



# PARISH PLAN 2006

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# INTRODUCTION

Government democracy in the United Kingdom continues to evolve with a move to greater devolution of decision-making to local levels, such as parish councils, together with a desire to give the local populace greater involvement and a greater say in the future development of their communities.

## What is a “Parish Plan”?

In line with the Government’s 2001 ‘Vital Villages’ initiative, Parish communities across the country are being encouraged to assess themselves and to develop and maintain a document which will:

- a) describe the unique make-up and character of their village,
- b) identify their needs and desires for improvement and future development and
- c) define a plan of action to achieve the objectives identified.

This document, known as ‘The Parish Plan’, is to be compiled in line with the ‘Guidance for Parish Plans’ issued by the Countryside Commission and, whilst the production of the Parish Plan is to be sponsored by the local Parish Council and is to be funded by Government grant via the District Council, it is a key requirement that the Parish Plan is compiled by the local community and not by the local government.

This Parish Plan, being the result of analysis of detailed inputs from the parish community, provides:

- a) a requirement and mandate for actions to be taken by local government and other agencies,
- b) an authoritative basis for local government decision making (for example when planning applications or development proposals are being considered or investments are to be made)
- c) a defence against inappropriate, centrally imposed change, and
- d) factual justification to support grant aid and other social investment funding applications.

## How was this Parish Plan compiled?

Following an open ‘parish meeting’ attended by members of the general community and representatives of the various village organisations, a Parish Plan Steering Committee was formed from those who volunteered. This Steering Committee, comprising 10 members, commenced work in early 2005.

The Steering Committee itself, using the skills and facilities of its members, designed, wrote and published the survey questionnaires to address matters appropriate to our village, managed the issue and collection of surveys, developed methodologies for the analysis of the response data, processed the survey responses and designed, wrote and published this resulting Parish Plan.

Two general surveys were undertaken, one called the ‘Parish Survey’ which addressed the demographics of the community and the other the ‘Issues Questionnaire’, both of which were issued to each household in the Parish. In addition a separate ‘Young Persons Questionnaire’ was issued to those aged 11 to 17 years.

Any survey is only as good as the information collected, thus, in order to encourage as many residents as possible to complete and return the forms, a decision was made that they should be delivered and collected personally by members of the Steering Committee. In the event the Parish Survey return was some 70% and the Issues Questionnaire near 60%, with, in addition, 44 Young Persons separately contributing their individual views, a very gratifying result.

The Steering Committee obtained a full grant of just over £1000, via Uttlesford District Council, which has funded the core printing costs for both the issued survey forms and the published Parish Plan. Other incidental materials and copying were funded by the Parish Council. All Steering Committee members (see Acknowledgements) donated their time, effort, computing facilities and materials free of charge.

# BIRCHANGER VILLAGE

## The Historical Context

### Saxon Origins

The village of Birchanger has its origin in a post-Roman Saxon settlement of 5th and 6th centuries. Indeed, the name of the Parish derives from two Saxon words meaning 'birch tree' (or, more probably, 'beech tree') covered 'place' which refers to the wooded hill upon which the Parish Church of St. Mary's and the centre of the Village now stand. Whilst this hill may seem gentle to us it is, nonetheless, one of the highest points in the local area and that, together with the plentiful supply of wood, provided a good settlement site in those times. Later, in the 9th century, Birchanger fell under the Danelaw as part of the uneasy peace agreement between King Alfred and the Danish invader Guthram.

### A Domesday Village

Birchanger or Bicangra is listed in the Domesday Survey of 1086 under the Hundred of Uttlesford with Takely and Stansted and reads "Bicangra was held by Horolf in the time of King Edward (the Confessor) in 1046. Now Tascalin the priest holds it in almone of the King..... There is woodlands for 28 swine, 5 acres of meadow and 1 mill." Another entry gives its extent as "2 hides (240 acres) and 1 manor". There is also reference to 2 ploughs with their associated oxen, 6 other cattle, 2 horses and 36 goats on 6 acres of meadow. These figures imply a community of some 25 to 30 persons, who would have paid allegiance to the manor, at a time when the population of the nearest major town, St Albans, was only some 200.

### The Manor of Birchanger

Birchanger Manor, with the Manor House known to have been located near the existing Church, had, at the survey of 1086, been given to the Abbey of Saint Valery in Picardy. This Abbey had a small Priory, founded in the reign of Henry I at Takeley and the Prior who resided in it was the Procurator General of Saint Valery Abbey and Collector for all their lands in England. The Manor of Birchanger was confirmed as a Monastery by Henry II but was seized by Edward III during his wars with France. It remained in the possession of the Crown until 1391 when it was granted to William of Wykeham for the endowment of New College, Oxford, which was founded in 1379. The Warden and Scholars of New College from then on leased the Manor collecting feudal dues and periodically holding a Manor Court to settle local disputes. New College remained 'Lord of the Manor' of Birchanger for nearly

500 years until they sold out in 1883. However, vestiges of New College's ownership of the manor still remain in the form of a right to be involved in the selection of candidates to the 'Living' of St Mary's Church.

### Historic Buildings



*The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin*

The oldest building in Birchanger is St. Mary's Church, built of flint rubble with dressings of limestone and clunch, which dates from the Saxo-Norman period of 1000 to 1199 AD. However, there are also many classic and historic domestic buildings some of which have parts of their construction dating from the 14th and 15th centuries. These include the old village farmhouses of Duck End farm, Sion House (originally Stansted Mill Farm), and Birchanger Hall farm, together with houses such as Centuries and Old Cottage, that were probably



*Willow Thatch*

originally terraces of very small cottages that have become combined into single homes more appropriate to our more affluent living. Also there are other houses such as Spider Cottage, Willow Thatch and Moorswood which have changed and evolved around ancient core structures, prompted by both caring development and disaster recovery, over the years.



*Moorswood*



*Duck End Farm*

## **Agriculture and Industry**

From Saxon times Birchanger has been a farming community with large farms developing around the farmhouses identified above. Two Mills processed grain from the farms and, later as transport links improved, grain found its way to the brewing and distilling industry that grew to feed the London market. However, by the late 1800s farming could not support the whole village and the Brickworks established in the Bradley Common area provided welcome employment feeding the Victorian demand for new building. Throughout the 20th century the sources of employment moved gradually further afield as local jobs declined.

## **Further Historical Information**

If you would like further, more detailed, information about Birchanger, together with photographs and reference documents, please access the Archive on the Village web site (<http://www.birchanger.com>).



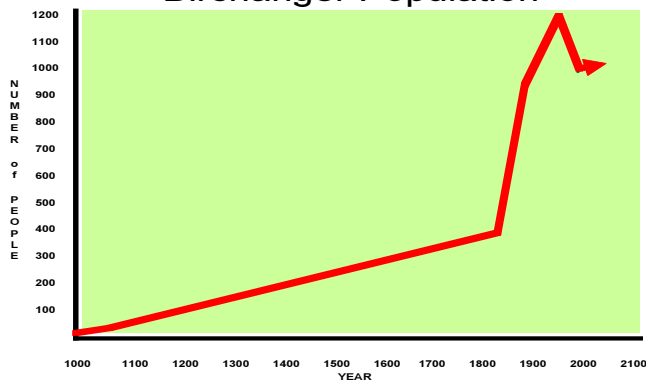
***The Birchanger Website & Magazine Banner***

# DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

## The Shape of our Community

In order to establish a baseline understanding of our Community makeup, the Steering Committee issued an anonymous Survey form to every household in the parish. Of the 325 survey forms distributed 225 were returned representing a near 70% success rate which is a tremendous result (other parishes have reported less than 30%) and is a tribute to the residents of Birchanger who clearly care about their village and its environs. The survey returns and the statistical analysis are held by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

**Birchanger Population**



*The Population of Birchanger over the Years*

### Housing

From the Survey we now know that 82% of residents live in houses (as opposed to flats etc) and that 88% (a high proportion) of all dwellings are owner-occupied. This is clearly a sign of the affluence of modern times, but it does indicate that there are few homes available for those who cannot afford to buy. It would be interesting to see how this compares with 50 years ago when a significant proportion of village properties would have been council owned and rented or farm labour tied-cottages.

### Employment

Our area is often classified as “London commuter belt” comprising “dormitory villages” occupied by London workers. In fact our Survey shows that 48% of residents travel less than 10 miles to work, whilst just under 30% travel between 10 and 30 miles. Therefore, more than three quarters of Birchanger residents travel less than 30 miles to work. Bearing in mind that we generally think of commuters as travelling by train, the survey also shows that over 70% of residents travel to work by car and only just over 6% by train.. Thus we must be careful to ensure that local government does not erroneously generalise in its classification of Birchanger and that local public services and facilities are provided to support a village that is very much more than a commuter’s dormitory.

### Education

To further illustrate Birchanger Community’s “local” attitude, 90% of primary school children travel less than 5 miles to school (presumably the majority to the village school – a very successful primary school that is a tremendous asset). In addition, according to the survey, all secondary school students travel less than 5 miles to school. We seem, therefore, to be in the very fortunate position of being able to access sufficient, appropriate, good-quality secondary schooling within our immediate area.



*Birchanger C of E Primary School*

### Environment

Birchanger residents make good use of their open spaces with footpaths, bridleways and woods being particularly favoured. The only disappointment seems to be the negligible use of allotments. Only 3 residents indicated that they make use of this Parish Council-provided facility. It would be sad if the lack of use caused this amenity to be lost to residents but if it is not used then presumably it is not wanted?

### Healthcare

Nearly everybody has used their doctor (90%) or dentist (80%) at least once during the twelve months prior to the Survey. Of these over 90% use doctors within the local area whereas only 65% use local dentists. The Survey shows that many residents (34%) use dental services outside (and some significant number are far outside) the local area. This possibly reflects the growing national difficulty in registering with any dental practice, particularly if you seek NHS care, or perhaps it is just that people choose to remain loyal to their dentist even when they move.

## Shopping

It will come as no surprise to learn that 78% of us use out-of-town Supermarkets for our shopping although some 45% still use Bishops Stortford town centre. It will also be no surprise that 95% travel to the shops by car. Such are the times, particularly with out-of-town Supermarkets being situated, er, out of town! Only a very small number, 5.5%, have so far gone down the home delivery route but another survey in say 5 years time (if villagers can face the prospect!) may show this increasing exponentially as broadband Internet use continues it's inevitable march forward.

## Community, Social and Entertainment

Village community facilities, clubs and associations are well used, with near half of us (45%) using the Three Willows Pub and 32% using the Birchanger Social Club. Church attendance is claimed by 18%, which probably again reflects a sign of the times. However, whilst these responses do not imply constant or regular attendance at any of these gathering places, they do confirm that Birchanger does have active community gatherings.



For dissemination of news and information, an impressive 67% read the Village Magazine, which is a tribute to the volunteers who produce and distribute the magazine, but only a disappointing 12% use the Village website (<http://www.birchanger.com>). This may be due to ignorance of the presence of said website and it is to be hoped that the Survey will have alerted residents to it's existence.



Birchanger Village Fete 2006 - Held in the Three Willows garden

## Transport and Traffic

It is, no doubt, just coincidence that the two most contentious factors, if anecdotal evidence is anything to go by, causing concern and friction amongst residents, Transport and Traffic and Law and Order, were at the end of the Survey.

According to the Survey there are 414 cars amongst the 225 respondents, which is just under two per household. 95% of households have off-road parking available yet 54% report that they experience problems with other vehicles parked in the road. If nearly all residents have off-road parking, how come over half have problems with other people parking in the road? Could this be visitors or off airport fly parking? Or, maybe more likely, there is only room for one car off-road with the other parked in the road.

[Following on from the Survey, snapshot observational evidence would suggest that only some 5% of households do park their cars in the road. This would not seem significant, but then as villagers will well know, a small amount of in-road and on-pavement parking in a small handful of village sites can cause problems to many village residents.]

## Law and Order

First the bad news. Yes there have been problems with crime and anti-social behaviour in the Village, but the good news is that only 7.5% have been victims of crime and only 10% victims of anti-social behaviour. Obviously if you are part of these statistics, the relatively low numbers are not much comfort. But, bearing in mind that we live in a village which is close to large towns with a "getaway" motorway not far away, perhaps these figures are actually encouraging. Interestingly, given the level of expressed concerns, only just over a quarter of households are involved in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.



# THE YOUNG PERSON'S VIEW

## The Next Generation Villagers

Young people between the ages of 10 and 17 were invited to contribute to this Parish Plan via their own anonymous survey questionnaire. In all some 44 young people returned the questionnaire and most had produced careful, well thought out, responses which showed just how much and how seriously our young people care about the future of Birchanger and the environment. The survey returns and the analysis record are held by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

### Social and Community Issues

Over 50% of the young respondents use the parish magazine to discover what is happening in the village, but only 3 have ever used the website. Information about the village is mainly gathered from their parents, friends and via the school.

Suggestions for improvement include the use of more brightly coloured leaflets advertising events, a Village notice board at the school, a dedicated Youth spot on the website, more frequent publication of the Village Magazine and a heartfelt request that adults actually talk to them about what is happening.

### Community Buildings and Facilities

The majority of the Young Persons responding attend or make use of the School, the Church, the Church Hall, and the Recreation Ground.

Regarding the latter, it is of note that the youth of the village recently took an active part in defining the need and raising funds to install their own "Teen-Shelter", upon the Recreation Ground. This shelter now provides a meeting place facility for ongoing generations.

Over 50% attend the Village Fetes thus involving themselves in village community activities. Both the visiting Youth Bus and the Telephone Box (despite its vandalised state) are used by 40% of the respondents, and some 40% also are members of the Cubs, Scouts, or Brownies. However, only 7 (16%) take part in sport facilities in the village, as the sports clubs they wanted to join do not exist.

Many new Youth activities were requested which cover a wide variety of sporting activities, drama, dance and youth clubs.



*The Recreation Ground & the new Teen-Shelter*

Thinking of others, the respondents suggest that there should be more facilities for the disabled, including a tarmac entrance to the recreation ground, a designated disabled play area and more general disabled facilities in the village. Interestingly, nearly everyone thought that the Church and the War Memorial were important to the Village.

### Crime, Policing and Safety Issues

Over 50% think crime is a problem in Birchanger. They are very concerned with the vandalism, broken equipment and broken glass on the recreation ground. They said that, whilst in the general view of the village it was the youngsters who were to be blamed for this vandalism, they, the youngsters, were aware that it was adults who were actually responsible for the damage to the play equipment.

There were also concerns expressed about anti social behaviour, drugs, speeding and graffiti. Some of the respondents have been victims of anti-social behaviour, but most of those have never told anybody about it.

Some 16 respondents (36%) think there are safety issues in Birchanger. To address this they suggest that there is a need for more street lights and a clamp down on off road biking and vandalism. Other concerns are traffic, especially on the blind bends, lack of pavements, icy roads and litter. To address these issues they would like to see safety mirrors on the bends, more pavements, a zebra crossing, speed cameras, warning signs, and grit bins. Over 50% want a reduction in traffic in the lane.



## Recycling and Resources

Most respondents participate in recycling schemes, and there were many suggestions for additional facilities, including specific facilities for carpets, toys, mobile phones and car batteries. Nearly a third want their households to participate in energy conservation schemes, including wind and solar power schemes, water recycling and better insulation.

## Natural Habitats and Pollution

Over half of the respondents want all the woods around Birchanger preserved. Three quarters use the footpaths.

Twenty of the young respondents (45%) think pollution is a problem in the village with cars, rubbish, kerosene odours, noise and the airport in general being considered the key sources.

## Housing and Industry

Over 50% of the respondents do not want any new housing to be built in the village. However, 11 (25%) do want some new housing with a variety of suggestions for locations - but all make a plea that new houses should not be built on the fields and green belt land.

Only 20 (45%) want any industrial development, but these include 11 requests for a shop and post office. Generally the opinion is that any industrial development should be along the lane by the Ambulance Station and Hotel.

## Transport

The majority of the young respondents rely heavily upon lifts in cars from their parents and friends. Many do travel in other ways and 25 (57%) of these young people own a bike but they request the provision of cycle paths to facilitate using their bikes more often. Considering public transport, 21 (48%) use the bus and 7 (16%) use the train. Those who use public services express some dissatisfaction and generally want cleaner trains, more buses - especially later at night - with a more reliable service and better displayed bus timetables together with a bus shelter at the stop by the Social Club.



*The Village bus service*



## The Youth Bus

It's visits have given our young people a much needed social focus, providing a source of independent advice and guidance as well as enthusing a spirit of self-help.

# COMMUNITY ISSUES

## What's Right and What's Wrong

The following three sections of this Parish Plan are based upon the responses to the Issues Questionnaire which was responded to by near 60% of community households and sought to identify the views, issues, wants and desires of the respondents for future of their Parish. The survey returns and analysis record are held by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Whilst the Issues Questionnaire divided its questions into Environment, Social and Employment sections it was found that the analysis of responses makes more logical sense and provides a clearer indication of requirements when grouped and considered under Community, Environment and Development headings.

### Local Democracy

It would seem that Birchanger's various democratic organisations operate reasonably openly and successfully with over 60% of respondents considering their involvement by the Parish Council to be Good or Satisfactory. Similarly the Social club scored 56%, Parochial Church Council 47%, Birchanger School 51% and Friends of St Mary's 51%. Whilst many chose not to answer these questions – possibly because they did not wish to be involved in these organisations anyway – only some 5% consider that these organisations do not involve them adequately.

### Access to Information

As in any active community there are multiple sources of information for those wishing to find out what is going on in Birchanger. Key amongst these is the Village Magazine which is totally independent and is compiled, edited and distributed free to every household in the parish by a group of volunteers funded only by donations and advertising. Many local organisations, including the Parish Council, are regular contributors to this magazine.



### The Birchanger Village Magazine

A massive 83% of respondents use the Village Magazine as an information source whilst 46% get information from the Parish Notice boards provided by the Parish Council, 36% use the notice boards in the Social Club, 28% get information from Parish Council publications, 14% from the School and 11% from the Church. However, only a surprisingly small 10% obtain information from the Village Website (<http://www.birchanger.com>).

When asked what could be done to keep them better informed about Village events, facilities and issues, the predominant response was to suggest the inclusion of more information in the Village Magazine with additions such as an inventory of Village clubs and societies with contacts, together with regular club news reports, bus timetables and a more comprehensive 'coming events' calendar. The only negative comment about the Village Magazine was that several readers found that late delivery meant some information was out of date when they got it. Other suggestions for improvement are for larger Parish Notice Boards with space for a 'Year Planner' of village events and for more use of the Village Website by local clubs and groups (does the lack of this content affect user volume?).

## Community Services

From the replies to this questionnaire it is obvious that Health associated services affect more respondents than any other of the public services with some 70% using Doctor/Health Centre services, 64% using Hospitals and 37% using Emergency Medical services. In the field of Education some 19% use Nursery, 32% use Primary and 26% Secondary Schools. 2% use Childcare services and 6% use Homecare services.

Whilst 61% of respondents consider that Birchanger is well served by community health, education and care services, a worrying 16% are not in agreement. The majority of adverse comments complain about the lack of a Doctor's surgery in the Village since its provision in the Church Hall was terminated by the Practice at the end of last year. Linked to this are complaints about the difficulty experienced in accessing the Health Centre and in making appointments.

Some suggestions to alleviate these problems include the provision of a visiting Doctor service for the infirm and elderly, but most recommend that the Village Surgery be re-instated in the Church Hall. One very helpful input was that the Williamson Pharmacy provides a collection and delivery prescription service to the Village.

A few respondents complain about a slow response to calls for the Ambulance service (especially as there is an Ambulance Station in the Village) and there are concerns expressed about the distance to the nearest A & E.

## Public Transport Facilities

Surprisingly, whilst elsewhere there was an 'anti-Airport' response related to noise and pollution, 54% of Birchanger residents do use Stansted Airport and, possibly more surprisingly, these numbers are greater than the 39% who use Taxis, the 38% who use the Railway and the 27% who use the Bus (just half the number who use the airport!).

The low usage of the Bus service seems to indicate that although there is a daytime hourly service, the timetable cannot properly address the travel needs of Village residents who tend to use private Cars in preference to the Bus. The residents indicated that a more frequent Bus service is needed earlier in the morning and later in the evening if it is to be used for to/from work travel and post-work recreation trips rather than just mid-day shopping trips. Suggestions were made for smaller buses and direct service to Stansted Airport as well as more publicity about schemes such as Dial and Ride.

## Crime and Policing

Residents seem to be equally divided in their view of Crime issues within the village with 41% believing that there is a problem and 43% perceiving no problem. Amongst those who see a problem the overwhelming complaint (38%) is of the level of vandalism - be it damage to property, street furniture or parked cars - and there is also a general (16%) perceived threat from "gangs of youths" from outside the village. A lesser minority complain of the level of petty theft and burglary, drug abuse, traffic speeds through the village and the illegal use of vehicles in the woods and on the footpaths and bridleways.

Nearly half of respondents complain of an inadequate level of Policing whilst only a fifth are happy. The main cause of complaint is the lack of any Police visibility in the Village. Residents would like to see higher frequency, random, Police presence especially at evenings and weekends, when most incidents seem to occur, rather than the more usual mid-weekday visits when all is quiet.

## Public Safety

Some 65% of residents are concerned about safety hazards in the Village. Most concerns are about traffic speeds (37%) and other traffic issues caused by the nature of Birchanger Lane - ie the amount of in-road and on-pavement parking in the Lane (41%), the lack of a continuous pavement (6%) especially as this occurs at the most dangerous parts of the Lane and the dangers caused by the blind bends at either end of the village and the blind junction with Tot Lane (5%). Also near 9% are concerned about the number of young persons using skateboards in the road. Other concerns are about safety at the junction with the B1383, not only for vehicles having to cross a poorly visible fast moving traffic stream but, probably a bigger safety problem, the lack of any safe crossing for pedestrians where there is a bus stop. Yet more concerns are expressed about the size of the bus that transits the village (especially regarding its negotiation of the double bends), the restriction of vision caused by overgrown hedges near the bends in the Lane and very strong views are expressed about the dangers posed and damage caused by HGV's negotiating, or attempting to negotiate, our very restricted village lane (it is noted that these complaints are mainly related to the Duck End part of the Lane).

Suggestions and requests for improvements include every kind of Traffic Calming Measure such as "Vehicles In Middle Of Road" warning signs, Speed Cameras, single track Traffic Light control at the Bradley Common junction; double-yellow lines to stop in-road or on-pavement parking at the appropriate places; a ban on

HGV's except for access to the Village or a LGV-only weight restriction; more Speed Limit signs and even a new 20 or 25mph speed limit. Other improvement measures suggested include regular hedge trimming at the Cottage Guest House; permanent closure of Tot Lane; improvements to the junction with the B1383 to include a safe pedestrian crossing to access the bus stops; mirrors at the double bends; and the provision of a continuous footpath, wide enough for pushchairs and wheelchairs, the full length of Birchanger Lane.

## Community Buildings and Facilities

Relatively few residents (only some 30% according to the Leisure Amenity response below) make personal use of the Village Community Buildings and Facilities, nonetheless a very high proportion of respondents consider these buildings and facilities to be assets that contribute to our Village life and character. 84% support the Three Willows pub, 81% the Social Club, 84% the Church Hall, 83% the School, 81% the Church, 85% the Recreation Ground, 66% the Allotments, 66% the Telephone Box, 79% the Scout Hall and 4 respondents added the Post Boxes to the list.



*The Social Club*

Again, while only some 30% claim to use any of these facilities, this must be through personal choice as 80% confirm that they are readily accessible to them, against only 6% who believe that they are not. The greatest complaint was the lack of information on how to book, how to join, who to contact and what's on with suggestions for this information to be included in the Village Magazine. Other complaints related to the lack of Disabled toilets in pub and club, the non-child friendly area in the club and child ban in the pub.

## Facilities for the Disabled

Only 1 respondent replied that they make use of Disabled Facilities in the Village and 86% confirmed that they do not use any such facilities. However, several respondents are concerned enough about this matter to provide comments about the lack of facilities for the disabled in the Village.

Key complaints include the lack of Disabled Toilet facilities at the Three Willows and the Social Club, the two major social venues in the Village, and the lack of Pavement provisions. On this latter subject 5 respondents cite the lack of dropped edges to the pavements for wheelchair/pushchair access and 6 cited the lack of pavements, wide enough for wheelchairs, along Birchanger Lane at the dangerous blind bend and other corners and at each end of the village. One respondent even suggests that, in the absence of pavements, there should be "Pram/Wheelchair in Road" warning signs through the Village. Other suggestions are for a subsidised taxi service for medical appointments, the provision of low level access buses, improved access to the Church and more benches along the village for people to sit and rest.



*The Church Hall*

## Leisure Amenities

Only 30% of respondents claim to make use of Village leisure amenities whilst 39% definitely do not. Of those who do enjoy these amenities some 79% make use of Birchanger Social Club, 21% the Three Willows pub, 15% the Church Hall, 8% the Scout Hall, a further 10% make use of the Bowls and Over 60s clubs.

When asked what other amenities they would like, 24 respondents cited a Shop/Post Office (one suggesting that the Social Club should provide it) and 7 cited a Youth Club. Others identified Dance Classes, Keep Fit, a Drama Group, a Table Tennis club, a Swimming Pool and even non-leisure items such as a Doctors Surgery and a Police Station. It is notable that some of these activities are already available through clubs operating in the Church Hall so maybe more publicity is needed in the Village.



*The Three Willows*

# ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

## What to Keep, What to Change

The following section is based upon an analysis of the relevant responses to the Issues Questionnaire which was responded to by near 60% of community households. The survey returns and analysis record are held by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

### Public Historical Sites and Heritage Assets

Birchanger is and always has been a small rural agricultural and residential village and it, thus, does not have a wealth of public heritage sites. However, St. Mary's Church, Birchanger, dating from the Saxo-Norman period (1000/1199 AD) is one of only 250 Anglo-Saxon churches that survive in Britain today. Within the Church is a unique August Gern organ dating from 1898 that has not suffered any modification or replacement since it was installed – and it still works on Sundays. In the churchyard is the Village War Memorial that was established by public donations following WW1 and has recently been renovated.

76% of respondents consider that these assets are currently in good/satisfactory condition and an overwhelming 86% wish that these assets should continue to be maintained.



*The War Memorial*

There is some confusion, however, when it comes to funding this maintenance with 44% citing the Diocese, near 40% citing the Parish Council and near 45% citing voluntary support contributions. Typically these views split clearly between the Diocese funding the Church and voluntary funding of the War Memorial with Parish Council funding across both.

In addition to the above Public sites, Birchanger Village includes several architecturally and historically important domestic buildings. These are generally considered to form a key part of the village's character and a high priority given by the respondents to the preservation and protection of these buildings and their settings.

### Landscape and Natural Habitats



*Horse on a Bridleway*

Birchanger Village is surrounded by Green Belt land in both farm land and woods. The many public footpaths and bridleways that criss-cross the parish are on privately owned land but are maintained by the County Council. The two major areas of woodland are Birchanger Wood, which is run on behalf of the public by the Birchanger Wood Trust, and Digby Wood, which is privately owned. In addition to these natural areas the parishioners of Birchanger can avail themselves of the public amenities of the Recreation Ground and Allotments that are on Glebe Land rented and maintained by the Parish Council and funded by local precept. The Parish Council owns the Village Green although little amenity remains other than its use as an off-road parking area. In the centre of the Village a significant open grassed area is provided by the sports field owned and operated by Birchanger Social Club.

A significant 71% of respondents regard that the natural amenity of their village must be preserved with their priorities ranging from 95% for the woods, 18% for the farmland, 13% for the recreation ground, 12% for the footpaths and bridleways down to 4% for the sports field. Interestingly some 7% would like to preserve the allotments which attract only 3 interested users.

On the subject of ‘who should pay?’ those who wish these amenities to be maintained provide a firm 66% mandate to Parish and District Councils to use precept funding. However, there is also a 13% recognition of private owner responsibility.

## Road Traffic

[See also the comments in the section on Public Safety]

Birchanger is a linear village built along Birchanger Lane which is of country lane dimensions with two blind double bends but it also has long straight sections that allow traffic to speed. Vehicles parked in the Lane can, because of its narrow dimensions and blind bends, severely restrict its width down to that of a single track road forcing traffic to pass on the wrong side of the road and this problem can be increased by off-airport Fly-Parking.

In addition, Birchanger Lane and its even narrower feeder road, Tot Lane, provide a cut-through between the Stansted B1383 and the A120/M11 roundabout. Particularly at this time, whilst the B1383 is disrupted by the strengthening work at Pesterford Bridge, there can be significant “rat-run” traffic transiting the village. The narrow road, tight bends and parked vehicles make the Lane very unsuitable for HGVs to negotiate with many having become stuck, particularly at Duck End.

It is not known specifically why so many HGVs should wish to transit Birchanger Village but it is suspected that modern Satellite Navigation systems may see the Lane as the direct route from M11 to Stansted, or maybe the drivers are mistakenly seeking Birchanger Industrial Estate.

Road traffic is thus one of the hottest issues in the Village with 73% of respondents unhappy with the volume and speed (particularly speed) of traffic transiting their Village with only 18% considering it not to be a problem. Those who are concerned are very forthcoming and very imaginative in their suggestions for improvement with 42 (32%) requesting the installation of Speed Bumps, 18 seeking either a complete or partial “double yellow” parking ban in the Lane, 14 asking for “Slow Down” lights, 9 suggesting Birchanger should become a “gated village” with width restriction pinch points, 7 want Tot Lane restricted to one-way or closed completely, 9 want

Speed Cameras and 4 even want the speed limit reduced to 20 mph. 5 ask for a continuous pavement through the Village.

The residents exhibit a split response over the question of introducing blanket parking restrictions with a Residents Parking scheme with 42% for and 37% against. Key conditions expressed by those in support were that there should be no associated charges for residents and that there should be an authorised visitor provision. A cynical concern expressed by many was that such a scheme would not work as it would not be policed and 10 respondents specifically request more action to stop the problem of off-airport Fly-Parking in the Village.



*A Sign of our Times*

Asked if Heavy Goods Vehicles cause a problem in the Village over 47% said YES and 33% NO. Of those who see a problem 11 cite the physical damage caused to kerbs, hedges and verges through the Village and 3 claim damage to parked vehicles. To correct this problem 26 request that the Lane be made “HGV Access Only”, a further 29 request that the Lane be signed with a LGV Weight Limit and 7 want a smaller, more suitable Village bus – it is of note that the request for these restrictions comes from some 35% of the respondents which is a high proportion considering the number of households directly exposed to the Lane.

## Pollution

When asked if the Village suffered from pollution 56% responded YES and 30% NO and perhaps unsurprisingly, Stansted Airport related factors were highest on the list of causes of pollution.



*Motorway and Airport viewed from the Village*

Air pollution is top of the list with 50 respondents identified aviation fuel vapour as having a significant impact on air quality in the village. Noise pollution is also a major concern with different sources dependent upon the respondents position in the Village. 22 respondents complained of aircraft noise, with another 20 complaining of helicopter noise and 15 citing motorway noise. Light pollution due to the airport is identified by 7 respondents. Other lower level pollution issues identified were litter, horse and dog fouling and fly tipping of rubbish.

## Resources Conservation and Recycling

Some 64% of respondents believe that energy conservation should be promoted in the Village against only 12% against. Those supporting conservation showed a very keen interest in home insulation, solar and wind energy systems but were concerned about perceived costs. They, therefore, requested that the Parish Council should circulate information about appropriate grant schemes. There was some interest shown in water recycling but again there was a need for more information and some reported that more water could be saved if the water main below Bradley Common was replaced. One interesting comment suggested a safe crossing be provided over the A120 as this busy trunk road now effectively prohibits access from the Village to Bishop's Stortford by walkers and cyclists forcing all to use motor transport.

Birchanger residents are already well versed in waste handling and recycling. Some 89% of respondents make use of Council refuse collection and 73% use the recycling collection service. In addition 72% use the Bottle Bank by the Social Club, 65% use the Paper Bank and 56% the Can Bank. To augment these facilities 29 residents requested that the Council should provide a Garden Refuse-Green Waste recycling service and 16 would like a Clothing/Shoe recycling collection. In addition there are requests for recycling of more types of plastic, for more litter bins, for more visits by the council skip and for a composting station at the Allotments.

## Other Environmental Issues

Whilst Stansted Airport is outside of the Village environs and was not specifically addressed within the Survey and Questionnaire, it is only to be expected that having a major International Airport, especially one with expressed ambitions to become the largest airport in the world, as a neighbour does have an affect upon the residents and the environment of Birchanger. Currently the Airport affects parts of the Village with a level of atmospheric, noise and light pollution and with some off-airport fly-parking problems but has not directly impinged upon the basic character and community of the Village. However, a number of residents did use their Parish Plan responses to highlight their great concerns about the impact the Airport development plans may have upon their Village in the future. They generally do not want the Village to change and are thus concerned that the Airport development proposals are unspecific and do not clearly identify their effect upon Birchanger.

# DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

## How Our Village Should Evolve

A key objective of this Parish Plan is to provide, based upon the expressed views of the whole community, an authoritative guide to any new Housing or Industrial or other physical development within the parish and its surrounding areas in terms of its acceptability, quantity, character, design and location.

Over 60% of Birchanger households responded to the Issues Questionnaire providing a very strong and clear record of the views and desires of the parishioners with regard to the future development and evolution of their village. These views and desires, as summarized in this section of the Parish Plan, provide the Planning committee of the Parish Council with a mandate to promote the residents' wish for their parish to retain its character and to remain a rural village settlement into the future. This mandate also provides the Parish Council with guidance to identify potential development sites and infrastructure requirements and to promote good design practice in all redevelopments and extensions to existing properties. The survey returns and analysis record are held by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

### Housing

The questionnaire revealed that some 69% of Birchanger respondents do not see a need for more housing and are generally opposed to development of any kind.

Some 25% do accept that additional houses may be required. However, if such development does have to take place, the primary concern expressed by these respondents is about the size of such development. Those who provided information on 'acceptable' development believe that any increase in housing in the parish greater than 10% will adversely affect the village's rural character and the majority of respondents indicated that they do not want Birchanger to become joined with neighboring urban communities (e.g coalescence with Stansted or Bishop's Stortford). Thus, when asked where any such housing development should take place, the predominant view was that it should be limited to infill along Birchanger Lane.

When asked about the need for Affordable Housing 50% of respondents said NO (reasons given include the village being too small, lacking infrastructure facilities and being unpopular with young adults), whilst 34% said YES to allow young local villagers to remain in the village. If it were decided that an Affordable Housing Development was needed then only 28% would object but supporters would want conditions applied to ensure that such developments gave priority to deserving existing villagers.

### Business, Industry and Employment

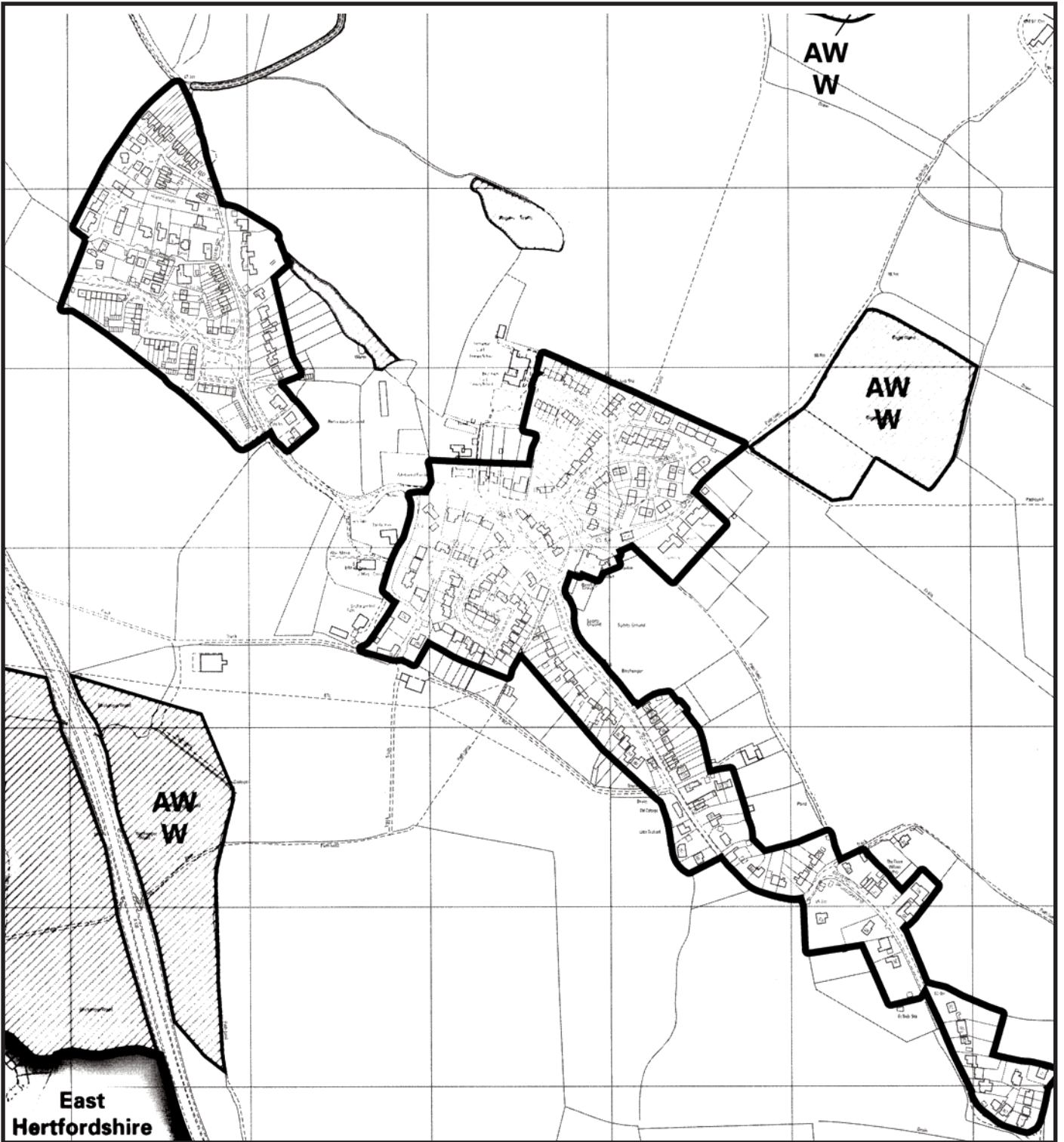
Birchanger Industrial Estate and Parsonage Farm Industrial Estate both lie outside the Parish and should not conflict with or affect the environs of Birchanger Village itself. Within the village there are some light industrial units at Duck End and there appears to be a growing amount of working from home in the form of "home office", home run businesses or very light 'garden shed' industry. Also, in addition to the two Hotels that lie at either end of Birchanger Lane, there is a rapidly growing Bed and Breakfast industry throughout the Village which is being driven by the demand for overnight accommodation generated by nearby Stansted Airport.



*The Cottage Guest House*

When asked if there was a need for further industrial development in the parish an emphatic 81% of respondents said NO and, indeed, some 46% wished all industry to be excluded. However, there were indications that these negative views were related to larger commercial offices, warehousing, and engineering ventures. There are 10% who do see a need for more industry with suggestions for further development of the existing Parsonage Farm and Duck End sites or new development beside the Ambulance Station. However, some 56% of the respondents do not view any such industrial development as likely to provide employment benefit to the local villagers. Considering the nature of business that would be acceptable, there were 11 requests for the opening of a Shop/Newsagent and Post Office whilst others suggested a Computer Training Centre and a Health Centre.





Map of Birchanger showing Development Limits and Woods Boundaries

# VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

The concept of the Village Design Statement predates the Parish Plan initiative but is complimentary to it. The Village Design Statement is document, produced by the Parish Council as supplementary planning guidance, that records their assessment of the existing physical fabric and character of the village and how that built environment should evolve. By comparison the Parish Plan is a document, produced by members of the community, defining their needs and desires for improvement and future development of their village.

Birchanger Parish Council have not previously published their Village Design Statement but it is felt that, because both it and the Parish Plan form Birchanger's supplementary planning guidance to be adopted by Uttlesford District Council, it is appropriate to provide the Village Design Statement as detailed below:



*Birchanger Village's Typical Building Styles*

## BIRCHANGER VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

This document aims to give guidance and guidelines for any development within the Parish of Birchanger. It is the mandate of the Parish Plan Committee and the wish of Birchanger Parish Council that these guidelines be adopted by Uttlesford District Council when considering any planning applications.

### Parish Council Resolution

At the Annual Parish Meeting held on April 12th 2006 the following resolution was proposed and adopted by unanimous vote of the Parish: **“This Council rejects any further coalescence with neighbouring towns and villages and will endeavour to protect the remaining Green Belt surrounding the Village”**. In view of this mandating resolution, a primary consideration of any proposed development must be that it can only be acceptable if it is to take place within the authorised Village development limits.

## **Guidelines for Redevelopments and Alterations to existing buildings**

Almost every building whether old or new has at sometime been subjected to change. Changes may have been made to convert a building to fit the owners needs or tastes or to accommodate a change of use or the changing needs of the time. Failure to modernise can limit the usefulness of a building.

If the character of an area is to be retained the following guidelines for building redevelopment and alterations should be observed:

- Materials, components and styling should be original or of a sympathetic match to those on the existing building; (UDC and property owners) GEN2 H8
- Redeveloped or altered buildings should be in proportion to and closely match the existing building and should not dominate or spoil the perspective of the surroundings; (UDC and property owners) GEN2 H8
- Existing hedges and trees should be retained whenever possible and the use of hedges as opposed to fences should be encouraged; (UDC, BPC and property owners) GEN2, ENV3, ENV8
- Boundary walling and fencing in terms of height, width and suitable blends of materials should be in keeping with the surrounding area; (UDC and property owners) GEN2
- On more recent properties third storey development should in most cases be limited to dormers that retain existing rooflines. In the older areas such developments may be inappropriate; (UDC) GEN2 H8
- The conversion of front gardens to hard standing for the purposes of car parking needs to be discouraged. This is primarily a feature of scale. There will be cases where an extra parking place can be fitted in without changing the general appearance but the conversion of the whole of front gardens into parking lots can degrade the appearance of the immediate area and should be discouraged; (UDC and property owners) GEN2
- When adding security and communications devices including external lighting care should be taken not to clutter the building or encroach on someone else's domain. (Property owners) GEN2

## **Guidelines for New Construction**

The following are points for consideration:

- An attempt should be made to retain the style of the area and where lost regain it; (UDC, property owners and developers) GEN2
- There should be due consideration for safety. For example any development should pay due regard to safe access of traffic to sites. (UDC and developers) GEN1
- Construction styles: New construction should be in character with its part of the parish. New buildings should be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, materials shapes and styles and proportions. Styles traditional to the area would be appropriate in new developments; (UDC and developers) GEN2
- The setting of listed buildings should be retained. (UDC) ENV2
- Where a development includes low cost housing there should be consultation at an early stage to ensure that the low cost housing is of a similar style and appearance to the rest of the estate. It should also be ensured that the estate has been fully integrated to maximise the standard of life of residents; (UDC and housing associations) H11
- A discouragement of flat roofing in favour of pitched and tiled roofs would, in most parts of the Parish, enhance character. GEN2

- Hedges and trees: Existing hedges and trees should, whenever possible, be retained in new developments. When trees are retained they should be allowed room to develop to their full stature without putting surrounding buildings at risk. New plantings of hedgerows should include a mix of native species that are characteristic of a large number of Birchanger hedgerows and include hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, ash and holly; (UDC and developers) ENV3 & 8

- Informal open space, sports areas and associated facilities should be included in future developments to provide play areas within reasonable distance to the residences. Open spaces should include facilities for all age groups. (BPC and UDC) GEN2

## **Commercial and Industrial buildings**

Whilst it is not recommended that any form of industrialisation takes place within the village, the following is suggested as a basic set of guidelines for the design of commercial and industrial buildings that might be constructed in the parish at some future date if called upon by legislation:

- The type of activity to take place in the building should be appropriate to its location, for example, where commercial buildings are close to housing, there should not be escape of noise, light or chemical pollution. Commercial or Industrial development, other than home working or cottage industry, should not be permitted within a residential development nor directly adjacent to existing residential properties; GEN4, GEN5

- Careful consideration should be given to the type and volume of Industrial Traffic that would be required to service, or that would be operated by, the proposed development. The existing village access lanes are unsuitable for either high volume traffic or heavy vehicle traffic. Where heavy vehicle access is required the development should be sited near to a main road access; GEN1

- Buildings should preferably be used for purposes similar to those for which they were designed, change of use can result in unsightly additions and alterations that spoil the outline and can damage the surroundings. It would be better to find an alternative building than to make unsightly changes;

- The colour and texture of the buildings should be sympathetic to other local features; GEN2

- The building size, height, shape and external effects should fit easily on the site and not crowd out or overlook adjacent areas. Its use should not congest or obstruct the surrounding area; GEN2

- Peripheral requirements such as parking, servicing and deliveries should be addressed in the design; GEN2

- Screening should be to a good standard and where possible should use native trees and shrubs. Both winter and summer appearances should be considered; GEN2

- Unconventional designs should not be automatically rejected but their design should aim to enhance the area; GEN2

- If the building is in a prominent position and cannot be effectively screened, it should be constructed in a locally accepted style using materials similar to the existing local buildings as indicated above. (UDC, property owners and developers for all points in this section) GEN2

## **Planning Note**

As a point of policy Birchanger Parish Council will encourage the establishment of cottage industries but only where this can be done on appropriate sites and within Government Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). Birchanger Parish Council will encourage all forms of commerce, that are appropriate to a village environment, that will provide employment to parishioners, providing this can be done within Green Belt policy, countryside and other planning guidelines, and is situated on suitable sites with suitable access. Birchanger Parish Council will review areas within the parish that may be suitable for consideration as potential sites for some limited, strictly controlled, industrial units. Any consideration will be viewed with respect to the relevant PPG's and local Development Plans.

# THE BIG ISSUES

The following have been identified by the Parish Plan Steering Committee as the most important and most urgent issues identified by the residents of Birchanger. This list is in alphabetic order only.

## **Airport Issues**

Significant numbers complain of airport related Pollution of the Village:

- Air pollution due to aviation fuel vapour
- Noise pollution due to aircraft landing, taking off and on the ground
- Noise pollution due to over-flying helicopters
- Light pollution due to airport and airport parking area lighting

Concerns are also expressed about the many airport development plans being proposed. Villagers are clear in their views that any resulting airport development should not be allowed to cause further impact upon Birchanger Village's environment, character, green-belt land or woods.

## **Bus Service**

Villagers of all ages point out that the schedule of the current Village Bus Service does not support its use for travel to and from work or college (especially by those seeking to catch trains in Bishop's Stortford), nor does it allow evening travel to and from Bishop's Stortford to attend the cinema, clubs or other leisure activities. There is also suggestion that, with the Airport being the largest local employment site, it might be sensible to have a direct service to the Airport.

Users of the Bus Service request that a Bus Shelter be provided at the stop by the Social Club

## **Development**

Residents of Birchanger want very strict and limiting controls to be exercised over any Housing Development in order to maintain and preserve the character of the Village and its component properties. Specifically, they want little (less than 10%) further development of the Village and they want Birchanger to remain a separate community entity with no development being allowed that would cause coalescence with neighbouring conurbations.

Villagers do not want any Industrial Development within the parish boundary

## **Disabled Facilities**

There is a need for Toilet facilities for the Disabled at both the Three Willows and the Birchanger Social Club.

In the interests of safety, requests are made for Birchanger Lane to have a more continuous, wheelchair (and pushchair) suitable Pavement.

## **Green Belt and Woods**

Residents of all ages want the Green Belt and Woodland that surrounds Birchanger to be maintained and preserved.

## **Heritage Assets**

Villagers of all ages want the Village Church and Village War Memorial to be maintained and preserved.

## **HGV Access**

There is strong feeling that Birchanger Lane should be banned to Heavy Goods Vehicle access.

## **Magazine Content**

As Villagers consider the Village Magazine to be the key source of information in the Village, they request the inclusion of more data on coming events, including regular weekly clubs etc., taking place at all social locations in the village (Social Club, Three Willows, School, Scout Hall and Church Hall) and to include contact information for all Village clubs, associations and facilities.

## **Notice Boards**

Similarly, Villagers request a larger Village Notice Board able to carry more event notices and a list of contact details.

The Young People of the Village request that a Village Notice Board should be maintained in the School.

## **Parking**

Significant numbers of Residents request that there be Double Yellow Lines installed to prohibit in-road parking in the immediate vicinity of the two double bends and the junction/bends at Duck End, Tot Lane and Bradley Common.

## **Policing**

Villagers complain about the lack of Police presence, particularly at evenings and weekends, and the difficulty in contacting the Police.

## **Resource Conservation**

Residents request that the Parish Council promote more information on Resource Conservation systems and grants.

## **Shop / Post Office**

Significant numbers of villagers request a Village Shop/Post Office.

## **Speed of Traffic**

Villagers want action of some sort (speed bumps, narrow points, speed limits, traffic lights, one way Tot Lane, etc.) to be taken to reduce the volume and speed of traffic transiting the Village.

## **Youth Club & Youth Activities**

The Young People of the Village request the establishment of a regular Youth Club to provide a focus for the development of more youth activities in the Village.

## BIRCHANGER PARISH PLAN – ACTION PLAN

No.	The Action Objective	How the Objective will be achieved	Priority Timescale	Owner Participants	Required Resource
1	Reduce air pollution due to aviation fuel.	Raise the issue with BAA directly and via DC and ensure the point is raised at every consultation meeting.	Medium <i>Ongoing</i>	PC working with Uttlesford DC & BAA	
2	Reduce noise pollution due to aircraft landing, taking off and on the ground.	Raise the issue with BAA directly and via DC and ensure the point is raised at every consultation meeting.	Medium <i>Ongoing</i>	PC working with Uttlesford DC & BAA	
3	Reduce noise pollution due to helicopters low over-flying of the village.	Raise the issue with BAA directly and via DC and ensure the point is raised at every consultation meeting. Attempt to get helicopter routing moved away from village.	Medium <i>Ongoing</i> 3 months	PC working with Uttlesford DC & BAA	
4	Reduce light pollution due to airport & car parks.	Raise the issue with BAA directly and via DC and ensure the point is raised at every consultation meeting.	Medium <i>Ongoing</i>	PC working with Uttlesford DC & BAA	
5	Ensure airport development does not further impact village environment, character, green-belt or woods.	Continue to lobby and respond to consultations making a clear case for the defence of Birchanger and its environs. Ensure strict application of planning rules.	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Parish Council & Uttlesford DC	
6	Extend the village bus service to run from 7:00 am through to 10:00 pm.	Raise the matter with Essex CC making the case as per the Parish Plan.	Medium 6 months	Essex CC Parish Council	
7	Get a bus service direct to the airport that is accessible to villagers.	Raise the matter with Essex CC making the case as per the Parish Plan.	Low 12 months	Essex CC Parish Council	
8	Provide a bus shelter at the stop by the Social Club.	Identify suitable shelter type and supplier, obtain site approval, seek source of funding and present case for PC approval	Medium 6 months	Parish Council	c. £3000
9	Control and limit any further development of the village housing stock to less than 10%.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and ensure it is taken into account in all planning decisions.	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Uttlesford DC Parish Council	
10	Ensure that Birchanger remains a separate community with no boundary coalescence.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and ensure it is taken into account in all planning decisions.	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Uttlesford DC Parish Council	

## BIRCHANGER PARISH PLAN – ACTION PLAN

<b>11</b>	Prohibit any industrial development within the parish boundary.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and ensure it is taken into account in all planning decisions.	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Uttlesford DC Parish Council	
<b>12</b>	Provide a toilet facility for the Disabled in the Three Willows.	Advise the Landlord of the views of the village residents.	Medium <i>TBA</i>	Greene King Brewery Paul Tucker	
<b>13</b>	Provide a toilet facility for the Disabled in the Social Club.	Advise the Social Club committee of the views of the village residents	Medium <i>TBA</i>	Bivchanger Social Club Committee	
<b>14</b>	Provide a more continuous wheelchair and pushchair suitable pavement along Birchanger Lane.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and raise the matter with Uttlesford DC & Essex CC Highways dept. making the case for pavements as per the Parish Plan.	Medium <i>TBA</i>	Uttlesford DC Essex CC, Highways, Parish Council	
<b>15</b>	Preserve all Green Belt land surrounding Birchanger village.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and ensure it is taken into account in all planning decisions.	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Uttlesford DC Parish Council	
<b>16</b>	Preserve and maintain Birchanger Wood.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance. Issue Birchanger Wood Trust with copy of Parish Plan. Support Wood Trust	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Birchanger Wood Trust Parish Council	
<b>17</b>	Preserve and maintain Digby Wood.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance. Issue Birchanger Farms with copy of Parish Plan. Liaise with Birchanger Farms	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Birchanger Farms Parish Council	
<b>18</b>	Preserve and maintain St Mary's Church.	Issue the Diocese, Benefice and PCC with copy of Parish Plan. Promote awareness, encourage local fund raising, facilitate events	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Parochial church Council All Parishioners	
<b>19</b>	Preserve and maintain the village War Memorial.	Promote awareness and encourage local fund raising as and when appropriate.	High <i>Ongoing</i>	Birchanger Village Community	
<b>20</b>	Prevent Heavy Goods Vehicles from entering the village.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and raise the matter with Uttlesford DC, Essex CC Highways dept. making the case as per the Parish Plan.	High <i>6 months</i>	Essex CC Highways Parish Council	



## BIRCHANGER PARISH PLAN – ACTION PLAN

<b>21</b>	Extend the ‘coming event’ listings and event coverage in the Village Magazine.	Issue the Village Magazine editorial team with copy of Parish Plan. Advise editor of villagers’ views. Invite groups to provide input.	Medium <i>3 months</i>	Magazine Editorial Team Village Groups	
<b>22</b>	Provide contact information for all village clubs, associations & facilities on a regular basis in the Village Magazine.	Issue the Village Magazine editorial team with copy of Parish Plan. Advise editor of villagers’ views. Pass the Parish Council report contact information to the Magazine. Invite input.	Medium <i>3 months</i>	Magazine Editorial Team Village Groups Parish Council	
<b>23</b>	Provide a larger and more secure Village Notice Board.	Identify suitable notice board type and supplier, present case and budget for PC approval	Medium <i>6 months</i>	Parish council	c. £1,000
<b>24</b>	Display more coming event details and contact information (as per the Village Magazine)	Invite village groups to display posters. Agree with Magazine Editor for print of coming event and contact data to be made available.	Medium <i>3 months</i>	Village Groups Magazine Ed. Team Parish Council	
<b>25</b>	Provide and maintain a Village Notice Board in the School.	Issue copy of Parish Plan to School. Liaise with Head Teacher & Governors regarding need for Notice Board. Identify suitable notice board and supplier, present case for approval	Medium <i>3 months</i>	Parish Council School Governors	c. £250
<b>26</b>	Install Double Yellow Lines to prohibit on-road parking in Birchanger Lane in the vicinity of the two double bends, Duck End junction, Tot Lane junction and Bradley Common junction.	Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and raise the matter with Uttlesford DC & Essex CC Highways dept. making the case for Birchanger Lane parking restrictions as per the Parish Plan.	High <i>TBA</i>	Uttlesford DC Essex CC Highways Parish Council	
<b>27</b>	Improve Police presence within the village, especially at weekends and evenings.	Issue copy of Parish Plan to Essex Police. Liaise with Community Police department to agree a solution.	High <i>6 months</i>	Essex Police Parish Council	
<b>28</b>	Improve contact with the Police.	Issue copy of Parish Plan to Essex Police. Liaise with Community Police department to agree a solution.	High <i>6 months</i>	Essex Police Parish Council	
<b>29</b>	Provide residents of Birchanger with information on Resource Conservation systems & grants	Collect and collate information. Possibly issue together with Parish Plan. Provide regular re-issue and updates with Parish Council Annual Report.	Medium <i>3 months</i> <i>Ongoing</i>	Parish Council and Uttlesford DC	

## BIRCHANGER PARISH PLAN – ACTION PLAN

<p><b>30</b></p>	<p>Promote the establishment of a Village Shop/ Post Office.</p>	<p>The Parish Council will support and promote any proposal for a village shop/post office, but believe that it would be uneconomical for the owners of such a venture due to the size of the village and close proximity of several supermarkets where residents already shop.</p>	<p>Low <i>Ongoing</i></p>	<p>Parish Council and Uttlesford DC</p>	
<p><b>31</b></p>	<p>Reduce the volume and speed of traffic transiting the village.</p>	<p>Submit Parish Plan as Planning Guidance and raise the matter with Uttlesford DC &amp; Essex CC Highways dept. making the case for speed controls as per the Parish Plan.</p>	<p>High <i>TBA</i></p>	<p>Uttlesford DC Highways Parish Council Essex Police</p>	
<p><b>32</b></p>	<p>Establish a village Youth Club with suitable facilities as a focus for youth activities.</p>	<p>Raise the need with Essex CC. Seek local volunteer support and identify local venue. Identify sources of funding. Present case and budget for approval.</p>	<p>Medium <i>12 months</i></p>	<p>Essex CC Parish Council</p>	<p>c. £5,000</p>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Birchanger Parish Council wish to thank the following who have contributed their time, ideas, effort, materials and funding to the production of this Birchanger Parish Plan

## Uttlesford District Council

- Grant (nominally £1000) towards printing costs.
- Printing of questionnaires and Parish Plan documents

## The Parish Plan Steering Committee

- Design, development and distribution of Questionnaires.
- Analysis of returns and compilation of results.
- Design, development and distribution of the Parish Plan document.
- Donation of all time, ideas, effort and personal computing materials.

<b>Tim Bishop</b>	Parish Plan Coordinator & PPSC Chair
<b>Peter Booker</b>	Birchanger Social Club representative
<b>Anne Bulling</b>	Birchanger resident
<b>Jayne Devine</b>	Birchanger resident & PPSC Secretary
<b>Elizabeth Godwin</b>	School Governors & host for meetings
<b>Cathy Gooding</b>	Birchanger resident
<b>David Holder</b>	High View Residents Asc. representative
<b>Philip Hoy</b>	Parish Council Planning sub-committee
<b>Ann Kent</b>	Neighbourhood Watch representative
<b>Keith Williams</b>	Birchanger resident & PPSC Treasurer

## The People of Birchanger

- For their enthusiastic response to the Questionnaires.

## Birchanger in Springtime and Harvest



Springtime in Digby woods (aka Bluebell Woods)



Harvest Time in Birchanger Fields

# BIRCHANGER VILLAGE - An aerial view

