



Community Plan 2009

Introduction

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Welcome to the Alne community plan

A community or parish plan sets out a vision for how a community wants to develop over the next five to ten years and brings together the views, needs and opinions of the whole community. A community plan can be used to inform officer and member opinion at district and regional level and can have a powerful impact on strategy development that affects us all. It is a means of community involvement in influencing strategy that is proven to work.



With the permission of Alne parish council

Over 100 parishes in North Yorkshire alone have produced plans and these are working together to impact on Local Strategic Plans, Local Area Agreements and Local Development Frameworks. They also feed into Primary Care Trusts influencing the local healthcare we receive. Our Community Plan will join this drive, giving us measurable outputs to show how we can effect actual change in our local community.

Our plan is a dynamic document, designed to have a lifespan of ten years, to be regularly re-visited and reviewed to ensure that it continues to reflect our needs over time. The plan builds on our achievements as a community to date and seeks to bring together our aspirations for the future and help us reach them.

Alne & our history

Alne is a small village situated 12 miles north of York and about 3 miles South West of Easingwold in the Hambleton district of North Yorkshire. There are about 271 households in the parish and in the 2001 census the Parish of Alne had a population of 711.

Alne was mentioned in the Domesday Book and in 1823 Baine's Directory of the County of York said "This village (Alne) takes its name from the Latin word *Alnus*, (the alder tree) it being situated in a low swampy country, which formerly abounded with alders, and thence it was called the Forest of Alders. Pop. 386".

In the early to mid 19th century the parish of Alne was a thriving community and a railway station opened on 31st March 1841. By the early part of the 20th century Alne was said to be virtually self supporting with four grocery shops (including a post office), 2 saddlers, a basket makers, a cobblers, a blacksmith, two joiners, two dressmakers and a tailor. There were four "pubs", the Blue Bell Inn and the Fox & Goose near the centre of the village and The Station Inn and Railway Inn at Alne station. At the station there were six stopping trains daily in each direction and other services.



However, change has always been a feature of our community as has concern over its effects: "When I was a girl everyone knew one another, but now things are so different. Now people come and go before you really know them, and country life as I knew it has gone altogether" (1937); "People no longer know each other" (2008).

What the community has

We already have a number of valuable resources in the shape of places and people who form the heart of this community. We have a thriving village school that is fed into by an extremely popular and highly regarded playgroup. Both are supported by parents, management and governing bodies to ensure their continuing success,

We have a beautiful and historic Norman church that we consider central to our community. The dedicated Parochial Church Council work hard to maintain the church and fund a monthly parish newsletter, which keeps us informed of community and church events. We also have a village hall which is available for social and community events and ably managed by a voluntary committee. We have a Cricket & Social Club, branch of the Women's Institute and a Gardening Club among many others.

There are numerous thriving businesses in and around the village from farms to brickworks to a caravan park. We also have Oak Trees Nursing and Care Home and the Leonard Cheshire Home which bring diversity and employment opportunities.

Additionally we are incredibly fortunate to have our playing fields. Brought into being by the efforts of the community to raise funds and maintained to a very high standard by the Alne Parish Leisure Association (APLA). Our annual Street Fayre is the chief fundraising activity for the playing fields and is justifiably popular throughout the area.



Other community successes include campaigning for a footpath between Alne and Alne Station and having the speed limit reduced from 60 to 40 mph on the same stretch of road.

Almost all of this has been achieved and is maintained by the support of volunteers from within the community; residents who care about how and where they live and are prepared to give their time and energy to making Alne a wonderful place.

Introduction

What the community wants

Alne already has a justifiable reputation for having a great sense of community and a track record of working together to achieve our goals. As a community, we want to continue to build on this and help to focus on what we want over the next ten years. We also want to make sure that our voice is heard when decisions are made that affect our community. We hope that this plan will be the vehicle to help us achieve this.



How the plan was produced

In September 2007 a group of interested people met after the Parish Council placed a notice in the Parish Newsletter asking if anyone would like to help produce a plan and a steering group was formed. The group arranged a number of open events and distributed suggestion boxes to gather opinion on what should be in the plan. The events were well attended and produced lots of ideas.

This information was used to draw up a questionnaire and then the data provided by this was used to write this plan. The steering group went back to the community and the Parish Council to make sure the plan was do-able before it went to print.

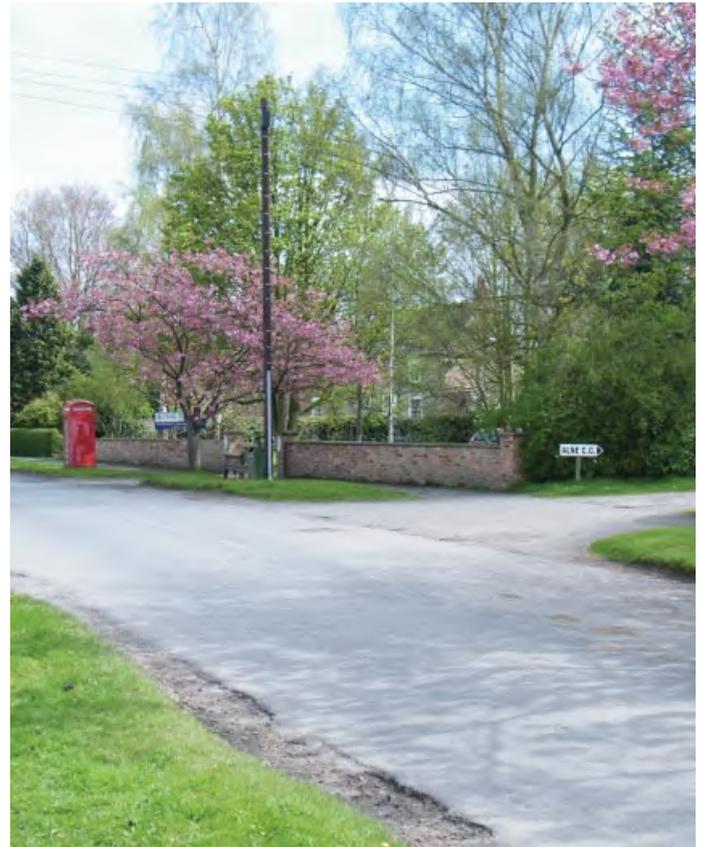
The steering group was funded by a grant from Yorkshire Rural Community Council and from North Yorkshire County Community Fund for Local Strategic Partnerships. This money was used to pay for the open events and printing costs for publicity materials, the questionnaire and producing the plan. The steering group worked on a voluntary basis and no one was paid for their time.

What next?

At the end of 'The Plan' you will find the 'Action Plan'. This sets out what you want to be done, how it can be achieved and over what timescale.

The parish council will report back to the community at regular intervals to let us know how it is progressing.

This is also your opportunity to get involved. If any of the action points interest you and you would like to be part of helping to deliver it, let the steering group know and they will help to get you started.



The Plan

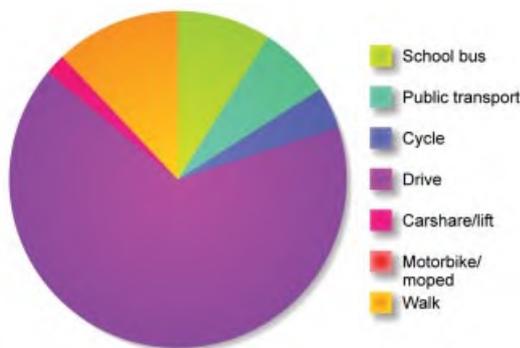
All of the ideas, issues and actions identified here have come from our community, what we, the steering group, have tried to do is place them into a plan so that there is some supporting structure around what the community wants to achieve over the next ten years. The ideas and issues have arisen from the open events that were held and from the results of the community questionnaire.

About 70% of households responded to the questionnaire and you told us our priorities for the future and quite a lot about yourselves.

From the responses we were able to determine that about the same number of men as women returned questionnaires, only 15% of respondents live alone, 74% of our population is aged over 36 and 15% aged under 16 (so we're a bit short on 'young' people). 42% of us work outside the home, 18% are retired and 25% have caring responsibilities. Of those who go out to work 60% work more than 10 miles from Alne and 66% of those who go out to work, drive.

All this information tells us things like: we are a car dependent community, we have an ageing population, half our population is at home all day, every day, we have a lot of caring responsibilities and we travel a long way to work. These issues are important to policy makers.

How do you get to work/school?



We asked you more than 100 questions arranged into six topic areas and the plan is laid out in the same order. We asked you to respond by recording how strongly you agreed or disagreed with a statement and the following are the top 20 scoring issues in your order of priority:

- 1 The landfill site on Forest Lane is a concern
- 2 The Church building and its surrounds is an important asset to the parish
- 3 The avenue of trees on Main Street should be maintained
- 4 There should be improved local recycling
- 5 The village needs an accessible pub
- 6 The village needs a shop
- 7 Sheep should be brought back in churchyard
- 8 There should be footpaths between villages
- 9 There should be footpaths to school
- 10 There should be a parish directory
- 11 There should be good broadband connectivity
- 12 There should be a neighbourhood watch scheme
- 13 Abattoir/food industry waste should not be sprayed on agricultural land
- 14 Planning controls should be enforced
- 15 I would attend events in Alne
- 16 There should be community fuel contracts
- 17 There should be a means to advertise for sale and swap items
- 18 There should be more evening buses to York
- 19 We should use the church for other activities
- 20 We should extend a welcome to newcomers

You will then see that the action points in the plan are a response to these priorities.

The Parish Environment and Appearance

The community was asked about Alne's appearance and environment and these turned out to be the issues of most concern to us.

"Plant more cherry trees along Main Street - those planted in 1952 are beginning to die back"



The community is particularly concerned about the appearance of Main Street and buildings in the village.

We also care about how Alne links with Alne Station.

"Nice to hear that Alne Station is included - we should move the village sign to say so!"



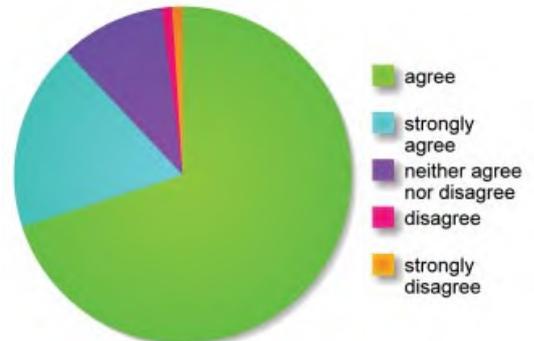
We want the village to retain its rural nature. Local farming brings benefits and it is appreciated when it is conducted responsibly with care for the environment and residents.

Planning controls need to be enforced to protect the environment but have to be flexible enough to meet the needs of a changing community. We also want our Conservation Area status preserved.

Whilst landfill sites may be necessary for the time being, they need to be managed responsibly and fully within the law and there needs to be strong enforcement of relevant regulations.



The landfill site on Forest Lane is a concern (smell/size/windblown litter)



“Allotments would be great - it would help to cut down food miles”

As a community we would like to be sustainable. We want to increase our use of renewable energy, buy energy more efficiently, improve our access to recycling and become more self-sufficient in food production, perhaps with the introduction of an allotment scheme.



“Bring back those sheep to cut the grass: this has been a tradition for centuries”

Finally, we want the sheep back in our churchyard.



Actions:

- Establish a ‘trees and hedges’ working group
- Set up an ‘environment’ action group to address issues such as local recycling and waste spreading on fields
- Monitor the landfill site
- Set-up an action group to pursue an allotment and woodland scheme
- Re-introduce sheep in the churchyard
- Monitor Planning Issues



Local Facilities & Amenities

School and Playgroup

There is an excellent primary school and preschool playgroup in the village, to which the majority of pupils come from the five villages within a three-mile radius.



"Sounds an excellent idea to have rugby posts on the playing field, to encourage children to partake in sporting activities is fundamental"

The school has coped well with a recent increase in pupil numbers but residents noted that both the school and playgroup could do with more space. The school has very dedicated staff and a knowledgeable and supportive Governing Body. It also has Friends of Alne School (FOAS) which raises funds to supplement the school's resources.

Similarly, the playgroup management committee supplement funds through a variety of well attended and supported community events during each year.

"Playgroup is an excellent facility but should not be taken for granted"

There is good community support for the village school and playgroup and a strong appreciation that both do an exceptional job with the limited space and resources at their disposal.

The school is encouraged to improve and extend its facilities to accommodate ever growing pupil numbers and some residents thought that it would be beneficial for playgroup to have its own purpose built accommodation.





"A local swimming pool would enhance the area considerably"

We'd like to have access to a local swimming pool which would benefit the community as a whole and our children would like some additional facilities on the playing fields.



Actions:

- Continue and build on the good links that have been forged between the school, playgroup and the local community
- Promote cohesion between school and playgroup to develop facilities
- Have a bus link to Thirsk swimming pool



Local Facilities & Amenities

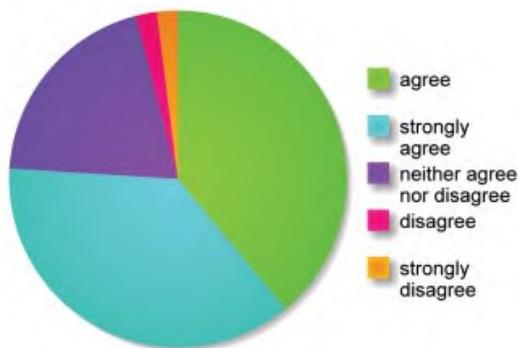
Village Hall, Church and Social Facilities

For residents of Alne the notion of “community” is a very important one. The village has a church, village hall and cricket club - which are dear to it - but there is a wish for more in the way of social facilities. Mainly places we can meet both formally and casually.



Sadly, we lost our post office and the shop that housed it in recent years. Our pub is now a smart country inn, where the emphasis is primarily on dining. However, it was clear from our questionnaire that we want a shop and an accessible pub.

The village needs a shop



Happily, work is already well underway on reopening a shop with a dedicated working group in existence. Planning approval has been granted for an extension to the village hall, which, despite there being issues about parking and access, offers a good location for a “community shop”.



Re-establishing a local pub may be difficult as it might require private premises to become available and someone to actually seek a license to run one. In recent times the cricket club, with its thriving bar, has provided an alternative, but it is a private club whose central function is to play cricket. Clearly popular and highly thought of, there is no strong desire from the community and club alike to see the cricket club further evolve to become a full substitute for a village pub.

“The village hall is a fantastic and well-used facility”



“the village needs a traditional pub”

Alne is lucky to have its village hall - in what used to be the village school building. Its availability needs to be better publicised to the community to make more use of it - particularly for activities for teenagers and older children, which is a gap in social facilities identified by the respondents.



We have a beautiful and historic Norman church situated at one end of the village. We all see it as an important asset to our community and we would like to see it used for other activities in addition to worship, perhaps lectures, art displays, debates and concerts.

"The church would be ideal for lectures/debates. There have been exhibitions and concerts in the past - if only there could be more of the same in the future"



Actions:

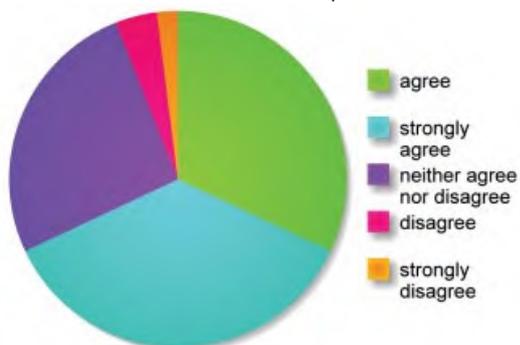
- Village Shop Working Group
- Set up a working group for a village pub
- Promote use of the Village Hall
- Promote use of the Church



Our Community

The community is well connected; most of us have a computer and internet access and as a result there is little interest in having an internet café in the village but we do want good broadband connectivity.

There should be good broadband connectivity for work and social use in the parish



"We would really value proper fast broadband"

We want to be able to communicate effectively with each other locally and make sure there are good links to information about local events and directories about local goods and services. We enjoy local events and activities and want to be sure that they are advertised as widely as possible to ensure support.



"When we moved in we felt really welcome"

We'd also like to be able to welcome newcomers to the community and give them access to information about us and what we do.

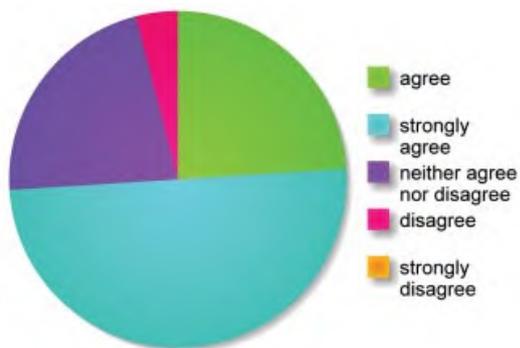
There used to be a 'Neighbourhood Watch Scheme' which is now dormant but there is a desire to have this re-instated.



We have a fantastic monthly Parish newsletter which addresses most of these desires but we would like to expand on this and have a village website.



There should be a neighbourhood watch scheme



Actions:

- Identify someone to champion the broadband issue
- Re-establish a 'Neighbourhood Watch Scheme'
- Contribute to Parish Newsletter
- Establish and maintain village website



Roads & Transport

We have good school bus services and reasonable public bus services, particularly between York and Easingwold although we'd like more evening bus services. However, we are a car dependent community.

"I would use a bus if they were more frequent and I could get hold of an easy-to-read bus timetable"



The community would like footpaths between local villages that children can use to walk to the primary school and a network of footpaths for recreational use for everyone.

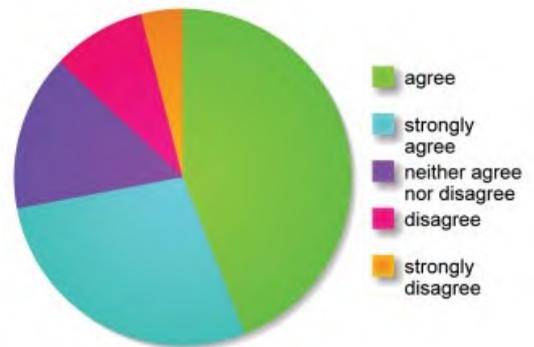


We want our roads to be safe, particularly for our children and cyclists, and to protect the nature of our community. However, presently there is little desire for major traffic calming measures such as speed bumps or chicanes and we would like signage kept to a minimum to protect the appearance of the village.



"The Parish is poorly served by cycle paths and footpaths"

There should be footpaths between the villages of Alne, Tollerton, Tholthorpe and Flawith





“Additional paths would perhaps lead to less road traffic between the villages - a very good idea”

There are on-going issues concerning parking and congestion at the school. The school is proactive in encouraging parents to be considerate when dropping off and picking up and runs a popular “walking bus” to encourage a healthy lifestyle for children. There is currently little support for radical action such as a ban on cars in Jack Hole or police enforcement of traffic regulations within the village. However, this issue will need monitoring if the traffic volume or public opinion changes.

Actions:

- Input to bus routing and timetabling decision making
- Set up a ‘footpaths & cycle ways’ action group
- Promote continued use of walking bus
- Continue monitoring speed limits and traffic



Health & Social Care

We consider ourselves to be a fairly healthy community and we are reasonably satisfied with our access to health services. However, areas of concern are access to dental services and the GP appointments system at Tollerton and Easingwold.



"Surgery hours should be amended to accommodate typical working hours"

"(There is a) lack of provision of out of hours GP service within reasonable distance. York walk - in centre manned by a nurse"

We are also concerned about access to health services for older and disabled people.

We would like better dental services - the nearest NHS dentist is in Easingwold and is currently unable to take new patients.

"(Health care is) adequate being healthy and not too old"

We would like to see an adequate out of hours GP service and an improved weekend service.

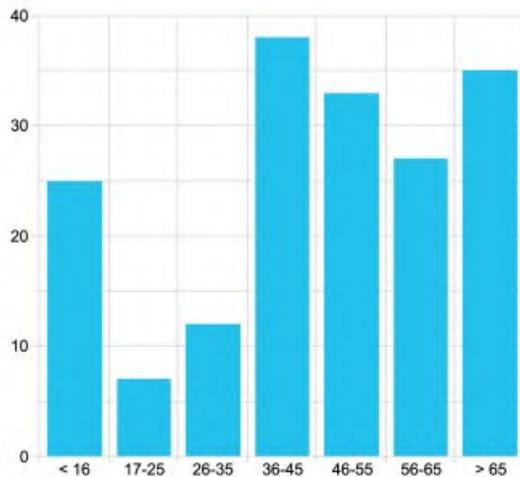
It is difficult for those less able and our older population to travel to the health services that are available. We would like this to be addressed and we are generally concerned about care for this section of our community.





Overall, there is clearly a lack of awareness and information about what services are available.

Age range of questionnaire respondents



"look out for older people"

Actions:

- Identify what health services are available locally and communicate results
- Determine what needs to happen to improve services or accessibility



Our Economy

In addition to a number of small local businesses, the community is home to several larger employers, providing opportunities for local people. These include the Alders Caravan Park, Alne Primary School, Leonard Cheshire Home, Oaktrees Nursing Home, The Blue Bell, York Handmade Brick Co, and numerous farms.



It is important that employment opportunities in the village are supported, so that the local economy is enhanced. One method of sustaining this might be by setting up a Local Business Support Group to share information, experience and facilities.



"LET's schemes are brilliant and bring communities together"

There was a suggestion to set up a Local Exchange Trading Systems or Schemes - this is a local community-based mutual aid network where people exchange all kinds of goods and services with one another, without the need for money. There was not a great deal of support for this which probably reflects the number of people that commute away from the village to work, but it may be worth considering in the future, particularly if we want to be more self sustaining.



"The majority of people who live in Alne work elsewhere - that is not going to change - so I'm not sure how significant any plans for home workers would be although there may be quite a few people who (like me) are home based for 10-20% of their working day"

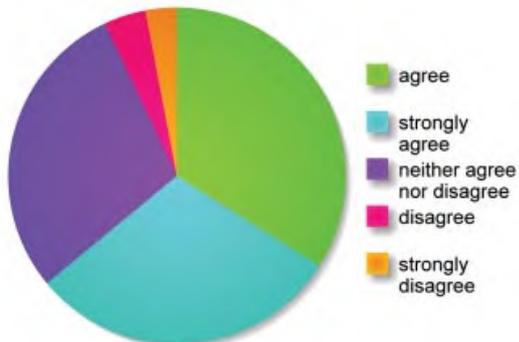


While most of us who work do so outside the home, there is not a great deal of support for a home worker's network. However, with the continued growth of home working, the need to have a fast reliable broadband service is crucial.

We are keen to buy fuel co-operatively, with recent high rises in fuel prices we could achieve real value for money by buying as a community instead of individually.

"Group together to buy heating fuel - it will lower the cost"

There should be community contracts to buy fuel to achieve lower prices by aggregating our demand



Actions:

- Monitor situation re LETs, Local Business Support Group and Home workers network
- Set up a fuel contract scheme
- Identify a broadband champion to improve connectivity



Action Plan

The Action Plan summarises how we will achieve the outcomes identified in the Community Plan. We have listed each action the recommended approach to achieve the target and within what timescale.

The colour code represents where we are on the actions.

- Completed or in hand
- Ready to go
- We need your help

Action Point	Approach	Time Line				
		2009 - 2010	2009 - 2010	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2018
The Parish Environment & Appearance						
Establish a 'trees and hedges' working group	Working Group	Establish the group now and define parameters and timescales within the next 6months. It is likely that the work of this group would run for the lifetime of the plan. A group leader has been identified but more members still needed – contact the steering group				
Set up an 'environment' action group to address issues such as recycling and waste spreading	Action Group	Establish the group now and define parameters and timescales within the next 6months. It is likely that the work of this group would run for the lifetime of the plan. A group leader has been identified but more members still needed – contact the steering group				
Monitor the landfill site	Parish Council and interested individual					
Set up an action group to pursue allotment and woodland scheme	Action Group	Establish the group now and define parameters and timescales within the next 6months. It is likely that the work of this group would run for the lifetime of the plan.				
Re-introduce sheep in the churchyard	Already achieved by the Parochial Church Council (PCC)					
Monitor Planning Issues	Via the Parish Council or www.hambleton.gov.uk a source of information and assistance on local planning issues	The mechanisms to monitor planning issues already exist but need communicating better – the establishment of the village website will be key to achieving this.				

Action Point	Approach	Time Line				
		2009 - 2010	2009 - 2010	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2018
Local Facilities & Amenities - school & playgroup						
Continue and build on the good links forged between the school, playgroup and community	Playgroup Committee, School Governors, Parish Council, parents and interested individuals					
Promote cohesion between school & playgroup to develop facilities	Consultation with School, Playgroup, Governors, Management Committee and others needed					
Get a bus link to Thirsk swimming pool	Liaison with Easingwold Villages Forum					
Local Facilities & Amenities - village hall, church & social facilities						
Re-establish a village shop	Village Shop Working Group (VSWG)					
Set up a working group for a village pub	Working Group					
Promote use of the village hall	Village Hall Committee					
Promote use of the church	PCC					

Action Plan

Action Point	Approach	Time Line				
		2009 - 2010	2009 - 2010	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2018
Our Community						
Improve broadband performance within the parish	Broadband Champion					
Establish and maintain a village website	Webmaster & team	A group leader has been identified but other members needed – contact the steering group to get involved				
Re-establish a 'Neighbourhood Watch Scheme'	NWS Co-ordinator	A group leader has been identified but other members welcome – contact the steering group to get involved				
Contribute to the parish newsletter	Everyone					
Roads & Transport						
Set up a 'footpaths & cycle ways' action group	Action Group	A group leader has been identified but other members welcome – contact the steering group to get involved				
Promote continued use of walking bus	School & parents					
Input to bus routing and timetabling decision making	Liaison with Easingwold Villages Forum	A group leader has been identified but other members welcome – contact the steering group to get involved				
Continue monitoring speed limits and traffic	Parish Council & Action Group	A group leader has been identified but other members welcome – contact the steering group to get involved				

Action Point	Approach	Time Line				
		2009 - 2010	2009 - 2010	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2018
Health & Social Care						
Identify what health services are available locally, communicate the results and determine what we can then do to improve access	Action group					
Our Economy						
Set up a fuel contract scheme	Scheme manager					
Monitor situation re LETs, Local Business Support Group and Home workers network	Via the village website - webmaster			We need a volunteer to take this forward		
Investigate the possibility of getting a mains gas supply to the village				We need a volunteer to take this forward		



Alne Primary School 'My Community' art competition

This document is a "work in progress". Each member of the community can become involved in any of the actions by contacting a member of the Community Plan Steering Group or a Parish Councillor (see right). Some groups already exist, others need to be established; we don't want to re-invent the wheel, this is about building on what we've got and keeping what is good as much as it is about starting new initiatives.

The Parish Council is ultimately responsible for delivering this action plan and will make regular reports to us, the community, to let us know how it is progressing.

A Fact Book providing the background information used to produce this plan will be made available in electronic format and will be obtainable from the Community Plan Steering Group, the Parish Council and will be on the Alne website.

To become involved

Contact:

Jackie Davies	Gudrun Gaudian	Steve Gilholm
Jo Hall	Neil Hawkins	Pam Marlow
Liz Toomey	David Walker	

Tel: 07894 112272 or **email: alneplan@mainlead.com**
or a member of the parish council

Acknowledgments

The steering group would like to thank the Parish Council for giving us the opportunity to work on and produce this plan, the YRCC for funding and support, Alne Cricket Club and the Village hall for letting us hold our open events. Most of all, we would like to thank the whole community of Alne for everything they have achieved so far and for coming up with every single idea in this plan.

Steve Gilholm, Chair, Alne Community Plan Steering Group, July 2009.