

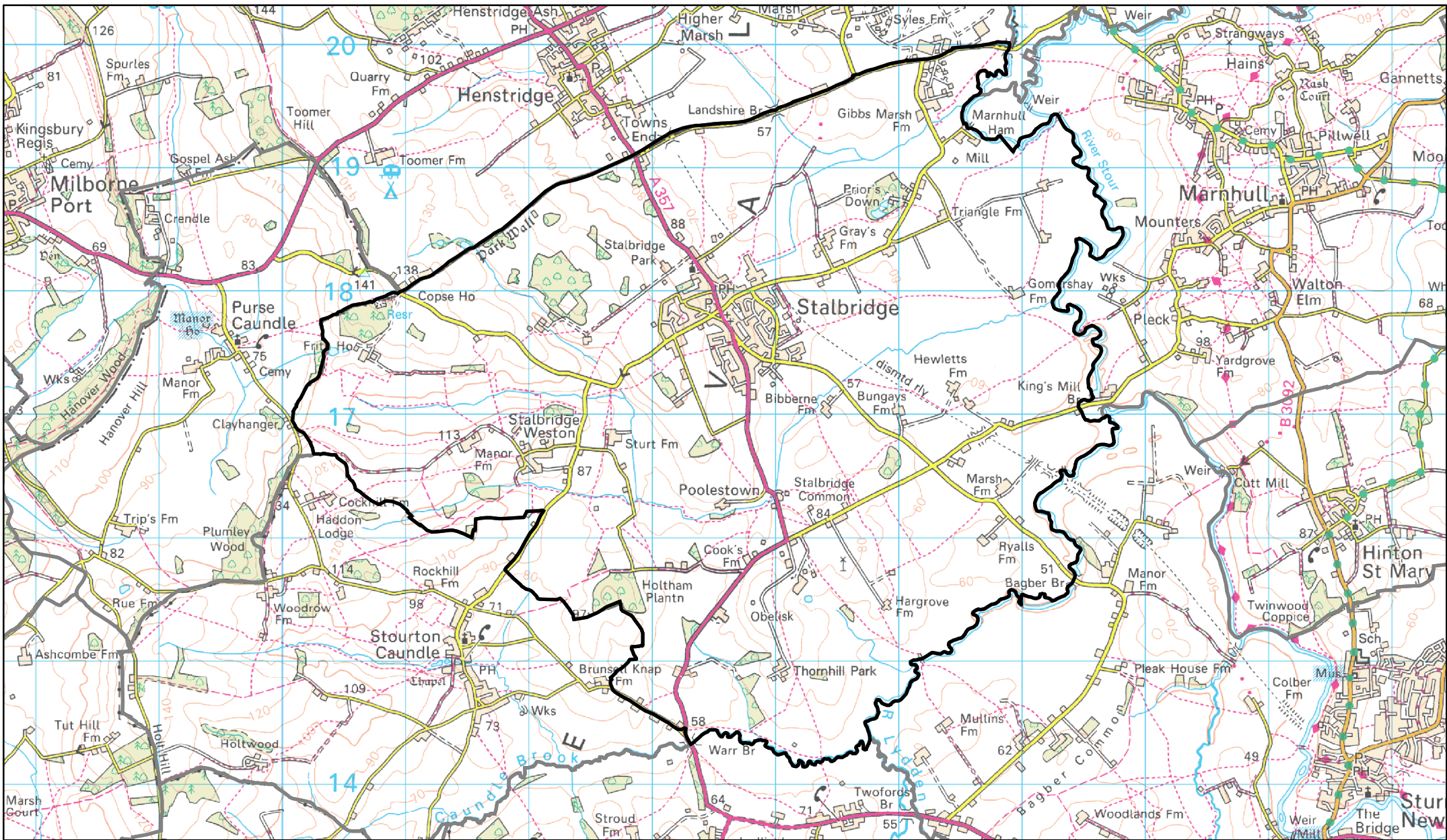
Stalbridge Town Plan Summary & Action Plan



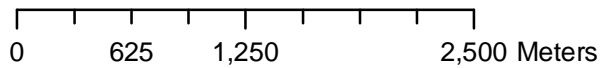
March 2008

Front cover designed by Don Murray, Stalbridge

Photo of Stalbridge Cross by courtesy of Joe Dunckley / Cotch.net



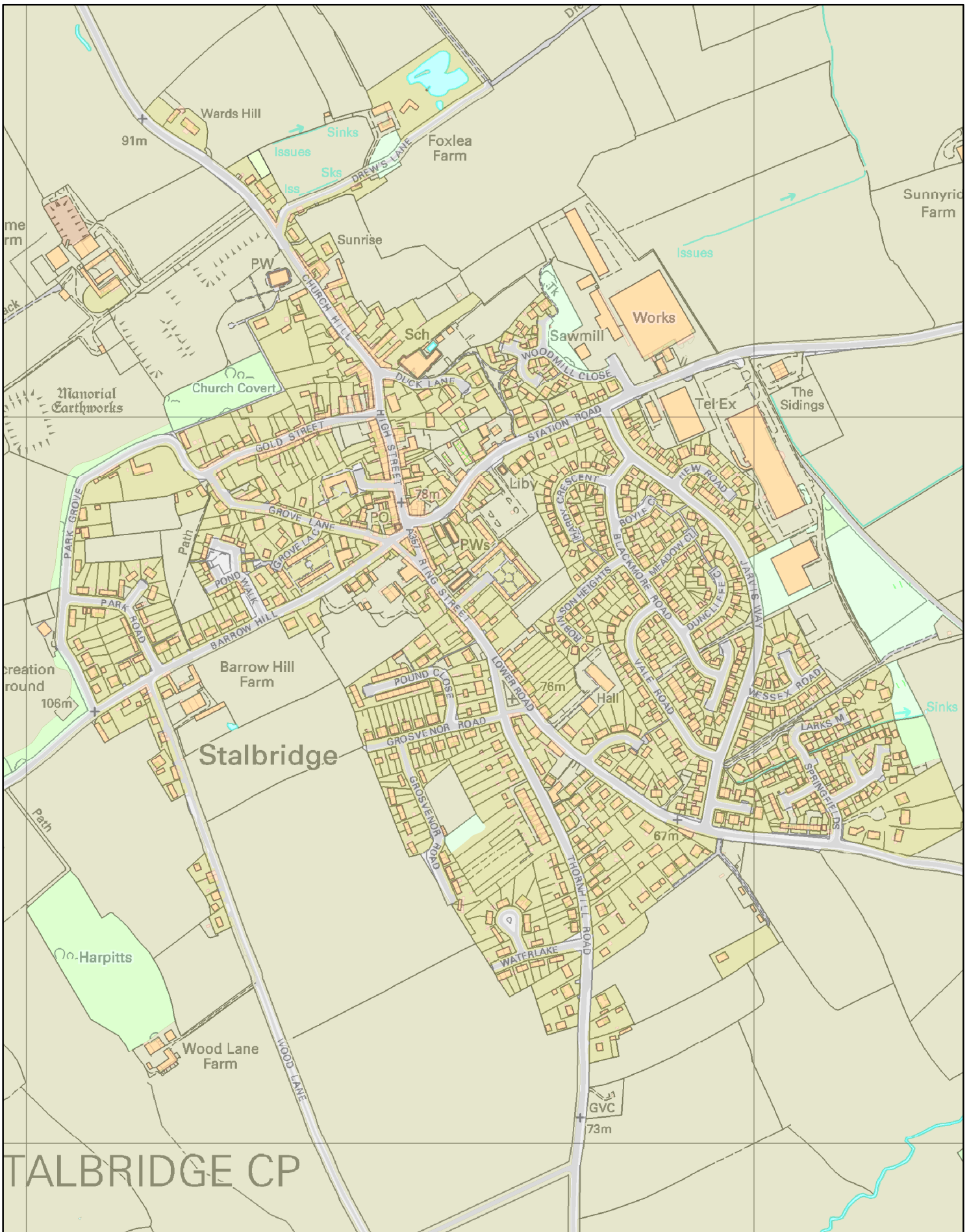
Stalbridge Town Boundary



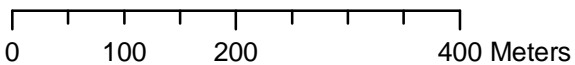
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North Dorset
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Stalbridge



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INTRODUCTION

The Stalbridge Town Plan brings together your concerns and ideas for the future of the town, and there is a wealth of good ideas. It also records what you value about Stalbridge, and it is very clear that Stalbridge is a great place to live and work.

The Town Plan gives the community a sense of direction, and can also be used to influence others. Ultimately, however, it is your Plan, and it is up to everyone to help make things happen.

What is a Town Plan?

A Town Plan is a document describing how a community currently sees itself, how it wants to develop and what it needs to do to make it happen. The Plan covers many aspects, including community life, the local economy and the environment.

The key features of a Town Plan are that:

- Everyone has an opportunity to take part
- It identifies what people value about the town
- It identifies what needs improving
- It identifies how these improvements can be implemented

Why do we need a Town Plan?

It's not something that we have to have. However, more and more towns and parishes across Dorset are developing these community based plans, which can give a local community a sense of direction, and help groups and organisations work better together. Some of the ideas which come out from these plans can be done by our own community. Other ideas will need work by outside agencies, such as District and County Councils, the Police, etc, and by providing a clear statement of what the community wants, a Town Plan can help them make informed decisions on matters which affect the community. It is also useful in supporting applications for funding.

The Stalbridge Town Plan, an initiative supported by the Town Council, is funded through the Dorset Strategic Partnership.

The Town Plan process

The Stalbridge Town Plan has taken some time to complete; these plans always do, but it is fair to say this one has taken longer than usual!

It started with a display in the Community Office in the summer of 2006, used to identify the key issues.

This information was used by the Steering Group to design the questionnaire, which was distributed in late December 2006, with a return date of the end of January 2007. Part of the questionnaire was tick box replies, easy to analyse, but much of it was asking for comments, and you had a great deal to say! It took months to record and analyse this, and a summary was given at an Open Meeting held in November 2007, which also generated some more ideas. Finally, there was a display at the Stalbridge Lights in December 2007.

So what happens next? Well just like any other Plan, it's full of great ideas that can start happening tomorrow, particularly if people like you are prepared to lend a hand. Some things in this Plan will take physical and mental effort. Other things will take more money, more time and more patience on the part of everyone involved.

Graham Carr-Jones

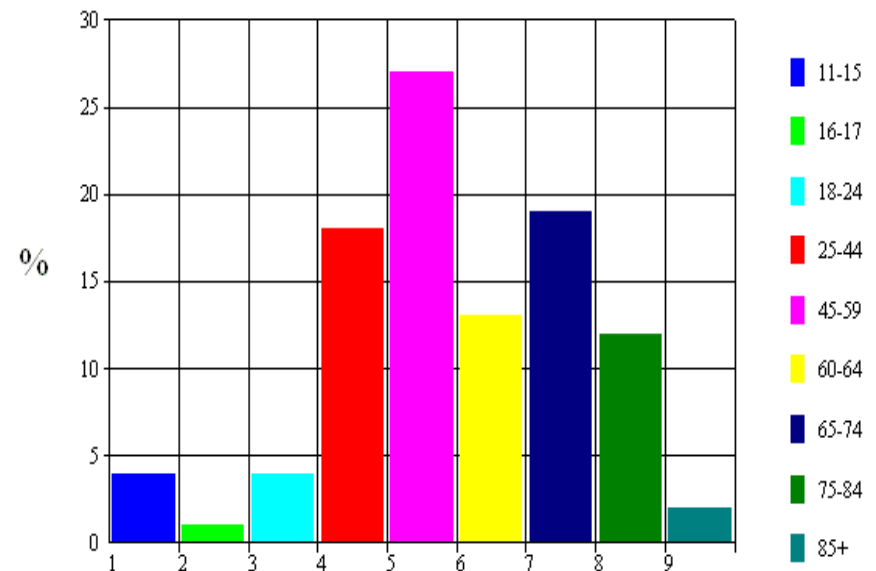
QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

- 355 households, giving a 33% return
- From the questionnaires returned, there was a slight over-representation of older people, and under representation of families with young children
- Also a Youth survey through the Youth Club

The household composition was as follows:

	Male	Female
0-4	11	16
5-10	24	19
11-15	24	12
16-17	3	6
18-24	19	10
25-44	57	67
45-59	92	96
60-64	38	51
65-74	69	68
75-84	40	44
85+	6	9

What age group do you belong to?



When residents were asked how long have you lived here?

From the questionnaires returned

- Most residents 6 years or more (77%)
- Few people born & bred here (8%)

WHAT YOU LIKED, DIDN'T LIKE, AND WANTED TO SEE IMPROVED

Like:

- Friendliness of the people
- Strong feeling of community spirit
- Size of the town and range of facilities (shops, Library, Post office, Health Centre, School)
- Countryside, peace and quiet and a safe place to live

Dislike & want to see improved:

- Traffic
- Parking
- Road safety & pedestrian crossing

LOCAL ECONOMY

When residents were asked how can we secure jobs here? They said.....

- Encourage small businesses, shops and light industry; also need for more business units and workshops
- Support existing businesses, particularly shops

Shopping

- Very positive on shopping in Stalbridge
- Friendliness of staff
- Range of shops
- Supporting local shops
- Wanted: clothes shops, café, greengrocer, baker (this was before the new Dikes)
- People also shop away because it's cheaper and there's a wider choice

Town Centre

- People would like a Farmer's Market or general market, but where?

Where do you work

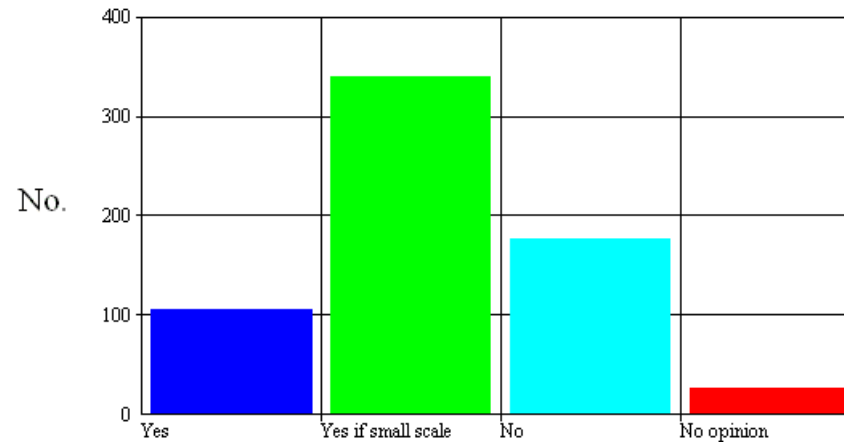
- Most people work in Stalbridge or from home
- Other main location is Sturminster, followed by Yeovil & Sherborne
- Some had problems getting work due to transport & childcare

Ideas for Action:

- Support local businesses
- Support local shops (e.g. Directory of Local Shops)
- Markets to try out on Stalbridge Hall car park. Or start a Country Market (used to be WI Market) in Stalbridge Hall
(Note: for Farmer's Market, Stalbridge not big enough to be viable)
- Support more light industry business units, both behind The Sidings and at Henstridge
- Clothing shops
- Provision of ICT training

DEVELOPMENT

Do you think Stalbridge can sustain more development?



- General view that Stalbridge could sustain more development if small scale
- However, a significant minority felt there should be no more development

HOUSING

- Sons/daughters wanted to leave home, but could not afford to buy or rent
- Family members have had to move away, but still work in Stalbridge
- 19 households from survey had an individual in need of accommodation locally
- 10 new houses to rent are to be built, with maybe a few more in the future

Ideas for Action:

- To encourage the completion of a Housing Register Application Form where housing need has been identified

HEALTH

- Very positive about the Health Centre
- Requests for an NHS dentist. There is already an NHS Dentist in Stalbridge, but it is full.

Ideas for Action:

- Keep fit classes
- NHS Dentist, more capacity

TOWN COUNCIL

- Reasonable level of interest
- Frustrations

Members of public being able to speak at meetings (Rules have now been changed by Government, so easier to speak at meetings)

Knowing timing and what the meetings are about

Views of Town Council making a difference. (The views of the Town Council are taken into account when decisions are made at a higher level, but it should be noted that the Town Council does have limited statutory powers)

Ideas for Action:

- Rules about public speaking in meetings have been changed

TRAFFIC

- The biggest issue
- Ideas included parking restrictions on High Street, bypass (although recognised as very unlikely), banning HGVs, Pedestrian crossing, traffic lights.

Ideas for Action:

- Town Centre traffic. There have been long negotiations between the Town Council and Highways on this subject. A Pedestrian Crossing is not possible at this stage, but there are ongoing discussions about traffic and parking schemes for the Town Centre
- Continue to press for a Pedestrian Crossing in High Street
- Extend car park by Library into grass area to south

TRANSPORT

- Bus service considered poor, particular issue about frequency
- Community transport service NorDCAT considered useful, but many people did not know about it

Ideas for Action:

- Continue to work to improve bus service. Frequency of service a particular issue, & lack of Saturday late return service from Yeovil another example
- Information on public and community transport (NorDCAT) to be promoted more widely through Community Office & The Ring.
- Travel to School Plan, Stalbridge School

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

- Lots of community activities going on
- Residents would like: Leisure Centre/swimming pool, Adult Keep Fit classes, Dance, Tai Chi, Brownies + other specific activities
- Stalbridge Hall a good facility, but specific comments for improvements to chairs, toilets, car park
- Play area at Jarvis Way needs improvement
- Library: strong concern about losing it. 'Use it or lose it', and ideas for activities to encourage use
- St Mary's Church, valued:
 - For baptisms, weddings and funerals
 - As an historic building
 - As a focal point for the community
- Finding out what's on: BVM, Shop windows, PO, The Ring, Library, Notice boards & Community Office

Ideas for Action:

- There are many activities going on, but not everyone knows what is on.
- Consider a summary of all activities for The Ring. Also consider a What's On update
- Can activities such as adult keep fit, dance, Tai Chi and Brownies be started? (there are Yoga and Stretch & Relax classes in Stalbridge)
- Stalbridge Hall, upgrade car park
- Support retention of Library
- Support The Ring
- Town website, use for wider range of information, & main Noticeboard in town centre
- Welcome Packs for new residents
- Stalbridge History, idea of Museum or exhibitions
- Disability access for local footpaths, replacing stiles with kissing or self closing gates
- Older People's Forum

YOUNG PEOPLE

- Clothes shop with gear for young people, café, computer café
- Play area at Jarvis Way needs improvement
- Improvements to Jarvis Way park, skatepark & cricket nets?
- Ideas about football pitch, golf, quad bike track
- Can the Youth Club be open in the school holidays?

Young People's Ideas for Action:

- Improvements to Jarvis Way play area
- Youth Club open during school holidays
- More 'out-of-school' clubs
- Skatepark at Jarvis Way park
- Cricket nets at Jarvis Way park
- New football pitch, golf area

ENVIRONMENT

- Recycling (inc. community composting)
- Improve public transport
- More local employment
- Reduce litter
- Reduce traffic (inc. Car Share scheme)

Ideas for Action:

- Promote more recycling (note; local charity WISH now take green waste from Stalbridge area)
- Provision of allotments
- Community composting at the allotments
- Reduce litter. Idea of town litter pick? (Note, management of Street Cleaning now to be through Town Council)
- Encourage people to walk to shops
- More cycle paths
- Trailway project, Stalbridge to Henstridge & Templecombe
- Trailway project, Stalbridge to Sturminster

‘Ideas for Action’ Summary

Topic	Action to be taken	Action led by	Comments
Local Economy			
	Support local businesses		
	Support local shops (e.g. Directory of Local Shops)		
	Markets to try out on Stalbridge Hall car park. Or start a Country Market (used to be WI Market) in Stalbridge Hall	Stalbridge Hall?	
	Support more light industry business units, both behind The Sidings and at Henstridge	North Dorset District Council, Planning	
	Clothing shops?		Market forces will decide this
	Provision of ICT training	Community Learning Centre	
Housing			
	To encourage the completion of a Housing Register Application Form where housing need has been identified	North Dorset District Council, housing	
Health			
	Keep fit classes		New classes? Better use of existing activities
	NHS Dentist		There is an NHS Dentist, but is full.

Topic	Action to be taken	Action led by	Comments
Traffic			
	Continue to press for a Pedestrian Crossing in High Street	Stalbridge Town Council	
	Extend car park by Library into grass area to south?		
Transport			
	Continue to work to improve bus service (frequency of service a particular issue) Lack of Saturday late return service from Yeovil	Dorset County Council Town Council Transport Rep	
	Information on public and community transport (NorDCAT) to be promoted more widely through Community Office & The Ring	NorDCAT, Community Office	
	Travel to School Plan, Stalbridge School.	Stalbridge Primary School	

Topic	Action to be taken	Action led by	Comments
Community Activities & Facilities			
	There are many activities going on, but not everyone knows what is on. Consider a summary of all activities for The Ring. Also consider a What's On update	The Ring Stalbridge Hall	
	Can activities such as adult keep fit, dance, Tai Chi and Brownies be started? (there are Yoga and Stretch & Relax classes in Stalbridge)	All	
	Stalbridge Hall, upgrade car park	Stalbridge Hall	
	Support retention of Library	All	
	Support The Ring.	All	
	Town website, use for wider range of information	Stalbridge Town Council	
	Main Noticeboard in town centre	Stalbridge Town Council	
	Welcome Packs for new residents	Community Office?	
	Stalbridge History, exhibitions or idea of Museum		
	Disability access for all footpaths around Stalbridge (say a 1 mile radius), replacing stiles with kissing or self closing gates	Stalbridge Town Council Footpaths Officer	
	Older People's Forum?	NorDOP	

Topic	Action to be taken	Action led by	Comments
Young People			
	Improvements to Jarvis Way play area	Stalbridge Town Council	
	Youth Club open during school holidays	Youth Centre	
	More 'out-of-school' clubs		
	Idea of skatepark at Jarvis Way play area?	Young People, Stalbridge Town Council	
	New football pitch area, golf area, cricket nets at Jarvis Way play area?		
Environment			
	Promote more recycling	North Dorset District Council	
	Provision of allotments on Goat Field	Stalbridge Town Council	
	Community composting at the allotments		
	Reduce litter. Idea of town litter pick?	Stalbridge Town Council	Note, Town Council now manage Street Cleaning
	Encourage people to walk to shops		
	More cycle paths		
	Trailway project, Stalbridge to Henstridge & Templecombe		
	Trailway project, Stalbridge to Sturminster		

Acknowledgements

Stalbridge Town Plan Steering Group
Cllr Graham Carr-Jones
Mrs D Hine, Town Clerk
Stuart Waite
Margaret Wiseman
Gordon Chapman
Joy Rabbetts

Supported by:

Stalbridge Town Council
Dorset Strategic Partnership
North Dorset District Council
Dorset Community Action
Stalbridge Youth Centre
Don Murray

Joe Dunckley/cotch.net (photo of Stalbridge Cross)

Rachelle Smith, Community Researcher (DCA)

Lynne Saunders, Community Development Worker

Hugh de longh, Community Development Worker (DCA), Tel: 01258 471456

March 2008

APPENDIX 1

Stalbridge Town Factsheet, from the 2007 Dorset Databook



dorsetforyou.com

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=343606>

Stalbridge

Stalbridge is Dorset's smallest market town. It stands on the Blackmore Vale, close to the Somerset border. Its long main street runs from the church to The Ring, and includes the 15th Century market cross, reputedly the best in the country. Stalbridge dates from Saxon times and has an unhurried, olde world atmosphere that adds to its charm.

Communications

Stalbridge is located on the A357. The nearest rail station is just over 3 miles away in Templecombe (Somerset).

Education

Sturminster Newton Pyramid Area:

6 Primary Schools (Stalbridge Primary School),

1 Secondary School, 1 Special School.

The Secondary School for the Area

Sturminster Newton High (644 pupils)

Commercial land

Between 1994-06, 2.23 hectares of land has been developed in Stalbridge. The total area of land with permission or allocated in local plans is 0.70 hectares.

Crime - domestic burglaries

Rate per 1,000 households 2005/2006

Stalbridge	12.2
DCC Dorset	5.7
South West	8.8
England and Wales	13.5

Population

Latest population figure (2005 mid year estimate) for the town (Stalbridge Parish) is **2,680**

	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Census population (enumerated)	1,220	1,250	1,540	1,520	1,960	2,320	2,280	2,580

Housing growth

	95	96	97	98	99	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Housing development	19	6	4	1	29	14	38	22	0	8	4	2

The 2001 Census records **1,112** dwellings in Stalbridge.
 Since 2001, a further **36** have been built giving a total of **1,148**.
 At March 2006, a further **45** units have permission and **0** have been allocated in local plans.

Index of deprivation, 2004

(Figures show SOA ranking out of **247** SOAs in Dorset with **1** being the most deprived)

SOA	Multiple	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Housing	Crime	Living
Stalbridge Town	141	71	89	83	140	175	145	130

SOA = Super Output Area (minimum 400 households or 1,000 population)

House prices

Detached	£314,289
Semi-detached	£233,111
Terraced	£234,375
Flats/Maisonettes	Insufficient sales

Land Registry average prices (July-September 2006)
 (Prices may be affected by low number of sales)

Area

Approx 'built-up' area = 80 hectares (198 acres)

Local Authority revenue

Council tax band D for year 07/08	£1,408.53
Council tax band D for year 06/07	£1,337.39
Council tax band D for year 05/06	£1,289.87
Council tax band D for year 04/05	£1,226.88
Council tax band D for year 03/04	£1,158.24
Council tax band D for year 02/03	£1,023.21
Council tax band D for year 01/02	£936.82
Council tax band D for year 00/01	£885.38
Council tax band D for year 99/00	£836.84

Car availability, 2001 (% of households)

No car	15.4%
1 car	42.6%
2 cars	33.5%
3+ cars	8.5%

2001 Census data:

	Stalbridge	Dorset
Resident Population	2,254	390,979
Males	1,106	188,780
Females	1,148	202,199

Age Structure (%)

	Stalbridge	Dorset
0-15	18.6	17.9
16+17	2.1	2.4
18-44	29.4	29.6
45-59	22.4	20.8
60-84	25.0	26.2
85+	2.5	3.1

Ethnicity (%)

	Stalbridge	Dorset
White	99.7	98.7
Non-white	0.3	1.3

Household characteristics

	Stalbridge	Dorset
Number of All Household Spaces	987	178,065
% Second Residences / Holiday Homes	0.3	2.8
% Vacant Household Spaces (no residents)	1.9	2.9
Number of Households (with residents)	966	167,998
% of Households with No Car/Van	16.9	17.0
% of Households with 2 or more Cars/Vans	39.3	36.7
% of Households without all Basic Amenities (Bathroom &/or Heating)	4.8	7.2

Household composition (%)

	Stalbridge	Dorset
Pensioner	32.0	33.4
Married Couples	43.2	37.8
Co-habiting Couples	7.4	7.0
Lone-parent	5.6	6.8
Owner Occupied	75.6	76.3
Renting Publicly	15.1	12.1
Renting Privately (& other)	9.3	11.6

Economic activity

	Stalbridge	Dorset
Economically Active Population (16-74 yrs)	1,074	178,519
% Employed: Part-time	20.7	20.9
% Employed: Full-time	56.3	55.3
% Self-employed	18.4	17.6
% Unemployed (Economically Active)	2.6	3.1

Occupational characteristics

	Stalbridge	Dorset
% High Skill	31.3	39.7
% Low Skill	23.7	18.7

Qualifications

	Stalbridge	Dorset
% with No Qualifications	31.3	26.2
% with Higher Qualifications (level 4+)*	7.9	18.3

* First degree; Higher degree; NVQ levels 4 and 5; HNC; HND; Qualified Teacher Status; Qualified Medical Doctor; Qualified Dentist; Qualified Nurse; Midwife; Health Visitor.

Health

	Stalbridge	Dorset
% with Long-term Illness / Disability	18.9	19.2
Health: % Good	69.0	68.1
Health: % Not Good	7.6	8.4
% Providing Unpaid Care	10.2	10.8
% in Communal Establishment	1.2	2.6

Retail profile - total Town floorspace

16 Shops (2005) 14,000 sq.ft. Mainly local shops

Industrial estates

Stalbridge Trading Estate (7.1h), Gibbs Marsh Trading Estate (7.7h).

Poverty indicators

Benefit population (2006) as a % of total town population Blackmore Ward = **10.5%**

Unemployment % (persons)

	Male	Female	Total
July 1997	2.0 (18)	1.0 (7)	1.6 (25)
July 1998	1.0 (9)	1.4 (10)	1.2 (19)
July 1999	0.8 (7)	1.8 (13)	1.2 (20)
July 2000	1.0 (9)	0.8 (6)	0.9 (15)
July 2001	0.8 (7)	0.5 (4)	0.7 (11)
July 2002	0.7 (8)	0.3 (2)	0.5 (10)
July 2003	0.6 (8)	0.4 (4)	0.5 (12)
July 2004	0.6 (6)	0.4 (4)	0.5 (10)
July 2005	0.3 (3)	0.1 (1)	0.2 (4)
July 2006	1.2 (12)	0.3 (3)	0.8 (15)

Of July 2006 unemployment figure, the long term unemployed = 0%

2005 employment

Total number of people working in the town: **900**

Full-time	71%
Part-time	29%
Male	58%
Female	42%

Employment Type	%
Agriculture, Forestry and fishing, Energy and water	* < 1
Manufacturing industries	* 30
Construction	8
Distribution, Hotels and restaurants	35
Transport and communication	* < 1
Banking, finance and insurance	9
Public administration, Ed and Health	* 20
Other service industries	* < 10

* Approximation

Source: Annual Business Inquiry 2005

Major employers

Stalbridge Timber, William Hughes Ltd, Dorset County Council, Fudges Dorset Village Bakery

Local authorities**Dorset County Council**

County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ 01305 251000

North Dorset District Council

Nordon, Salisbury Road, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7LL 01258 454111

Parish Council

Mrs D Hine, 8 Ring Street, Stalbridge, Dorset DT10 2LZ 01963 364276