS from SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE

- I like it just the way it is
 - Like the quiet, we've got enough here already
-
- Better mobile & broadband coverage
 - Bigger official village notice boards
 - Facebook page
 - Got to get groups working together
 - Information board on the castle
 - More co-ordination between groups
 - Revamp the magazine; get a webpage or a
-
- Exhibit photos and old plans of the village
 - Put Village Centre in the Castle
 - Restore the watermill & wheel
-
- Enter Britain in Bloom
 - Get EdF to sponsor the hanging baskets
 - Keep Hinkley Point traffic out
 - Make the gravel less slippery going
 - Plant more trees around the Gravel
 - Plant more trees around the village
 - Slow down the traffic
 - Use local people with skills in projects & renovations; take on apprentices
-
- Better information about what goes on for youth
 - Children's farm workshop
 - Clubs for the children and a pre-school
 - Day trips out for families during summer holidays
 - Get youth involved, they will bring new ideas
 - More entertainment for children in school holidays
 - Out-of-school activities for younger children
 - Scouts/Guides/Brownies/Cadets
 - Skate board park, adventure playground
-
- A gym, a rugby pitch, an ice-rink, a swimming pool
 - Crazy golf course, Badminton courts
 - Cricket team
 - Make accessing tennis easier
-
- A seed and vegetable swap for gardeners
 - Cycle paths
 - Develop coastal scrubland for wildlife diversity
 - Dog poo bins in Stolford
 - Improve paths for the elderly
 - More allotments
 - Nature walks, moths, birds
 - Organised dog-walks in the afternoons & weekends
-
- Café open in the evenings for young people
 - Casino nights
 - Charity Balls
 - Covered seating on the gravel
 - Definitely the loos
 - Drop-in café, Internet café and coffee house
 - Improve park facilities, more benches, a picnic area
 - More Pubs
 - Night Club
 - Restaurant or tea-shop
-
- A night-club
 - Beginner computer courses
 - Classical/Modern concerts and Arts events
 - Leisure Classes in the church, village hall
 - Meet the neighbours evenings
 - Open the bar in the Acland
-
- A bakery, stuff like that
 - A big shopping centre for clothes etc
 - Craft fairs, stalls, jumble sales, book sales
 - Credit Union
 - Fish & chip van, mobile butcher van,
 - Library
 - Make sure the Post Office stays open
 - Try to keep the Emporium; a great asset
 - More shops and facilities
-
-

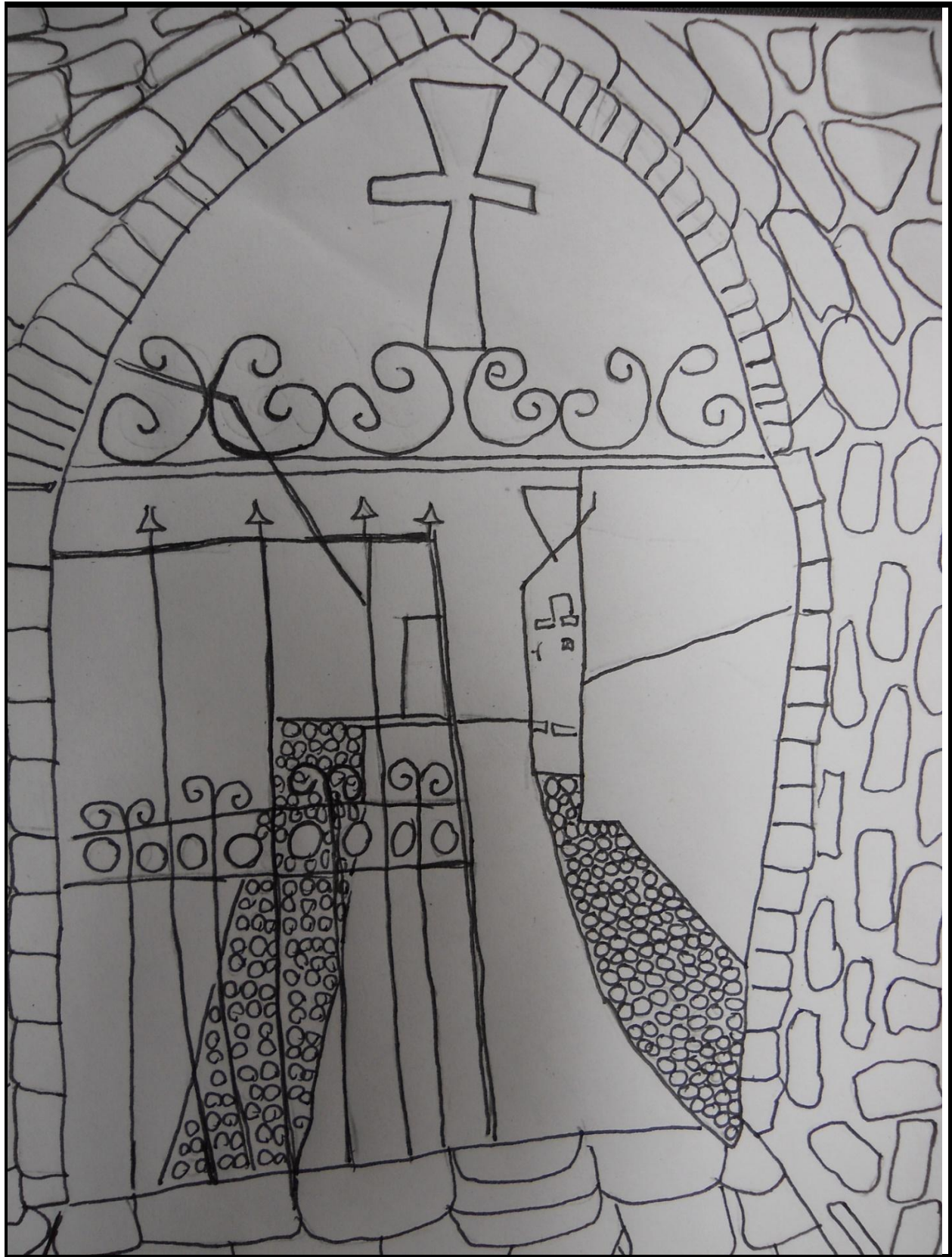


APPENDIX 3 PARISH PLAN EDF EXIT POLL

We used the opportunity provided by the EDF display to ask what parishioners thought that EDF should offer as community gain in recognition of the impact of the development on Stogursey and the outlying hamlets. We had a list of twelve suggestions which were supported in order of priority as follows:

- Funding to enable the school to develop for the benefit of both children and community
- Parish Lengthsmen who will work year-round to maintain the parish amenities including keeping footpaths accessible and regularly clearing ditches to prevent flooding.
- Free Wi-Fi access for the community
- EDF funded bursaries to be awarded to students from the parish to cover all tuition and maintenance fees
- A new Sports Centre for the community to replace and improve upon the all-weather court
- Financing of bus operatives to ensure better frequency of service responsive to community needs
- Cycle Path from Cannington to Hinkley and on to the coast including a bridle way
- A mobile 'phone mast on the Hinkley C site
- Community orchard/woodland on a site to be determined through later discussion
- Purchase of the Lime Street shop to be used as a Parish Office, a community resource including a Museum and as a permanent base for an EDF-funded Community Liaison Officer
- Purchase of St. Andrew's Road garages for development for use by the community
- Anaerobic digester to provide green energy by using household waste and locally-grown miscanthus grass at present exported to Cardiff for processing





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Anne Sparkes	who provided the Church Audit and answered factual questions
John Chedgey	on Recreation
Peter Malim	on Farming statistics
Sari Pearce	on Education
Steve Stoneham	on Crime and Safety

and to all the people in the community who so patiently answered our questions, filled out questionnaires and took the time to make suggestions about how best to develop the Plan.

Somerset County Councillor Mr Anthony Trollope-Bellew kindly arranged council funding for researching and printing the document

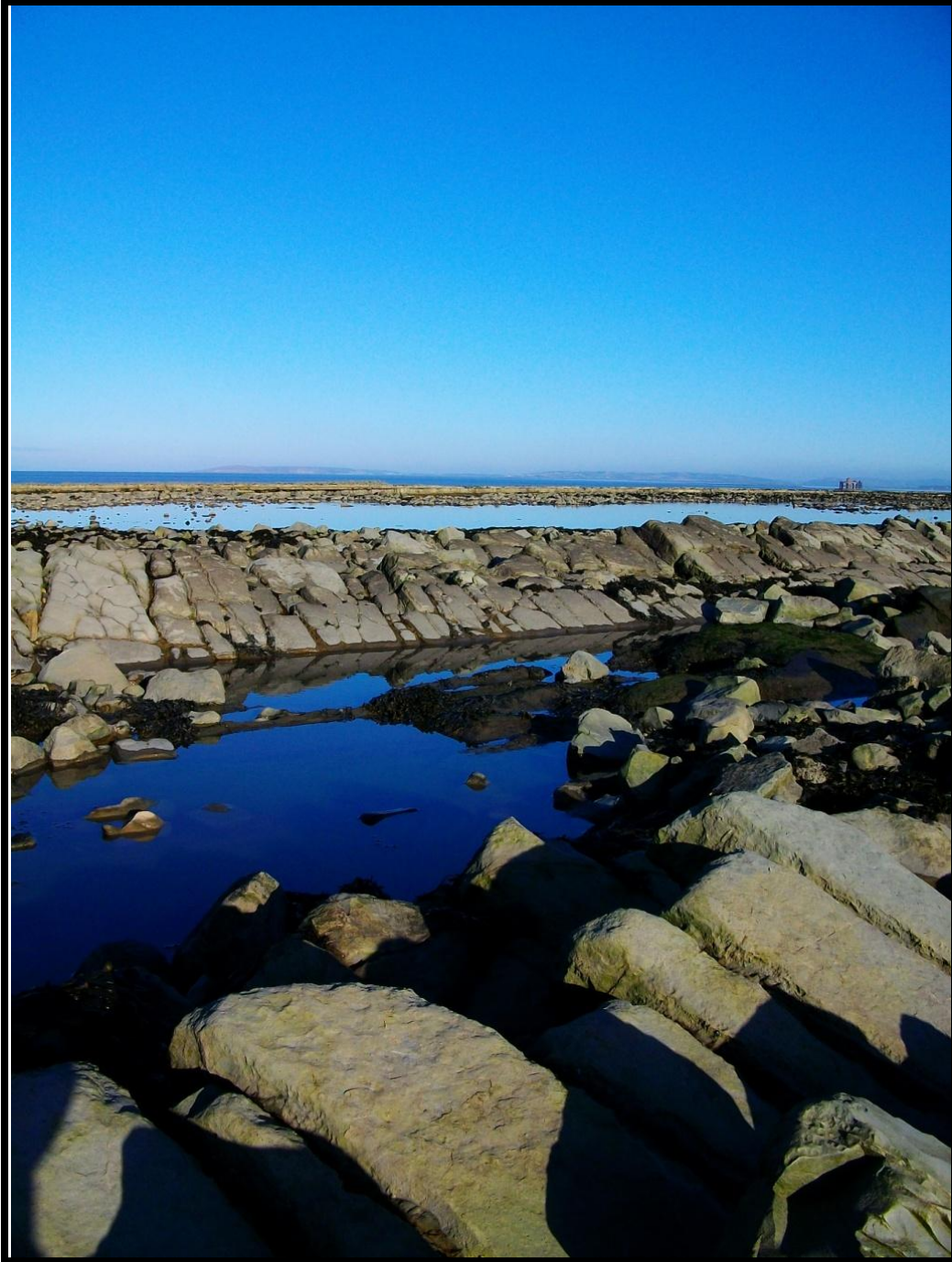
Useful sources for Audit:

- Stogursey News
- Parish Profile – The Priory Church of St Andrews Stogursey (lent by Anne Sparkes).
- Stogursey Now and in the Future. Report of Event held Saturday 20th April 1996 Somerset Rural Development Area (lent by Allan Searle).
- Clare Gathercole: An archaeological assessment of Stogursey SCC 2003
- Quantockonline www.quantockonline.co.uk
- National Census Office: Census.CustomerServices@ons.gsi.gov.uk
- First: Guide to Buses serving Sedgmoor and the Quantocks
- The Ancient Parish of Stogursey (available to buy in Church)
- www.upmystreet.com/local/crime-in-ta5-1td.html
- DEFRA: Julian.Groom@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- Magna Housing Group: westsom@magna.org.uk
- Strongvox: enquiries@strongvox.co.uk
- Youth Service: NHarwood@somerset.gov.uk

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