



SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN ACTION PLAN

2009 – 2013

« *By the Community : For the Community* »

Published by the STAP Steering Group
Sawbridgeworth
January 2010

STAP Action Plan v9 091216

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INTRODUCTION

Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan

By the Community – For the Community

What is a Town Plan?

As you may know, we are in the process of putting together a Town Plan. You may not however have the first idea what it is all about. Town Plans are a Government initiative arising from the 2000 Rural White paper; to date over 3,000 villages have produced one. In the impenetrable language of the bureaucrat these are "holistic documents [which] comprise the socio-economic and environmental issues of a community and their proposed remedies. In plain English, it is an opportunity for the whole village to influence the way in which Sawbridgeworth develops.

Merely preparing the document is bringing together many people from all walks of life, and refreshing the sense of community spirit. If this is the only benefit of the Parish Plan it must surely still be viewed as a success. We hope however that the Plan will achieve much more.

The Plan is intended to be an evolving document, outlining how we would like to see the town develop over the next ten years. It includes an action plan detailing how these developments can be achieved. Once finished the Town Action Plan will be a document of reference for local government, including the Town Council.

However this is most certainly not just about roads and houses. The plan covers all aspects of town life ranging from

local businesses, provisions for the young and elderly, all the way to street furniture, wildflowers, verges and ponds.

Where have we got to?

Several questionnaires have been produced over the years and a Community Voice Meeting in 2009 also gathered some views and opinions. Working groups from the Community have analysed these and formulate the way forward. These form the basis of the Action.

Why is It Important?

This plan is an opportunity for everyone to have a say in the development of all aspects of community life in Sawbridgeworth. Some of the ideas for development we can implement ourselves, such as starting up a new club or society that proved popular in the survey. Other findings will have an important influence on decisions made by the Town Council and possibly even the District Council. It is therefore important that the Town Plan represents the views of as many parishioners as possible~

What happens next?

An abstract of the Town Action Plan has been distributed to every householder and business in the town. It has also been made publicly available on the Town Council web-site www.sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk. The full version is available for reference in the library and the Town Council office.

On-going Monitor.

This an **Action** Plan and it will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by an Action Group. Progress will be reported annually at the Towns Meeting.

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THE TOWN OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Sawbridgeworth is a small, mainly residential, town in Hertfordshire on the Essex border, situated between Bishop's Stortford and Harlow.

Sawbridgeworth is four miles south of Bishop's Stortford, twelve miles east of Hertford and nine miles north of Epping.



It lies on the A1184 and has a railway station that links to Liverpool Street station. The river Stort flows through the east of the town, past the Maltings (now a small business and residential area). Nearby towns and cities: Bishop's Stortford,

Harlow. Nearby villages: High Wych, Spellbrook, Much Hadham

Prior to the Norman Conquest, most of the area was owned by the Saxon Angmar the Staller.

The Manor of "Sabrixteworde" (one of the many spellings previously associated with the town) was recorded in the Domesday Book. After the Battle of Hastings it was granted to Geoffrey de Mandeville by William the Conqueror. Local notables have included Sir John Leventhorpe, who was an executor of King Henry V's will, and Anne Boleyn, who was given the Pishiobury/Pishiobury estate, located to the south of the town.

Much of the picturesque town centre is a conservation area; many of the buildings date from the Tudor, Stuart, and Georgian periods. Great St. Mary's church was originally built in the 13th century (although a church on the site existed in Saxon times) and includes a Tudor tower containing a clock bell (1664) and eight ringing bells, the oldest of which dates from 1749.[1] Ralph Jocelyn of Hyde Hall, who was twice Lord Mayor of London in the 15th century, is buried here; images of many of his family and other locals have been engraved on brass, and hence the church is popular for enthusiasts of brass rubbing.

The town's prosperity came from the local maltings, owned by George Fawbert and John Barnard; in 1839 they set up the Fawbert and Barnard charity to fund local children and their education, funding a local infant school that still exists today

Apart from the historic nature of the town, attractions include local river cruises in the summer and two annual fairs held on Fair Green on St George's Day and the Feast of Saint Dionysius.



By the time of the Norman conquest, or soon after, Sawbridgeworth's rich farming land was fully developed for cultivation as was possible with the means available at the time: it was the richest village community in the country. It

is, then, hardly surprising that many important medieval families had estates here. The land was divided amongst them, into a number of manors or distinct estates; the Lord of each manor had rights not only over this land but also over the people who farmed it. The number of manors increased during the Middle Ages, by a process of subinfeudation, which is the granting out of a part of an existing manor to a new owner so that the new manor was created. Many manors sprang from the original Domesday Book holding of the de Mandeville family. The one that came to be called Sayesbury manor, from the de Say family who inherited it from the de Mandeville's in 1189. The many important people who held these manors built themselves houses with hunting parks around them; when they died their tombs enriched the parish church, so that today St. Mary's has one of the finest collections of monumental sculptures in the country.

The Lordship of Sawbridgeworth includes the following estates: Sayesbury, Pishiobury, Gilston, Eastwick Hall, Overhall, Giffards, Shingle Hall and Tedmanbury

Pronunciation. The name of the town is now almost universally pronounced in the obvious way, but this was not always the case. In the Middle Ages it is believed to have been pronounced "sapserth", and since then the pronunciation has varied to include "sapsa", "sapster" and "sapsworth", and even until the Second World War was pronounced "sapsed". Current residents often use the casual name "Sawbo".

Politics and local government Sawbridgeworth is administered by East Herts district council.

The local Town Council currently has 12 councillors, covering both Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook. Sawbridgeworth is twinned with: Bry-sur-Marne in France (1973)

In Parliament, it is in the Hertford and Stortford constituency. Since the election of May 2005 Sawbridgeworth is represented by Mark Prisk, a Conservative. The village of Lower Sheering in Essex adjoins Sawbridgeworth, east of the railway station, along the Hertfordshire - Essex border. It shares the same postal code as Sawbridgeworth, although for local government purposes it comes under the Epping Forest district of Essex, with the Member of Parliament being Bill Rammell (Labour).

Education Sawbridgeworth has a secondary school, the Leventhorpe School, which also offers a public swimming pool and gym. There are also three primary schools and one infants school in Sawbridgeworth.

Sport Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club is one of the leading cricket clubs in the south of England, fielding seven senior sides and seven colts sides, from ages nine to fifteen. The 1st XI plays in the Home Counties Premier Cricket League, and the other league sides play in the Hertfordshire Cricket League. The main ground is Town Fields, situated behind Bell Street. The second ground is at Leventhorpe School. Sawbridgeworth also has a football, tennis and bowls club.

Trivia: Notable inhabitants include Victoria and David Beckham at "Beckingham Palace" since 1999. The Leventhorpe School has two fully functioning and operational wind turbines, the first in the local area.

OUR SIX BIGGEST ISSUES

(WHICH WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS)

- 1. ROADS AND TRANSPORT**
- 2. PLAN HOUSING SENSIBLY**
- 3. CAR PARK CHARGES**
- 4. SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR**
- 5. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES**
- 6. PROVISION OF A REPLACEMENT SCOUT HUT**

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TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

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TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN

LEADERS : BARRY HODGES : PAUL ROSE

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Support	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
PUBLIC TRANSPORT:							
Buses	Find substitute for SW1,2&3 Services	STC	EHC	H	Y	Now	Need for substantial Grant Funding and/or Sponsorship
Trains	Publicise Services	STC	National Express	M	Y	By 03/10	National Express
CYCLING & WALKING:							
Footpaths	Publicise locations	STC	EHC	M	Y	By 03/10	STC Budget
	Maintain	STC	CMS	M	Y	ongoing	
Cycle Paths	Publicise locations	STC	HH	M	Y	Now	STC budget
	Provide secure Bike Racks						
	At Station	STC	Natl. Exp.	M	Y	09/10	Grant aid
	In Bell Street	STC	EHC	M	Y	09/10	Grant aid
Pedestrianisation	Study for Bell Street	STC	HH	L	?	By 03/10	HH project time
	Pedestrian Routes	HH	STC	H	Y	By 01/10	Grant from EHC
ROADS & PARKING:							
A1184	Management of Traffic	PC	HH	M	Y	Ongoing	Reduce congestion
	By-pass	HH	-	L	?	?	National Plan

Road Maintenance	Repairs	HH	-	H	Y	Ongoing campaign	HH plan
Parking Charges	Assess damage to local economy by the levy of charges	EHC	STC/STP	H	?	Ongoing campaign	EHC plan
Parking for Shoppers	Allow short term parking in Bell Street	EHC	STC	H	Y	Ongoing campaign	EHC plan
Inappropriate parking	Management of Grass Verges	EHC HH	STC STC	H H	Y Y	ongoing ongoing	EHC Civil Enforcement HH action
Station parking	Plan for supplementing	EHC	National Express	M	?	03/11	Investigate
Speeding	Plan for control Focus on High Wych Road	PC(SO)s	STC	M	Y	ongoing	Police Locality priorities
Pedestrian Crossings	Knight Street Spellbrook	HH HH	STC STC	H M	Y ?	09/09 03/10	In progress Feasibility study under way

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

- Change the layout of the Bell Street car park – reverse the one way system
- Consider the introduction of parking disk permit system
- Stop parking in the Crofters - obstructing emergency vehicles
- Seek funding from Uttlesford DC and Epping Forest DC to support local bus

TRANSPORT

Sawbridgeworth is well served both from a public transport perspective. As well as having relatively easy access to major roads and motorways. The key transport issues that this plan will consider are:

- Public Transport
- Cycling & Walking
- Roads & Parking

Public Transport

In Sawbridgeworth is relatively good with varied rail, bus and coach links both locally and into London.

Rail services are frequent and are used by much of Sawbridgeworth's population as the main option for commuting both into London, and other local centres such as Harlow, Bishops Stortford, and Cambridge. Whilst these services are fast and generally reliable, the cost of travel and over-crowding are critical issues.



Bus and coach services are varied. However the bus and coach services in Sawbridgeworth are limited. North-south services are well served like the trains, but east-west services are sparse. Bus fares are also expensive, and some services too infrequent. Coach services are sparse but provide a useful alternative commuter route into London

The key recommendation of this plan in the area of public transport should be to encourage greater usage of our public transport options, as this would have the following beneficial impacts for the town:

- To reduce the town's carbon emissions
- Greater usage of public transport encourages greater investment and expansion of public services
- To reduce car traffic and associated effects e.g. noise, congestion, and pollution

Recommended Actions:

To achieve this, the Sawbridgeworth town action plan would encourage the following recommendations:

- A single leaflet and or website detailing all available transport options
- Increased information on timetables and fares
- Lobbying for lower fares and improved service frequency with all public transport providers
- Improved information for the Town's citizens on the benefits of using public transport
- Feasibility study for funding community transport

Cycling & Walking

Sawbridgeworth is a compact town ideal in many respects to encourage walking and cycling. The town is surrounded by and criss-crossed by many public footpaths, as well as river towpaths. Sawbridgeworth is also very fortunate in having a dedicated and hard working Footpaths Officer, which makes a tremendous impact on the access to and quality of our local footpaths

There are however critical issues preventing more walking and cycling activities taking place:

- Few dedicated cycle paths (all outside of the town)
- Few facilities for storing bikes especially in the Town centre
- Very busy roads which can discourage both cycling and walking
- Few disincentives to making short journeys by car

The key recommendation for the Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan in respect to cycling and walking should be to;

- Reduce the number of short car journeys and encourage people to walk or cycle.



Recommended Actions:

- Work with local partners e.g. highways agency, EHDC etc, to identify opportunities for more cycle paths or to make roads safer/more pedestrian friendly
- Provide secure bike racks in the centre of town e.g. Town car park
- Publicise all local footpaths, showing travel times by foot/cycle and health benefits of walking and cycling
- Consider prevention of parking and set down close to schools, and/or encourage walking/cycling to schools
- Undertake a feasibility study of pedestrianisation of Bell Street.

Roads & Parking

There are a number of key issues relating to roads and parking:

- The main road through Sawbridgeworth (A1184) is extremely busy, even in 1988 the number of vehicles using this road was 22,000 a day, which was close to the level of traffic before the M11 opened!
- Parking charges in the town are generally unpopular
- Parking illegally (and legally) makes access through some roads e.g. Knight Street, difficult and potentially dangerous for pedestrians as well
- Very little parking for Sawbridgeworth station and the businesses in that area
- Poor quality of roads, potholes etc
- Speeding e.g. High Wych
- Lack of crossings e.g. Knight St

The key recommendation for the Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan in respect to roads and parking should be to;

- have a strategic plan which would be used as a key part of consultation with key stakeholders.

A future plan should outline:

- The town's preferred management for the A1184

- A Town parking strategy
- Identified road risks and plans for improvement
- The role of STC and the community in developing the "roads agenda"

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CRIME AND DISORDER

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CRIME & DISORDER ACTION PLAN

LEADERS - BARRY HODGES : PAUL ROSE

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Support	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	Graffiti removal	EHC	PC(SO) & STC	H	Y	Ongoing	EHC budget
	Drink and Drug abuse	PS(SO)s		H	Y	ongoing	Offenders Restitution programme
CRIME PREVENTION	Police Liaison / Police Locality meetings	PC(SO)s	STC / other groups	M	Y	ongoing	None
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	Maintain	N'hood Watch	PC(SO)s	M	Y	ongoing	None
CCTV	Mobile Units	STC	EHC / PC(SO)s	M	Y	06/09	STC budget
	Fixed Units	PC(SO)s	STC	L	L	06/10	Grant availability
POLICE ESTABLISHMENT	Police drop in centre	PC(SO)s	STC	M	Y	12/10	Maintain Police establishment, use STC facilities.
	Mobile Police Station	PC(SO)s	STC	M	Y	06/09	
	Higher visibility	PC(SO)s	STC	H	Y	ongoing	

STC – Sawbridgeworth T C. STP - Sawbridgeworth Town Partnership. PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. CMS- Countryside Management Services

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

- Early intervention support for young people

POLICING & CRIME

Sawbridgeworth as a locality is very lucky to be an area with one of the lowest crime rates. In fact the crime rate in the Sawbridgeworth area is at an all time low when comparing it to the previous three years.

The neighbourhood police team at Sawbridgeworth is keen to communicate with their neighbourhood in as many ways as possible and have set up a diary of Mobile police station surgeries for the area to assist in this. Home visits to help individuals understand a number of crime prevention tactics are also provided where requested.

The team at Sawbridgeworth also regularly runs a local operation to tackle crime and disorder and have been joined on these operations by members of the town council recently where they can not only give their input but also get an insight into how the neighbourhood policing team works.

All parties recognize the importance of local issues being dealt with in partnership and to this end the Neighbourhood policing team have regular meetings with town council, local housing associations, local businesses and other partners.

The local community priorities for Sawbridgeworth are:

Alcohol/drug abuse

- Burglary
- Parking issues
- Speeding/driving issues

The key recommendation for the Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan in respect to policing and crime is as follows:

- To continue to work with our neighbourhood police team to support the excellent work that they undertake in keeping crime in Sawbridgeworth as low as present
- To encourage the mobile police station to be present at town events e.g. farmers market thereby increasing the numbers of visitors and improve awareness of policing issues in Sawbridgeworth
- To consider increased publicity of police services and possibly crime figures through the planned town newsletter
- To ensure that other parts of the STAP provide the right support for crime prevention and reducing anti-social behaviour, i.e. night-time economy, youth facilities
- To ensure that current police numbers are not reduced



AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

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AMENITIES & FACILITIES ACTION PLAN

Leaders - Peter Reed : Joyce Vincent : Angela Alder : Hazel Mead

Issue	Status	Management	Regular External Support	Development Plans	Priority	Timescale	Resource Implications
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS							
Memorial Hall Trust	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Development started 2001	H	Ongoing	Grants required
Young People's Recreational Centre	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Develop Changing rooms	H	Ongoing	Grant required
The Hailey Centre	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Develop Facilities	H	Ongoing	Grant required
1st Sawbridgeworth Scouts	Charitable Trust	Trustees	Scouts Assn	Relocate to a new site	H	Immediate	Funding from developer/ assistance from EHDC
Girl Guides	Association	District Guides	Guides Assn	Maintain	M	Ongoing	-
Youth Create	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Maintain	M	Ongoing	Loss of funding
Air Training Corps	Charity	Essex Wing Air Cadets	MoD and R.F.& C.A.	Maintain	L	Ongoing	-
Friends of Great St Mary's Church	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Maintain	L	Ongoing	-

Evening Women's Institute	Charitable Trust	WI Committee	None	Maintain	L	Ongoing	-
Rotary Club	Charitable Trust	Rotarians	None	Expansion under review	M	Immediate	-
Sawbridgeworth & District Council for Voluntary Service	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Maintain	M	Ongoing	-
Town Twinning	Association	Committee	None	Maintain	M	Ongoing	-
OTHER LOCAL FACILITIES WITH ROOMS FOR HIRE							
Church House							
Parish Hall							
Leventhorpe School							
Reedings School							
Mandeville School							
Cricket Club Pavilion							
Football Club Pavilion							
The Hailey Centre							
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	Public Facility	EHDC	None	Alternative Provision	M	06/09	EHC Council Tax
MEDICAL FACILITIES							
Dental Practices	NHS & Private Practice	Partners	Dept. of Health	Maintain	M	Ongoing	
Central Surgery	Partnership	Medical partners	East & N Herts PCT	Maintain	M	Ongoing	

Opticians	NHS & Private Practice	Ophthalmologist	none	Maintain	M	Ongoing	
Chiropodists	NHS & Private Practice	Private practice	none	Maintain	M	Ongoing	
PCT – The Square	Child Health Chiropody Clinics	East & N Herts PCT	East & N Herts PCT	Services Extended	M	2010/11	PCT Responsibility
EMERGENCY SERVICES							
Fire Service	Public Service (Manned volunteers)	Herts Fire Service	County Council	Maintain	M	Ongoing	
Police	Public Service	Herts. Constabulary	County Council	Maintain	M	Ongoing	
Ambulance & Paramedic	Public Service	Herts/Beds Ambulance Trust	Herts/Beds Ambul. Trust	Maintain	M	Ongoing	
LIBRARY	Public Library	Herts CC	none	Community Centre Under Review	M	Ongoing	
SPORTS FACILITIES							
Angling	Club & Society	S.Angling Club & Saw Angling Society	None	Maintain	L	Ongoing	
Swimming Pool	School Pool open to public out of school	Contracted out by EHDC	none	Maintain	M	3 year (?) contract	

	hours						
Sports Hall	School facility open for public out of school hours	Leventhorpe School	none	Planning Stage	M	2011	Sale of school land
Skate Park	None	STC lead project	None	Plan and develop a facility for the town	H	2010	External grant funding
SPORTS ASSOCIATION							
Sawbridgeworth Football Club	Trust	Trustees and club reps	None	Maintain	M	2009	New stand
Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	Private Club	Club member committee	None	Develop New Pavilion	M	2011	Raising capital for building
Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Private Club	Club member committee	None	Maintain	M	-	
Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	Private Club	Club member committee	None	Maintain	M	-	
United Services Club	Private Club	Club member committee	None	Maintain	M	2010	New facilities
RECREATIONAL GROUNDS							
Young People's Recreational Centre	Charitable Trust	Trustees	None	Develop additional facilities	M	2010	External grant funding
Vantorts Open Space	Play area – public Inc. tennis courts	EHDC	None	STC seek to take over responsibility	H	2010	Transfer of funding from EHDC to STC
	Create a MUGA with	EHDC					

floodlighting							
West Road Site	Play area – public Small children	STC	none	Maintain	M		
Old Bowling Green	Play area - public	EHDC	none	Maintain	M		
Springhall Lane	Play area - public	EHDC	none	Planning development with EHDC	M		
Crest 'Kick About ' Area	Recreational open space	Currently EHDC	none	Planning use to be continued	H	Autumn 2009	
High Wych Area 84	Liaise with High Wych Parish Council	STC	none		M		
OTHER FACULTIES							
Town Cemetery	Community facility	STC	none	Maintain	M	2009-2013	Self funding
Allotments	Community facility	STC	none	Maintain	M	2009-2013	Self funding
Drop in Information Centre	Create an information point for use by all	STC	none	New project	M	2011	
Network Partnership	Gather together and co-ordinate the work of all voluntary groups	STC lead	none	New project	M	2010	
Outward Bound Centre	Create a new recreational area near the Stort on a	To be agreed	none	New project	M	2012	

water based theme								
Town Sign	Create a symbolic sign at head of Bell Street	STC	none	New project	M	2010	Grant funding from EHDC	

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

- Encourage an additional doctors’ practice
- Disabled access to recreation land
- Encourage clearance of permissive routes

AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

Sawbridgeworth has many amenities and facilities to serve social and recreational needs of the community as well as the more fundamental needs provided by the emergency services that are occasionally required.

Many of the social and recreational amenities are provided by voluntary groups, often Charitable Trusts, who carry the responsibilities of managing, organising and financing their particular organisation. The continued existence of such amenities depends on the support given by the community itself, through participation in the activity or assisting with the continuity and development of a particular organisation.

The several thriving sports clubs that serve the Town are managed through the club membership and financed largely through membership fees. The continued success, growth and development of the clubs depends on the enthusiasm and input from existing and future members.

Finance for projects to enhance or modernise the facilities of any voluntary run amenity is not necessarily readily available from central sources, but must be financed through grants and further finance raised in the community. Current ongoing or future projects for specific clubs or organisations are shown in the table.

Further medical and emergency facilities are provided through a variety of partnerships, Primary Care Trusts, County Council and Local Authority. Changes sought to such services need to be negotiated with the authority concerned, and are normally negotiated through the Town Council.

Voluntary Organisations

Many of the Amenities and Facilities serving Sawbridgeworth and the surrounding District are provided and serviced by voluntary groups. Many are organised in Charitable Trusts, with volunteers taking on the commitment of managing the organisations as well as the responsibilities as trustees.

Each organisation requires an appropriate location where its members can meet to participate in the specific activity of that organisation. Some organisations and clubs have facilities which are set aside for their members' exclusive use, while other organisations manage facilities which are available for hire by other organisations as well as for their own use.

Voluntary Organisations with Facilities for Hire and use by other organisations

Sawbridgeworth Memorial Hall Trust

The Memorial Hall is located in The Forebury and is a Charitable Trust and is owned by the Charity Commission.

The stated Object of the Charity is the provision and maintenance of a Village Hall including use for meetings, lectures, classes and other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants of the area.

The Memorial Hall has served as the Village Hall for Sawbridgeworth since 1950 and is the only facility available for hire at all times. It is currently used for a wide range of activities. Its large size permits use for many public meetings, clubs, exhibitions, private anniversary parties and charitable fund raising activities.

The Hall is managed and administered by trustees under a Scheme set down by the Charity Commission, and is financed and maintained through income from lettings of the Hall. Since 2001, the trustees have been pursuing a major refurbishment of the Hall, financed through funds raised from the community and grants. The refurbishment has yet to be completed, which can only be commissioned when the necessary finance is raised.

Sawbridgeworth Young People's Recreational Centre

The Sawbridgeworth Young People's Recreational Centre is situated off Bullfields, with entrance into the grounds from Cutforth Road. It is a further Charitable Trust operating under a Scheme set down by the Charity Commission in 1969.



The objectives of the trust are the provision and maintenance of a recreation ground and playing field for the benefit of youth of either sex resident in Sawbridgeworth who have not attained the age of twenty two years.

The amenity houses two football pitches of suitable size for youth teams which are used by junior teams from the Football Club. The grounds also include play equipment, which has recently been greatly improved by the addition of new play equipment and is now much used by the young people of Sawbridgeworth. A portion of the land has been leased to the ATC for its exclusive use. A further portion was taken in 1996 for the construction of the Bullfields Centre, which is available for hire for youth activities under the terms of the Scheme.

The facility is financed through regular lettings of the playing fields and Bullfields Centre, plus rent from the lease on the ATC building and through grants for improvements to the facilities.

The Hailey Centre

The Hailey Centre is located within the Sayesbury Manor complex off Bell Street. The organisation is run by Friends of the Hailey Centre, which is a further Charity run by volunteers.

The original stated objectives of the Charity are for the relief of the elderly and in particular to support The Hailey Centre for use for the elderly of the Parish of Sawbridgeworth, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the citizens. These objectives have been modernised to state that The Hailey Centre maintains an open door policy.

One of the main functions of the Centre is the operation of a 'Drop in Centre' for people over age 55 for 6 mornings per week plus

specific activities in the afternoons, with the Centre serving as a meeting point and providing much needed activities for the older people in Sawbridgeworth and District. The centre organises various activities, including keep fit classes, art and craft sessions, luncheons once a week, transport and outings to places of interest.

Finance to run the Centre comes through the efforts of the volunteers/trustees that manage it. Currently the Centre is in receipt of a substantial grant from Adult Care Services, but also receives income from hiring of the Centre when not required for the daily scheduled activities, craft sales, donations and other fundraising activities organised by the volunteers.

Facilities of other organisations available for limited hire

Church House
Parish Room
Leventhorpe School
Reedings School
Mandeville School
Cricket Club
Football Club

Societies organised on a voluntary basis

1st Sawbridgeworth Scouts Group
Girl Guides
Youth Create
The Friends of Great St. Mary's Church
Sawbridgeworth Evening Women's Institute
Rotary Club

Sawbridgeworth & District Council for Voluntary Service

1st Sawbridgeworth Scout Group

The 1st Sawbridgeworth Scout Group provides young people of all abilities with the opportunity to learn about and enjoy a wide range of activities while, at the same time, develop self confidence, leadership and responsibility through participation. Activities include camping, hiking, orienteering and other challenging outdoor pursuits for the older Adventure scouts. The Group totals 130 persons (girls and boys) ranging in age from 6 to 25 years. Different sections meet on specific nights of the week and participate in various activities at the weekend. In order to function, the Group requires its own Scout hut for the regular meetings, with store for the equipment for the different activities and located to be readily accessible for all users.

The Group has operated in Sawbridgeworth since 1908 and for the last 50m years on the site in Springhall Road. The land is leased to the Group, but now the current landlord has planning permission to develop the site and so the Group has to relocate if it is to continue to serve the Sawbridgeworth community in the future. While the lease term has not quite expired, a clause prevents the Group from building a new hut on the same site. After 100 years of use, the existing buildings are in poor condition and could easily become unfit for purpose. Extensive renovation of the existing buildings is uneconomical with an expiring lease, especially as the existing landlord is offering financial assistance to build new facilities elsewhere in Sawbridgeworth.

The project to find a new location has been dragging on for 9 years and needs urgent resolution to prevent the loss of the Scout Group after 100 years of service to the youth of Sawbridgeworth.

Public Conveniences

There is only one public toilet in Sawbridgeworth, situated in the Bell Street car park.

Facilities of the single public toilet have been reduced over past years, and now comprise only a single 'Unisex' toilet with one WC and one hand basin for all users, male, female and disabled – child and adult. A fold down baby changing unit is also fitted within the single room. The facility is clearly designed to minimise risk of vandalism.



The single toilet is under the control of East Herts District Council, and is maintained and serviced by contractors. The facility is open Monday to Saturday from 7.00am to 6.00pm.

Comments have been received, both about the adequacy of the facilities and standard of maintenance, especially on 'Farmer Market' days, when many visitors come to the Bell Street car park and seek use of the public convenience.

Local Facilities

Recreational Grounds

These provide recreation areas for children, consisting of play areas and play ground equipment. Six areas currently exist in various parts of Sawbridgeworth which are owned and maintained by different bodies.

1. Sawbridgeworth Young People's Recreational Centre

Situated on the corner of Cutforth Road and Bullfields. The facility is a registered Charity with Sawbridgeworth Town Council serving as the Trustee and operated through a management committee.



2. West Road site

Situated on the south side of West Road. The area comprises a fenced area with play equipment for young children, set in a well maintained grassed area.

The area is owned and maintained by Sawbridgeworth Town Council.



3. Vantorts Open Space



Situated behind housing on Vantorts Road and the Sports Association ground (Cricket Club) and is approached via a footpath leading from Fair Green to Springhall Road.

The area is owned and maintained by East

Herts District Council. The area is currently in poor condition, with only very basic play equipment, and EHDC have considered renovation projects for the area.

4. Old Bowling Ground



The area is situated between Sheering Mill Lane and Great St. Mary's churchyard. It comprises further play equipment for young children set in a grassed area. Responsibility for maintaining the area

is that of East Herts. District Council.

5. Two Fields in Pishiobury Park

Two fields at the end of Springhall Lane, running towards the river Stort are being made available for recreational

purposes. The fields form part of Pishiobury Park, which is owned by East Herts District Council.

Arrangements for use and management of the area are currently under discussion.

6. Kick about area behind The Crest

The area is situated on land to the west of The Crest.

The area originally formed part of Thomas Rivers Nurseries which were sold some 21 years ago. Ownership of the Kick-About area was granted to East Herts District Council for a limited period which terminates in 2009, and reverts to the original purchaser of the Thomas Rivers' land.

Maintenance of the area is currently the responsibility of EHDC for provision of grass cutting and supplying goal posts in the play area.

Discussions are on-going with the land owner after 2009, seeking continued use of the area as a Kick-about area and its retention as an important recreational facility in that area of Sawbridgeworth.

Local History

Mr. Wally Wright is the local historian and also a member of the Bishop's Stortford Local History Association. (Contact telephone 01279 722557). A comprehensive book on the history of Sawbridgeworth, written by Wally Wright, can be obtained from Sawbridgeworth Library or Rhodes Museum in Bishop's Stortford.

Historical documents are archived in various locations. Some are held at Rhodes Museum (contact 01279 651746). Further information can be found at Hertfordshire County Records Office in Hertford, with local search facilities at Bishop's Stortford library.

The archives for Thomas Rivers' Nursery have been placed in Church House, which can be viewed by appointment.

Library

The library is located in The Forebury. It is a County Library, maintained and serviced by Hertfordshire County Council. The library is open only at certain times (Monday to Saturday) – opening hours being displayed in the front window.

Plans have been drawn up for the incorporation of the library within a new Community Centre on the present site. These plans are on-going at the present time.

Emergency Services

Fire Service

As with other Towns in the area of similar size, Sawbridgeworth has one unmanned fire service station, which is situated in Station



Road. The service is retained by Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue service on a 24 hour basis and accessed via a 999 call in case of emergency.

Police

An unmanned police station exists at the corner of Cutforth Road and London Road. Policing of Sawbridgeworth is now operated from Bishop's Stortford police station and from Hertford.

Sawbridgeworth has been assigned two police constables and two police community officers to service the needs of the area. Requests for service should be made to Hertford directly.

Ambulance and Paramedic Service

Requests for emergency medical attention should be made through a 999 call, stating the emergency service required and providing essential information. The request and information are assessed and the most appropriate medical service is activated to attend.

Paramedics are based in Sawbridgeworth who can usually attend very rapidly to assess the situation and provide necessary medical attention and/or provide help before an ambulance arrives should such be necessary for treatment in hospital.

The Ambulance service for the area is provided by Herts and Beds Ambulance Trust and Essex Ambulance Trust.

Town Twinning Association

Since 1974, Sawbridgeworth has been twinned with Bry-sur-Marne, a town comprising of 16,000 inhabitants, eight miles east of Paris. The Town Twinning Association is a voluntary organisation which is partly self-financing through fund-raising activities and also receives the support of grants from Sawbridgeworth Town Council. It aims to promote friendship between the two towns and encourages the growth of mutual understanding of social, cultural, educational and all other aspects of day- to- day living in the twinned communities.

Visits normally take place every year, alternating between Bry-sur-Marne and Sawbridgeworth, and include time with the host

family plus an excursion and an informal dinner. We also encourage young people to take part in activities connected with our twinned town e.g. musical concerts, football tournaments.

You do not have to speak French to join the Town Twinning Association! Membership is free and open to all residents of Sawbridgeworth. You just need some *joie de vivre*, a little *je ne sais quoi*, a dash of adventure, a willingness to experience a different way of life and a commitment to having fun. In order to join, please contact the Town Clerk, who will put you in touch with the current Chairman. Full details of the Town Twinning Committee are to be found in the local library along with copies of recent Town Twinning Newsletters.

Sports Association

The Sawbridgeworth Sports Association was formed in 1921 under the guidance of Sir Arthur Cutforth to provide sports facilities for troops returning from the First World War. The Association administers to four sports clubs and also includes the United Services Club, although this Club acts as an independent body with its own trustees.

The Sports Association has the role of Executive Committee over the four sports clubs providing facilities for football, cricket, tennis and bowls. The Executive Committee comprises four elected trustees, to serve as President, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Association, plus 2 members from each of the 4 clubs, 7 independent trustees and a member of Sawbridgeworth Town Council.

The Executive Committee is the landlords of Townfields, where the cricket, tennis and bowls clubs are situated, and Crofters, where the football club is located. As landlord, the Executive Committee is responsible for tax on the land and the cost of insuring the buildings and contents of the four clubs.

Contacts for the Executive Committee are Barry Leslie (Secretary) on 01279 724452 or Bob Hoskins (Treasurer) on 01279 424726.

Each of the four clubs is autonomous, responsible for financing its own activities, maintenance of grounds and facilities which are largely achieved through membership fees and fund raising activities. Major improvements to club facilities, of which there have been many in recent years, are achieved through grants and fund raising by the individual club committees with occasional assistance from the Executive Committee.

Sawbridgeworth Football Club

The football club's ground is situated in Crofters. It is a highly active and successful club with a 1st team in the Essex Senior League, a senior Reserve team, a Ladies team and runs Sawbridgeworth Junior Football Club playing 15 junior teams each weekend in season.

A major problem facing this successful club supporting many teams is the number of playing pitches available at any one time, requiring use of other pitches in the surrounding district. A plan to acquire more land for enlarged facilities for all sports clubs had to be abandoned 4 years ago, when the area sought became designated for other developments. A 5-year plan is now under way seeking to raise the necessary finance to rebuild the club house and facilities on the current Crofters ground.

Contact: Chairman – Steve Day - 07802233994

Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club

The club's ground is located in Townfields. The club is successful and active, with the 1st team playing in the Senior Herts League and also has 5 further senior teams playing each



week in season. The club also hosts 200 colts, playing local matches, with coaching arranged with all local schools.

Match facilities on Townfields are limited with the large number of teams and an arrangement was reached with Leventhorpe School to lay a further cricket square with practice nets for joint use. The club's pavilion on Townfields has recently been developed to serve as a venue for many functions.

Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club

Courts for the club are also located on Townfields. The club employs a professional coach and enjoys a high standard of play with a full membership. The number of juniors in the club exceeds 100, with coaching supplied by the professional.

Facilities at the club have been upgraded over recent years with all- weather courts throughout and flood lighting to provide for play throughout the year.

Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club

The club's ground is also located on Townfields. A new bowling green has been set down following the award of a Lottery grant to the club. Club house facilities have also been greatly improved in recent years with a new kitchen and new changing rooms.

As a further successful sports club, the club has a team in the Herts and Essex senior league and plays other matches weekends in season. Individual members participate in teams in East Herts Bowling

Financing of the separate clubs

Each of the four clubs is autonomous and self financed to maintain its grounds and facilities. Necessary funds are raised through membership fees and social functions organised by the members and hire of premises where appropriate for other functions.

The major problem facing the clubs is the need of land for playing areas to expand activities, especially the football and cricket clubs with their large number of teams.

Amenities and Facilities for Sports

Angling

Opportunities for angling are available along the River Stort and its environs.

1. **Sawbridgeworth AS Angling Club** organises fishing on the River Stort – contact the Water Bailiff – John Armes 01279 723376. The Club also organises fishing holidays abroad.
2. **Sawbridgeworth Angling Society** enjoys a thriving angling scene with its own private lake situated just off the

Hallingbury Road. Day tickets are available on the bank. The Society also runs an Annual Open Day plus a 'Get Hooked on Fish' scheme in conjunction with East Herts Council to encourage children to enjoy fishing. Contact for further enquiries is David Spears 07739 730948.

Swimming Pool at Leventhorpe School

The swimming pool is owned by Leventhorpe School. An arrangement exists between East Herts District Council and the school for use of the pool and an associated gymnasium by the community outside school hours and in school holidays.

EHDC and Hertfordshire County Council share the costs of maintenance of the pool. EHDC are responsible for managing and operating the swimming pool and gymnasium for public use out of school hours. EHDC have placed a new contract to operate all 5 pools in the District with



Sport and Leisure Management (SLM) – a company based in Leicestershire. The new contract runs from January 2009.

Sports Hall

As at September 2008, plans are in progress for the construction of a Sports Hall at Leventhorpe School. As with the Swimming Pool, the Sports Hall will be owned by the school and form part of

the school buildings. The Sports Hall is primarily for use by the school, but planning involves use by the community out of school time, such as in evenings, weekends and in school holidays. The new facility will contain 4 badminton courts and other areas for possible use as a dance studio and gymnasium. The sports complex will also include a tennis court and a full sized Astro turf pitch.

The complex is being planned as a joint school/community project and is still at the planning stage. Administration arrangements for use of the facility by the general public have yet to be arranged.

Town Cemetery

The Town Cemetery is owned and managed by the Town Council. Its use is available to residents and, at a premium, to non-residents of Sawbridgeworth. There are sections for full interments in the Lawned Area, for cremated remains in two areas with different styles of memorial and locations for memorial trees and plaques. It is planned to add a "green" area for meadowland burial in 2009. The Cemetery will be extended onto land already owned by the Council over the period to 2013.



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ENVIRONMENT

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ENVIRONMENT ACTION PLAN

Leaders : Warren Richards : Monya Billing : Clive Atkins

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Support	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
RETAIN GREEN BELT	Planning Process	EHC	EHC/CPRE /STC	H	Y	On going	None
RECYCLING	Awareness Programme Provide bins for cardboard and plastics	EHC	EHC/Residents/ Local Business	H	Y	On Going	None
DOG FOULING	Awareness Programme	EHC	Dog Owners	M	Y	On Going	None
CARE OF RIVER & TRIBUTARIES	Establish Riparian Ownership, generate an action plan, determine Responsibilities Impact and effect analysis study on future house building programmes e.g. flooding, preventative maintenance issues	EA/EHC/ Developers	HH/STC/ EHC Riparian Proprietors	H	Y	On Going	Funding
CONSERVATION	Protection , Preservation and maintenance Awareness Programme	EHC/STC	Land Owners	H	Y	On Going	Funding
FLY TIPPING	Awareness programmes Penalty Fine Enforcement	EHC/STC	Residents	H	Y	On Going	Funding

GREEN FUTURE	Establish what effect future house building projects will have for example road building and possible by-pass major road schemes	EHC	CPRE/ Develope rs	H	Y	On Going	Funding
FAIR GREEN IMPROVEMENT	Set up a Trust to manage area	STC	none	L	Y	New project	-
RIGHTS OF WAY	Ensure Rights of Way are protected & maintained for future generations to enjoy	EHC/STC/ RA	Volunteer s/	H		On Going	Funding/Volunteers
ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY	Promote technologies such as solar panels, wind turbines and rainwater collection	EHC	STC	M	Y	New project	-
GROW YOUR OWN FOOD	Promote Allotments and gardens	STC	Allot. Assoc	H	Y	On Going	None
STREET LIGHTING	Provide lighting near Catholic Church	HCC	none	H	Y	New project	-
TOWPATHS	Make towpath from Harlow Mill to Spellbrook accessible	EHDC	STC	M	Y	New project	-

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

- Improve general level of street lighting

Crest “Kick about”

There appears to be no local ownership with regards to its current use and therefore its future. In better words there is not a designated local person named who looks after the interests of this highly used local play facility, predominately used by teenagers for kick about football activities. The site is also used extensively by families to play football, fly kites and model airplanes etc.

Currently, the site is maintained by EHC, but this agreement runs out in autumn 2009.

Once this site is taken away from local families and teenagers it will be greatly missed, leaving the western side of Sawbridgeworth with very little for teenagers and families to do.

Rivers/Behind the Crest Site

There is likely to be a requirement for Sawbridgeworth to accommodate another 150 to 250 houses in the period of the new district plan.

The site is currently designated Green Belt Land

The site is owned by EHC, but is under threat of housing development, as the original owner has a right to buy back the site in the time slot of April to July 2010.

RNSOG look after the interests of the River Orchard and adjacent meadow, but there is no local person or body who looks after the

interests of the remaining land that runs behind properties in The Crest, Brook End and Gilders

Not including Rivers Orchard and its meadow, some 30 or so dog walkers use the site daily throughout the year

The site has a “Right of Way” that runs from Gilders to High Wych which is used extensively by families and ramblers.

There are other areas of the site where currently “Permissive” and “Beaten Track” walking routes are extensively enjoyed by dog walker, families, OAP’s and Joggers alike.

What a loss to the people of Sawbridgeworth and surrounding areas, should this site go?

Care of River & Tributaries

The water course known locally as Sawbridgeworth Brook runs from West Road in the North West of Sawbridgeworth discharging into the navigational River Stort in the South East

The water course is now showing signs of fatigue, with banks being eroded, the build up of detritus materiel beneath bridges and culverts etc. The list goes on.Over time the water course has had to cope with more and more volumes of surface water being discharged into it as it meanders down to the River Stort.

Enough is enough; it simply cannot take any more with out drastic and costly measures being taken.

Whether it’s due to climate change, who knows? The water flow is either famine or feast, so to speak. Through the spring/summer months, the water course tends to dry up, which in turn dries the banks right up to the brink of the banks on both sides.

During the autumn/winter months the water can reach 60cm to 80cm in depth and in some very rare cases, it will rear 90cm to 100cm.

One of the reasons as to why the banks are eroding is over recent years, housing development.

A good example of this is where the water course runs along side Brook Lane. There is quite considerable erosion of the bank along this stretch. It is my belief that this is caused by high levels of water rushing through, washing away the shoulder of the brook as it does so.

Where does this volume of water emanate from? The White Post Field Estate.

All of the White Post Field estates surface water is discharged at one point, just up stream from Brook Lane.

When the White Post Fields estate was being considered, then developed and finally completed, no consideration what so ever was given to the effect that the development would have on the well being of the water course.

For information, the White Post Fields estate is approximately the size as the 150 to 250 new homes that could be planned for Sawbridgeworth

Future development proposals should include a full consequence study that developments would have on all water courses.

The cost of the development should then include enabling works to widen and strengthen water courses down stream of the development

The cost should also identify year on year annual budgets for water course preventative maintenance projects.

Why should developers pick up the cost? Well most, if not all of the Sawbridgeworth water course has either shared or out right Riparian ownership and responsibilities. Why should Riparian proprietors pick up the cost and be responsible for something not of their making.



From an environmental point of view, the water course is currently in quite good order; however, more should be done NOW with regards to annual preventative maintenance programmes.

Allotments

Sawbridgeworth has four Allotment Gardens at Southbrook, Bullfields, Vantorts and Bellmead.

They are fully used, and efforts are being made to provide half plots to attempt to shorten the considerable waiting list



Bullfields



Vantorts



Southbrook



Bellmead

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PEOPLE

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PEOPLE ACTION PLAN

Leader : Roger Beeching

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Support	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
YOUNG PEOPLE'S RECREATION CENTRE	Develop area into new meeting venue	Trustees	STC	M	Y	2010	Grant funding
SCHOOLS		Schools	STP	M	Y	2011	School funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leventhorpe • Fawbert & Barnard • Mandeville's • Reedings • Spellbrook 	Business mentoring for students						
PLAY AREAS	See Amenities Section						
YOUTH ORGANISATIONS							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATC • Guides • Scouts • Spotlight Theatre • Swimming Clubs • Sunday Club • Youth Create • Youth Club • Youth Council • Youth Football • Youth Tennis 							

CHURCHES								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great St Marys • Most Holy Redeemer • Evangelical Congregational 	Support	Churches						
PARKLAND								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pishiobury Park 	Maintain		EHC	CMS	M	Y	Ongoing	Continued funding
SWIMMING								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free swimming for under 16s 	New project		EHC	STC	H	Y	2011	Depends on EHC policy
SCOUTS								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a place for a new Scout Hut 	<i>See entry under Amenities</i>		-	-	-	-	-	-
ELECTRONIC DIARY								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To co-ordinate town events 	Create a diary system accessible to all		STC	STP	M	Y	01/10	Create as part of STC web-site
SUPPORT FOR SINGLE MUMS								
	New project		none	none	M	Y	2010	-

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

- Investigate the provision of a Skate Park (on Bullfields?)
- Investigate a “Timebanks” initiative for skills sharing
- Create a “Firepit” and “BBQ area” in Pishiobury Park
- Allow ball games in West Road

SCHOOLS IN SAWBRIDGEWORTH AND SPELLBROOK

The details of the schools are those that it is assumed will not change too rapidly over time.

1. LEVENTHORPE SCHOOL CAMBRIDGE ROAD.
FOUNDATION, SPECIALIST SCHOOL, MIXED SEX

DATE BUILT /OPENED 1967
AGES OF PUPIL 11 to 18
NOS OF PUPILS 1100
NOS OF TEACHERS 80
OTHER SUPPORT STAFF 75
NOS OF GOVERNORS 20
ANNUAL BUDGET £5,000,000

2. FAWBERT AND BARNARD KNIGHT STREET
INFANTS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

DATE BUILT /OPENED 1896
AGES OF PUPIL rising 4's to 7
NOS OF PUPILS 208 statutory no. 148
NOS OF TEACHERS 8
OTHER SUPPORT STAFF 10
NOS OF GOVERNORS 14
ANNUAL BUDGET about £500,000

3. MANDEVILLES WEST ROAD
MIXED PRIMARY COMMUNITY

DATE BUILT /OPENED 1970
AGES OF PUPIL 4 PLUS TO 11
NOS OF PUPILS 225
NOS OF TEACHERS 10
OTHER SUPPORT STAFF 11
NOS OF GOVERNORS 9
ANNUAL BUDGET about £500,000 LEA

4. REEDINGS BULLFIELDS
MIXED PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

DATE BUILT /OPENED 1967
AGES OF PUPIL 7 to 11
NOS OF PUPILS 227 capacity 240
NOS OF TEACHERS 10
OTHER SUPPORT STAFF 9
NOS OF GOVERNORS 17
ANNUAL BUDGET about £500,000

3. SPELLBROOK LONDON ROAD
CofE PRIMARY Gt St MARYS

DATE BUILT /OPENED 1891
AGES OF PUPIL 4 PLUS TO 11
NOS OF PUPILS 66
NOS OF TEACHERS 4
OTHER SUPPORT STAFF 7
NOS OF GOVERNORS 9
ANNUAL BUDGET about £150,000 LEA

PLAY AREAS IN SAWBRIDGEWORTH

In Sawbridgeworth 19% of the population are under 16. There are six play areas within the town which contain play apparatus.

Vantorts Play Area

This is managed by East Herts and is for under 14s only. The play area is fenced and contains:

- large slide
- 2 baby swings
- 2 full sized swings
- 1 springy horse
- 1 bench seat

None of the equipment is particularly up to date or exciting. There is also a grassed area next to the play area, plus two public tennis courts.

West Road Play Area

This is managed by Sawbridgeworth Town Council and is for ages 11 and under. There is a large grassed area, with a fenced area in the middle containing:

- 1 baby swing
- 1 springy sit on

Although the area is for children aged up to 11, the two pieces of equipment are suitable for younger children only.

There is very little to attract the older ones, especially since ball games are banned.

Sawbridgeworth Young Peoples Recreational Centre (Bullfields)

The recreation ground and “Bullfields Centre” building are under the trusteeship of Sawbridgeworth Town Council and the trust documents state that the area is for the use of children up to the age of 21. The large grassed area has two marked football pitches, plus an unfenced play area with the following equipment:

- zip wire
- 2 tyre swings
- 2 springy sit-ons
- basketball net and kick wall
- tornado (swivelling mushroom shape to hang on to)
- 1 dizzy disc
- seesaw
- climbing frame and large slide
- smaller slide and walkway
- 2 seats

The range of equipment is comprehensive and caters for both young children and teenagers.

There is also a chat room shelter further down, on the east side of the field. There is no easy access to this, as there is no gate in the fence near the shelter, the nearest one being on the north perimeter.

Edens Mount

The play area behind Edens Mount is owned and maintained by East Herts Council. Equipment was revamped at the end of 2007 and includes:

- 2 baby swings
- 2 flat swings
- 1 double seesaw
- a multi-play unit with a metal climbing wall, bouncy basket and banister slide
- 1 semi-circular seat

The equipment is up-to-date and caters for both younger children and teenagers.

Sheering Mill Lane (Old Bowling Green)

This play area is accessed via Sheering Mill Lane or through St Mary's churchyard. It is owned and maintained by East Herts Council and caters for the under 14s. Equipment is unfenced and includes:

- 2 baby swings
- 2 flat swings
- Springy duck

Climbing apparatus, incorporating steps, swinging rack and rope walk.

2 seats



There is also a large grassed area.

Kick about Area

There is a grassed kick-about area at the back of The Crest. None of the play areas were lit, so were not suitable for use after 4.30/5.00pm during the winter.

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PLANNING AND HOUSING

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PLANNING & HOUSING ACTION PLAN

Leader : Roger Beeching

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Support	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
AFFORDABLE HOUSING	EHDC 106 Agreements	EHC	Circle Anglia / RSLs	M	Y	Ongoing	None
STOP INFILLING	Planning Process	STC	EHC	H	Y	Ongoing	None
RIVERS SITE	Planning Process / Pressure Group	Rivers Nursery Group	STC / CPRE	H	Y	Spring 2009	Leaflets
RIVERS SITE - Orchard	Action Plan	RNSOG	EHC	H	Y	2009 ongoing	Campaign Costs
1. Conserving what we have	Increased Awareness of Site Maintenance Plan Lobbying Community Usage Community / Cultural / Education Harvesting & Local Produce Historical Archive development	RNSOG	EHC, National Fruit Collection Advisers	H	Y	2009 - 2010	?
2. Future Statutory Protection	Fruit varieties & site mapping Renewal of heritage varieties Identification of unique elements Biodiversity Surveys	RNSOG	Specialist Stakehold ers	H	Y	2009 -2010	

Planning Application scrutiny						
3. Communication Plan	Communication about the orchard site will be reliable, consistent, timely, open, straightforward, jargon-free and customized wherever possible to the specific needs of target audiences.	RNSOG	EHDC Officers, The Executive. Organizations – National, Regional and Local. Key Advisers. Public. Other Parties.	H	Y	2009 -2010
GILSTON GREAT PARK	Awareness and support for proposal to preserve the area	SHN	STC	H	Y	2010
GREEN SPACES	Create Green Spaces in conjunction with any new housing development	EHC	STC	H	Y	Ongoing

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

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PLANNING AND HOUSING

1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Sawbridgeworth being a category two village as designated in Policy HSG3 in the EH Local Plan second review, has to have 40% affordable houses in each development of 15 or over houses or in site with an area of more than 0.5 hectares.

However there is increasing pressure as land values change to provide funding for affordable houses and mechanisms must be in place to assess the viability of schemes where the developer informs EHCouncil this is an issue.

Statistics show the number of applications from builders to start new houses fell by 25% in the first quarter of 2008.

In the years 1991 to 2007 EH population grew by 14.5%.

The current approach to the provision for social housing engenders a number of issues that need addressing , low resident satisfaction, poor estate environments ,lack of tenant mobility , and increasing social polarisation.

These factors could well see the development of “sink estates”in the middle of private housing in the future.

2. STOP INFILLING

In EH district there are 12,000 houses needed by the edict of the Regional Plan between 2001 and 2021. This number excludes the , perhaps, 15,000 at Harlow North.

Of the 12,000- 8500 have already been allowed for in planning applications and designated sites. This leaves 3,500 houses for which at present no sites are recognised. Inevitably these will

have to be either in one big new town or distributed around the Districts towns and villages in equitable numbers.

Therefore a certain amount of infilling to restrict expansion of the communities boundaries will be needed.

In recognising this we must ensure we keep good quality public open spaces , and to avoid where possible over intensification of housing on large gardens. That is not to put in say 10 to 15 flats on a plot that previously had one detached house on it , as is happening at present.

3. RIVERS / BEHIND THE CREST SITE

As can be seen above there is likely to be a requirement for Sawbridgeworth to accommodate another 150 to 250 houses in the period of the new district plan.

There is already planning permission for our present quota of 170 houses either granted or soon to be so.

Next year (2010) the lease of the land to the rear and enclosing the Rivers Hospital site , including the Orchard reverts to the owners at a fee of £1.00. There is almost certainly then going to be great pressure to build on this land. This may in some areas be inevitable. We must,however be on our guard to restrict the area of this building and for reasons stated before to ensure the Orchard remains an area of national importance, and other parts of the site are set aside for the open space enjoyment and recreation of the community of Sawbridgeworth.. Perhaps by section 106 agreement.

3A. Rivers Orchard - Fruit Trees and Meadow Area

Thomas Rivers, born in Sawbridgeworth in 1798, consolidated the reputation of the nursery that his grandfather founded. His major interest was the breeding and introduction of new varieties of fruit. He was responsible for more than 75 different varieties including peach, nectarine, plum, cherry, apple, apricot and pear, the most famous of which is the Conference pear. Charles Darwin corresponded with him and sought his advice on a regular basis.

The nursery closed at the end of the '80s and 10 years later local people had successfully established it as a Community Orchard with large areas in fruit production. There is a renewed national interest in the preservation of traditional orchards and especially in local and heritage fruit varieties, long gone from commercial sale.. This orchard site is seen by national fruit experts as an important repository and is viewed as "The Holy Grail of English Fruit Production" by RHS Wisley.

The Rivers Nursery Site & Orchard Group(RNSOG) represents the interests of the community of the Sawbridgeworth area at large and all of the supporters of Rivers Nursery Orchard in particular in preserving the site as an historic orchard and a managed green space

The group has drawn up a set of action plans to address the many issues that threaten the future of this horticultural site and will seek the support of our local councils, key individuals

and organizations as we aim to secure the Rivers Nursery Site & Orchard for future generations.

The declared aims of the group are:

- To preserve and revitalise the nursery and orchard site in line with best management practice of old/historic and community orchards.
- To formalise a lasting robust statutory protection of the site within current demarcation lines as mapped out in the Management Plan.
- To continue to develop the archive collection and find a permanent home, befitting its cultural, scientific, historic, local and national importance.
- The protection and preservation of flora and fauna.

4 Gilston Great Park

The Parish Councils of Eastwick and Gilston, Hunsden and Widford in their Parish Plans are incorporating the proposal of Gilston Great Park. This is a concept that is an alternative to 20,000 plus houses proposed on East Herts green belt land north of Harlow. There should be a united front between the Parish and Town Councils affected by the threat of this undemocratic and unsustainable build on our beautiful countryside. Therefore this Town Action Plan thoroughly endorses the Gilston Great Park proposal.



SPELLBROOK

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SPELLBROOK ACTION PLAN

Leader : Angela Alder

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Support	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
Pedestrian Crossing	Petition Herts Highways and pursue this as a project	Spellbrook School	STC	H	?	2 years	Herts Highways
Develop Pedestrian Routes	Discuss programme with Herts Highways	STC	HH	M	Y	1 year	Herts Highways

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action

Plan

- Change

SPELLBROOK

Spellbrook is a small village to the north of Sawbridgeworth but included within its geographical boundary. It has approximately 140 residents and about sixty houses including a short stay residential house for families and a separate three unit block for single homeless people.

While a comparatively small community it boasts an ancient public house The Three Horseshoes in Spellbrook Lane East, frequented by Charles II on his way to Newmarket races.

Spellbrook Primary School is the church School for Great St. Mary's parish and attracts children from the outskirts of Bishop's Stortford as well as from Sawbridgeworth itself. The present Headteacher has deliberately set out to emphasise the Christian ethos of the School and its association with its mother church in Sawbridgeworth. The Chapel of Ease in part of the school classroom had monthly Sunday services conducted by clergy from the parish church until 1968 when the new school building was erected and the Services ceased. The Chalice, cross and candlesticks are now held in Great St. Mary's Church.

Spellbrook has a number of industrial units, one being Hayters, an international company, manufacturing rotary grass mowers. The founder of the principle of rotary mowers, Douglas Hayter was a resident of Spellbrook and pioneered this form of grass cutting. It is one of the largest employers within the Sawbridgeworth Town Council area and, indeed, among the largest in East Hertfordshire District. A hydraulic platforms business, two car sales businesses, one with a popular car washing facility, a well established vehicle break down service, a garden machinery sales and repair business together with

small one man independent business outlets all situated in Spellbrook. There is an exercise gym which is well patronised by local people and from the wider community. All these various enterprises give testimony to a thriving business community giving employment to over three hundred people.

The old part of the school which included the Chapel, the Three Horseshoes and the Farmhouse on the crossroads are all listed buildings.

The street scene has remained relatively unchanged over the last fifty years apart from numerous road realignments, involving the demolition of the Greyhound Public House and two cottages on the corner of Spellbrook Lane East and London Road, the reduction of the brow of the hill outside the Primary School, safety barriers on the west side of the road and double white line marking along most of the main road (London Road) along which most residents live.

A current need is for a safe pedestrian crossing which is being sought via a feasibility study hopefully to be undertaken by Hertfordshire Highways Authority.

The village itself is surrounded by farmland and open countryside. The Stort Navigation runs on the eastern boundary connecting Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth via this waterway link. A well maintained tow path provides a pleasant walk to both town centres and this attracts many visitors during the summer months when there are a large number of long boats and canal barges using this mode of transport.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Leader : **Sawbridgeworth Town Partnership**

Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Group	Partners	Priority	Feasible	Timescale	Resource Implications
SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES	Encourage local businesses to work for benefit of Town as a whole.	STP	STC	H	Y	Ongoing	??
	Revive Traders Assoc	SBA	STP	M	Y	Ongoing	??
SELF EMPLOYMENT WORKING FROM HOME	Business signposting on website	STP	?	H	Y	Apr 09	Funds needed for website development.& Admin time
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	Business Signposting	STP	SBA/EHC	M	Y	Sept 09	Funds needed for website development.& Admin time
DIRECTORY OF SERVICES IN THE TOWN	Online directory	STP	SBA/EHC	H	Y	Ongoing	
THE MALTINGS	Encourage better general direction signage	Traders	Essex CC	H	Y	Ongoing	££££ & who will action it
	Put in town specific signposts to and from Maltings.	STC	HCC	H	Y	01/10	Already costed

	Encourage more usage by Town & Community via website	STP	Traders	M	Y	Ongoing	Web admin
FARMERS MARKET	FARMA Certification	STP	EHC	M	Y	2010	Grant support required ££££
	Continue with innovations	STP	?	M	Y	Ongoing	?
	Healthy Food Agenda	STP	PCT	M	Y	End 2009	
RESTAURANTS ,PUBLIC HOUSES AND CAFES	Encourage responsible management of late night events	Traders	Police/ EHC	H	Y	Ongoing	??
	Ensure surrounding areas are cleaned up after closing time	Licensee?	STP /STC	H	Y	Ongoing	
	Encourage premises to get accommodation certified	?	STP /STC	M	Y	Before 2012	
	Get this sector to launch more promotions on the website	STP	Traders	H	Y	Ongoing	Web admin time and assoc costs
PROMOTION OF THE TOWN	Publicise all events in a regular format and encourage town groups to become more customer orientated	STP	STC	H	Y	Ongoing	Town Marketing Budget???
	Promote our Parks, Walks and open spaces	STP/STC	HCC/EHC	M	Y	Ongoing	

TOURISM	Publicity Support for town Walks	STP	STC	M	Y	Ongoing	???
	SBW Info leaflet to download from website	STP	-	M	Y	End 2009	Funding to be sought
	Work with water and Rail Companies to arrange special promotions	???	HCC/EHC	L	Y		
TOURIST INFORMATION	Establish info Kiosk in new civic buildings	STC	-	H	Y	11/09	Funded by STC
	Signposting to town centre from station						
COMMUNICATIONS	Continue to develop sbwonline website to ensure all that contributes to the vitality of the town is promoted constantly	STP	EHC	H	Y	Ongoing	Funds needed for website development.& Admin time
	Work with regional organisations to ensure SBW is a 'Destination' town. Destination not yet defined	?	Tourism bodes	H	Y	ongoing	£££

STC – Town Council. STP - Town Partnership. . PC(SO) – Police; HH – Herts Highways. EHC – East Herts Council. HCC – Herts County Council

WORKSHOP WISH LIST – Items for future inclusion in the Action Plan

Economic Development Background:

There is a noticeable divergence of objectives between the Business community and the 3 tiers of Local Government with each showing little understanding of each others needs or willingness to bridge the gap. The current economic climate (2009) is a challenging one in which to operate a business and local Councils need to show a greater understanding of economic difficulties facing small businesses and the local economy.

There is a wealth of evidence, demonstrated by the numerous expensive, weighty reports of questionable relevance commissioned by all tiers of local authority which alienates the business sector, resulting in traders not wanting to get involved in consultations and the perception that Council's do their own thing anyway. It is therefore even more important at this time that Local Government and the Business Sector seek to understand each others actions and motivations. Economic Development, more than ever, is reliant upon concerted and considered undertakings that seek to maintain stability in communities.

From an economic perspective the town offers a range of quality opportunities and experiences for businesses, visitors and residents. It is enriched by its residents who are, in general, friendly, educated, socially active and interested people. Sawbridgeworth is considered a little exclusive and although known as a historic market town it is an evolving place which seeks to move with the times whilst retaining its charming character and independence. There is a range of independent shops, some exclusive retail outlets, and a large supermarket which is well integrated in the community.

There is a large antiques base in the Maltings and a high quality Farmers Market has been established.



Perceptible weaknesses: Car Parking and charges. Some retail space empty. Decisions on 'Change of use' for retail space are not always logical. Not seen as a shopping location to travel to. Little room for expansion in terms of light-industrial business. Some areas need aesthetic enhancement. Sawbridgeworth struggles to get a profile separate from Bishop's Stortford in many publicity opportunities

Competition: the two large towns Harlow and Bishop's Stortford which border Sawbridgeworth are a serious draw on shoppers and offer many more facilities than are possible in a town of our size. These factors include:

Large supermarkets, Retail parks including the offer of chain store furnishings, electrical and white goods, and DIY, Cinema, Theatre (Harlow) Museums, Markets (Bishops Stortford, Thursday and Harlow Saturday and Thursday)

Going forward:

There is an increasing interest in ethical shopping and locally sourced products. Our Farmers' Market responds to this demand as does the town's main supermarket. There is a homogenizing of town centres with large chain-stores dominating the high streets. In response to this trend Sawbridgeworth has an opportunity to maximise and expand upon its base of independent retailers and offer a different, niche shopping experience.



The Sawbridgeworth Town Partnership (STP), as a body of volunteers, has set itself aims as follows

- To create an environment in which businesses can thrive
- To increase the business offer of the town and broaden its economic vitality
- To promote Sawbridgeworth as an excellent place to live, work and visit

Obviously the STP is limited by both finance and the willingness of all stakeholders to support and promote its efforts whilst respecting the limitations of its voluntary status. The STP is keen to work with stakeholders and be a key partner in the survival, stability and preparation for a stronger future for Sawbridgeworth as the economy readjusts. The issues and suggested actions detailed in this document are realistically achievable but only with sustained effort and the securing of funding for projects and the relevant people to steer them.

Economic Development Issues not mentioned here and previously listed in other versions of the Action Plan need to be evaluated by their sponsors and added in.

- To create an environment in which businesses can thrive
- To increase the business offer of the town and broaden its economic vitality
- To promote Sawbridgeworth as an excellent place to live, work and visit

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OPINION SURVEY

A Questionnaire was available in hard copy and posted on the Town Council and the Town Partnership websites for people to respond to.

Please give us answers to the following questions:

Q1. In General:

Please rank (from 1 – 8) the following issues in order of their importance to you in the community

Community Support Groups	
Community Identity	
Economic Development	
Environment	
Infrastructure of Town	
Law and Order	
Leisure and Social Facilities	
Roads and Transport	

Q2. In the 8 sections of the Draft Plan:

Please write in the two most important issues that you think need attention

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT

CRIME & DISORDER

AMENITIES & FACILITIES

ENVIRONMENT

PEOPLE

PLANNING & HOUSING

SPELLBROOK

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Q3. Would you like to come to the Workshops planned for 7.30pm on Thursday 02 April, here at the Memorial Hall?

YES	NO
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Q4. Have you any other comments you would like to make?

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OPTIONAL. Please give us your name address and telephone number if you would like us to contact you.

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Thank you.

KEY CONTACTS

There are few names and addresses in this Action Plan. This is partly because names and addresses change frequently and partly because they are displayed elsewhere in such locations as:

- The library
- The STC web-site
- The STAP web-site
- Church and Town Magazine

If you would like to comment on the first iteration of the Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan, or would like to be part of the working group which will scrutinise and monitor progress towards the objectives set out in it, please contact in the first instance the secretary to the Steering Group:

The Town Clerk
Sawbridgeworth Town Council
49-51 Bell Street
Sawbridgeworth
CM21 9AR

Phone: 1279 724537

Or contact him by e-mail at:

stc@sbwtowncouncil.org

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Members of the Steering Group and Working Parties:

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Cllr Angela Alder

Cllr Gary Austin

Cllr Roger Beeching

Cllr Eric Buckmaster

Cllr Barry Hodges

Cllr Paul Rose

Cllr Joyce Vincent

Richard Bowran, Town Clerk

Economic Groups

Joseph Fitzgerald – Town Partnership

Environment Groups

Monya Billings – Community Voluntary Service

Hazel Mead – Stort Valley Project

Warren Richards – Stort Valley Project

Clive Atkins – of The Crest

Volunteer Groups

Peter Reed – Memorial Hall

John Rider – Allotment Association

Youth Groups

Gill Hawkins – Youth Create

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