

Chelwood Parish Plan

Chelwood is one of the smallest villages in Somerset. It boasts a population of approximately 150 living in a total of 54 houses.

Chelwood was a settled community when the agents of William of Normandy made their survey in 1085. The village was mentioned in the Domesday Book. It formed part of two holdings known as 'East Celworde' and 'West Cellwert'. Both sides were originally owned by the Earl of Warwick Estate but East Chelwood then passed to the Popham family who held the manor of nearby Hunstrete. All the land in Chelwood is now privately owned apart from Glebe land which is owned by the Church.

The Church of St Leonard forms part of the Benefice with Compton Dando, Publow and Pensford, with one vicar. The foundations of the church and certain features are probably Norman but the main structure is 14th Century, the tower being rebuilt in 1722. Although the architecture is chiefly plain there are a number of nice features. The Norman font was made from a block of Dundry limestone around 1125 and the ironwork can still be seen which locked the cover, lest witches stole the holy water. The detailing on the corbels on the ends of the south arcade is 14th Century-vines leaves over a female head to the east, fig leaves to the west. The south windows contain many fragments of 16th Century Flemish glass.

Farming was the main occupation of the village at the beginning of the 20th Century but of late Chelwood has become more of a commuter village, being equidistant from the cities of Bath, Bristol and Wells.

The village has a Parish Council consisting of five parish councillors. It is part of the Clutton Ward represented by one councillor in the unitary authority of Bath and North East Somerset.

The village has no pub, but does have a village hall which was originally, until the 1920's, the village school.

Chelwood is one of the few "Thankful Villages" in Somerset where all the men returned from the First World War, four went and four returned.

Issue	Topic	Background	Action	Partners	Priority
Building	Commercial	Although the majority of the respondents, who expressed an opinion, were in favour of more small businesses in the parish they felt this would have to be controlled and where possible existing buildings utilised rather than new developments built.	Look into potential for current buildings, explore possibility of establishment of a nursery school and farm shop.	Local building and land owners, B&NES Unitary Authority, Parish Council	Medium
Building	Residential	Although the majority of respondents were not in favour of any more building in the parish, there was a requirement for low cost housing to enable young people to stay in the area. There was also a preference for conversions rather than new build and if any building was done it should be reviewed as to its sustainability and adequate service provision.	Discuss with Bath and North East Somerset Planning Department strategy for the parish	English Rural Housing Alliance, Parish Council, B&NES Unitary Authority.	Medium
Crime and Safety		There were no major concerns over crime and safety expressed but some respondents would like to review and or revive the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.	Review Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Neighbourhood Watch Group, Parish Council	Medium

This section produced the largest number of comments

Issue	Topic	Background	Action	Partners	Priority
Environment	Dog Fouling	There was only one comment and this was on the problem in School Lane that was caused by non resident dog walkers	Look into more prominent signs in this area.	Parish Council	Low
Environment	Drains	There appeared to be some issues with this and it was felt a more thorough job could be done which would alleviate some of the problems caused i.e. flooding.	Look into frequency and effectiveness of the current service	Parish Council, B&NES Unitary Authority, Environment Agency, Wessex Water/Bristol Water	Urgent
Environment	Flooding	Several places on the main road are vulnerable to flooding. A residence has been flooded.	B&NES advised	Parish Council, B&NES Unitary Authority, Environment Agency, Wessex Water/Bristol Water	Very Urgent
Environment	Hedges and Verges	The majority of respondents felt that the maintenance of hedges and verges was not done satisfactorily, and that the provision of the service could be improved. There were also though a number of people who felt it was adequate and the protection of the wildlife in the hedgerows ought to be taken into consideration.	Investigate how the maintenance could be improved without further damaging the natural environment.	B&NES Unitary Authority, Wildlife Trust, Local Conservation Group, Parish Council	Medium

Issue	Topic	Background	Action	Partners	Priority
Environment	Litter-Fly Tipping	The vast majority of respondents felt that fly tipping was becoming worse in the parish especially in gate ways, lay-bys, Frys Bottom Lane and Barn Lane.	Monitor and report instances to appropriate authority, look at signage to remind offenders of the penalties.	B&NES Unitary Authority, Parish Council, Environment Agency, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Encams (Tidy Britain Campaign)	High
Environment	Litter-General	It was felt that there was a growing problem with litter which was predominately caused by passing motorists and not by local people although it was felt that an extra bin should be provided. Investigation into solutions should be undertaken.	Investigate possible solutions. Litter “pick up” days to be increased.	Encams, Environment Agency, B&NES Unitary Authority, Parish Council, Local Community	High
Environment	Noise	There were a few respondents that felt the noise from recreational activities such as clay pigeon shooting and motor sports was becoming a problem.	Discuss with local landowners methods to alleviate the nuisance	Local landowners, Parish Council	Low
Environment	Street Lighting	It was felt by the majority of respondents to the questionnaire that no more street lighting was required.	None – too much light pollution		

Issue	Topic	Background	Action	Partners	Priority
Facilities	Village Hall	<p>This was felt by the vast majority of respondents to be essential to the community and the backbone of parish life and therefore must be maintained, it was felt though by most people that it should be self funding where possible but a few did say they would be happy for the precept to be used to assist if needed.</p> <p>It was suggested if it could be improved; better catering facilities, better lighting, disabled toilet etc that it would be more attractive for private functions and would then become more sustainable.</p> <p>It was also suggested that a quarterly social event could be organised, including a talk and refreshments, for the community. Adult education classes were requested and could be housed in the hall as well as some sports groups such as badminton and skittles.</p> <p>There was felt to be little provision for young people and that a children's playground was needed and this could be provided near the hall.</p>	<p>Investigate staging community social events, adult education classes and other events at the hall.</p> <p>Improve facilities such as catering and lighting.</p> <p>More use of hall and grassed area behind hall by children and guardians</p>	<p>Community Action (for funding and general advice, CVS (for funding advice), Norton Radstock College (for adult education classes), Local Community, Village Hall Management Committee.</p>	High

Issue	Topic	Background	Action	Partners	Priority
Services	General	In general the residents felt that the provision of such things as postal delivery and refuse collection was good and should be maintained at this level, although the earlier delivery of post would be appreciated. One person was experiencing electricity supply problems.	None Western Power		
Services	Recycling	Recycling was general though to be adequate but should be maintained at weekly intervals and that better provision for cardboard and plastics would be appreciated.	Review current provision and look at new methods of recycling.	Friends of the Earth, Local Community, B&NES Unitary Authority, Go Zero	Medium
Traffic and Highways	Road maintenance	It was felt that some maintenance was required because of the number of potholes on the roads and that more efficient cleaning was necessary.	Discuss level of maintenance and cleaning with Unitary Authority	B&NES Unitary Authority, Parish Council	Medium
Traffic and Highways	Signage	It was reported by some respondents that there was too much signage in the parish	Review signage	B&NES Unitary Authority, Parish Council	Low
Traffic and Highways	Speed Limit	Although the majority of respondents felt a lower speed limit would be beneficial and are concerned about road safety, that without proper enforcement it would be useless to instigate a new limit.	Speed limit from village to A37 roundabout decreased and enforced	B&NES Unitary Authority, Parish Council	Urgent

Issue	Topic	Background	Action	Partners	Priority
Transport	Public Transport	100% of the respondents to the questionnaire felt that the current public transport service was totally inadequate and therefore they could not use it but most would use it if the service was improved.	Investigate options available to alleviate problem	First Bus Company, Community Action, Dial a Ride, Parish Council Surrounding Parishes	Urgent