

Rothersthorpe Village Plan

July 2012



1. The Village

1.1. Demographics

The village is in the area of South Northamptonshire District Council and Harpole and Grange ward, together with the villages of Milton Malsor, Gayton, Harpole and Kislingbury. The village had a total population of 500 in the 2001 census. The village is part of the Daventry constituency.

In the absence of other businesses other than people working from home farming remains the prominent business activity.

1.2. History

The Berry ring works are medieval fortifications built and occupied from the late Anglo-Saxon period to the later 12th century. They are situated between the junction of North Street and Church Street and were small defended areas of buildings surrounded partly or completely by large ditches and earthworks topped by wooden palisades. They are rare nationally.

The Berry is the site of a ring work which stood at the centre of medieval Rothersthorpe. The site is irregularly shaped with a wide ditch on the north and west sides. There are the remains of an inner rampart in the north east corner and southern end. Features in the west of the interior of the works show the locations of former buildings. Remains of ridge and furrow farming are on the eastern side.

1.3. Facilities



The village has a mixed Church of England primary school, and the church of SS Peter and Paul. The Chequers public house closed in April 2012.

The village hall is unique in that it is a shared facility between the school and the community. The hall is used every evening of the week with a variety of activities including: Art Class; Short Mat Bowls; Badminton; Table Tennis; Guides;

Brownies; Rainbows; and Women's Institute. There are also events at the weekends throughout the year.

The village also has a children's day nursery that serves a wide area and children are dropped off and picked up throughout the day. This facility can accommodate up to 55 children per session.

The M1 Motorway with the Northampton (formerly known as Rothersthorpe) Service Area and junction 15A is nearby. The Northampton Arm of the Grand Union Canal, built in 1815 passes near to Rothersthorpe. Seventeen locks, taking the canal into Northampton and its junction with the River Nene, takes about two hours for a boat to travel through.



The village is bisected by Banbury Lane, an ancient Drovers' road along which cattle were once taken to market in Banbury from as far afield as Scotland. Along this road a mile or so south was a level crossing with the West Coast Main Line railway route from Euston to Birmingham.

The village has already accomplished a great deal with a unique arrangement of the village hall within the primary school, a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, a monthly village newsletter and web site and a number of activities within the village hall every evening and some weekends.

2. Introduction

The plan is based around the findings of a village survey undertaken in the Spring of 2012 and the subsequent public meeting that discussed the survey and agreed the actions. The survey received an excellent 83% response from 193 households.

The criteria for the plan is to:

- avoid inventing information or unsupported conclusions
- Look for volunteers to implement the actions
- Ensure the actions are possible and within the capabilities of the village

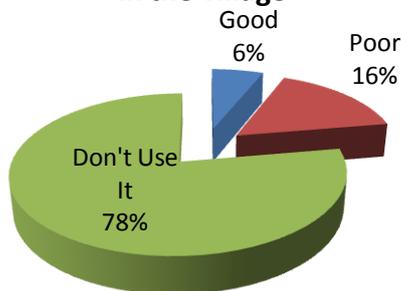
Rothersthorpe is not recognised as a sustainable community by South Northants council. Sustainability is defined as: *"Sustainable communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity."*

3. Village Transport

The current village bus service runs on 6 days a week with no Sunday service. There are five bus departures from the village and four return journeys each day. The first bus leaves Rothersthorpe at 07:59 and the last bus leaves at 17:34. The first return bus leaves Northampton at 11:00 and the last bus leaves at 18:00. The journey time is approximately 20 minutes.



What do you think of the bus service in the village



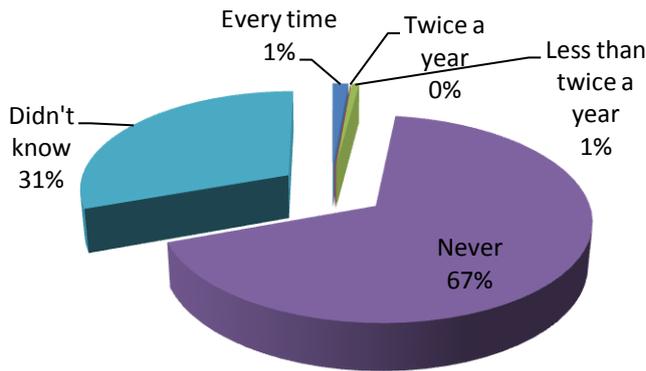
The village bus service is only used by 22% of the village and the majority of users describe the service as poor. This may change in the future when the aging village population get to the point when they can no longer drive.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Review the need for a community bus every twelve months to see if there is any change to the current usage.	Parish Council	Next annual review September 2013

4. Education

The survey clearly indicates that a number of people originally moved to the village because of the good reputation of the village primary school and/or Campion school. In many cases the children have now grown up and moved away, unable to afford to stay in the village, but the parents have stayed.

Do you or anyone in your household use the mobile library



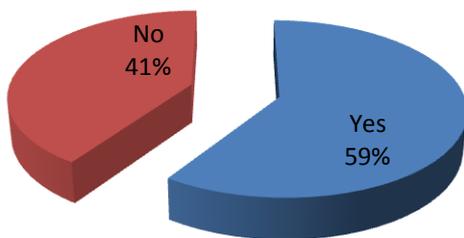
With only 2% of the village ever using the Mobile Library in a year this is an amenity that is likely to be lost in the future unless something changes. In order to increase the usage it was suggested that if the library could stop outside the school at the end of the school day (15:30) then there might be a chance of increasing the footfall.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Ask the Library service whether the mobile bus could stop opposite the school at the end of the school day	Parish Council	September 2013

5. Environment

5.1. Speed Limits

Do you consider the speed limits within the village are adequate



Although 59% of respondents considered the speed limits within the village were adequate there were a number of comments that the speed limits were not adhered to. The speed watch campaign that started in 2003 had some effect on speeding through the village and enabled the installation of permanent electronic speeding signs on Banbury Lane. Since the ending of the scheme in 2010 there is an apparent increase in the number of speeding motorists through the village although there are no statistics to confirm this.

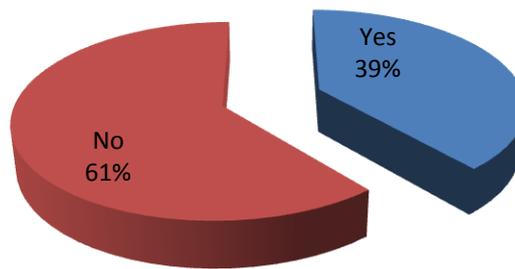
The speed watch initiative will recommence in September 2012 and villagers have been approached for volunteers.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Ask for Speedwatch volunteers to tackle speeding motorists	Speed watch coordinator	September 2012

5.2. Road Conditions

Nearly two thirds of villagers considered the roads and pavements were either too narrow or poorly maintained. There is nothing that can be done about the width of roads and pavements but the road maintenance can be tackled. Where road problems are reported, the County Council are generally very reactive and if the pothole meets the criteria set then local observation indicates a repair usually occurs within two weeks. To improve on the current perception there has to be better reporting of the issues by the people who notice them. If more than one person reports the issue then it is more likely to be resolved quickly and to everyone's satisfaction. To achieve better reporting there will be an awareness campaign through the village newsletter and web site over a 6 month period and all Parish Councilors' will be expected to take responsibility for monitoring specific roads in the village.

Are you happy with the roads and pavements within the village



Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Campaign for villagers to report all potholes; poor road surfaces and footpath issues to Street Doctor (0300 126 1000) or www.northamptonshire.gov.uk as soon as they are noticed.	Parish Council	October 2012

6. Leisure

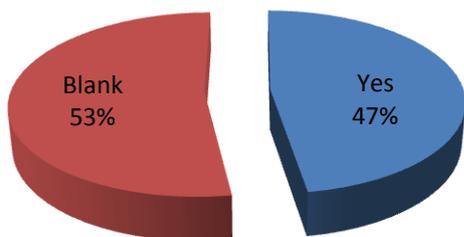
6.1. Village Play Area

The need for a village plan was first fully accepted at a meeting in the village hall when the school proposed closing the school grounds to stop an unacceptably high spate of vandalism during the summer of 2011. There were people at the meeting



who raised the issue of creating a children’s play area over 40 years ago and the village still did not have one. The public meeting also wanted to extend this to include the possibility of a club house as a possible replacement for the now closed public house where activities that are not suitable for the village hall could be located, for example skittles, darts, etc.

Is a childrens play area required



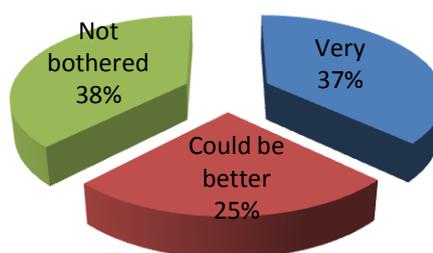
With only 28% of children at the primary school originating from the village one might expect very little support from the village however 47% of people believe a village play area is required.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Further investigate the location of a children’s play area; the cost of equipment and club house as found in Kislingbury.	Events Team	March 2013

6.2. Village Events

The village hall is used by different leisure groups or clubs every night of the week however only 37% of villagers are very happy with the leisure activities on offer and 25% thought it could be better. There needs to be further research into what people would like to see and then investigate how these entertainments may be organized and funded.

Are you happy with the current activities available within the village



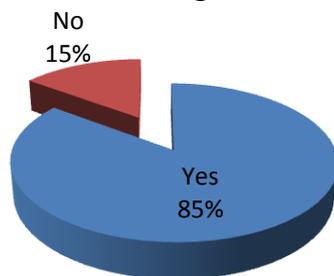
Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Set up a village events team funded by the Parish Council to explore the requirement for events; develop an annual events calendar; organize the approved events and try to use the facilities (village hall & church) to best effect. The team to make every effort for events to cover all costs.	Parish Council	September 2012

7. Information

The village newsletter is produced ten times a year and was originally paid for by the church but is now self funding with money from advertising going towards church funds. For many years it was compiled and copied by one person, Jane McCarthy, but she is now supported by Mr Phil Crowe who undertakes the compilation every other month. A small group of volunteers deliver the issues to their street or location.

The village web site has been running since January 2011 and had recorded 260,000 hits after 18 months. The village newsletter is also published on the web site.

Do you think a village information sheet would be useful for people moving into the village



Although the village does not experience a great deal of population turnover 85% of the village considered it essential that a village information sheet should be developed and made available both in paper format and online.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Seek volunteers to create a village information sheet and ask for contributions.	Newsletter editor	December 2012

8. Development

The last major development in the village (Mumford Drive, Ardens Grove, Grafton Way) was nearly 40 years ago.

The Housing Survey undertaken by South Northants Council in November 2010 concluded:

Ten households want to move in the next 5 years. The main reason given for needing to move was "To set up home for the first time".

Five households want to move within the parish of Rothersthorpe. Of these, four households have been identified as being in genuine housing need.

The recommended mix of affordable housing in Rothersthorpe is three homes for rent and one home as intermediate (e.g. New Build Home/Buy/Shared Ownership) as follows:

2 x 2 bedroom flats (rent)

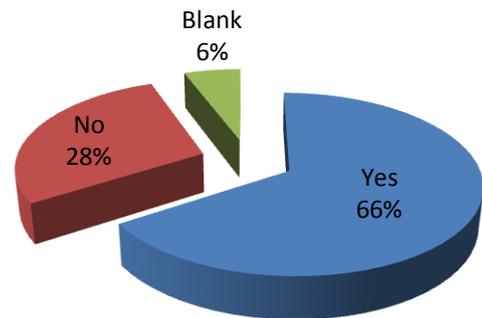
1 x 3 bedroom house (rent)

1 x 3 bedroom house (shared ownership).

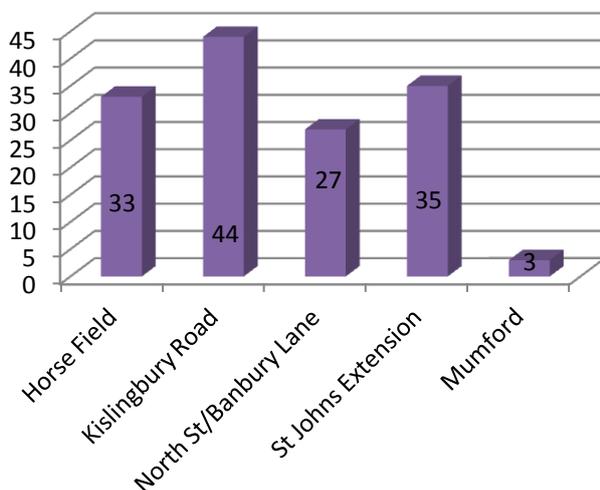
This recommendation needs to be pursued.

With two thirds of villagers in favour of small developments there is a clear indication that if sensitively located this would be of considerable benefit to the village and ensure the future of the community, its school and other amenities.

Would you be in favour of further small developments within the village? (less than 5 properties)



Where would you consider the best location for growth



The majority of villagers favoured development along Kislingbury Road and this is in line with a decision taken at a Parish Council meeting in 2011. The preferred site identified would be in line with existing housing.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Explore the possibility of creating affordable housing within the village to encourage younger families by liaising with South Northants Council planning department.	Parish Council	March 2013