



## Pontesbury Parish Council Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026

With an area of some 3,868 hectares and a population of over 3,281<sup>1</sup> Pontesbury Parish is one of the largest parishes in Shropshire. The Parish centres around the main 'hub' settlement of the village of Pontesbury linked with a number of smaller satellite settlements of Cruckton/Cruckmeole, Asterley, Habberley, Plealey and Pontesford and other hamlets between<sup>2</sup>. The large and scenically attractive parish of Pontesbury enjoys an excellent location. It lies within a mile of the A5 Shrewsbury bypass and much of the southern part lies within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Bisecting the parish the busy A488 links the main settlement of Pontesbury with Shrewsbury town centre, seven miles north. With nearly one quarter of the population aged over 65, this is significantly higher than the county or national averages.

Pontesbury village is the commercial and social hub of the parish, containing over half of the parish's population. Estimated population 1897 in 2016. For its size it has an excellent range of services used by villagers and outlying settlements. The village offers primary and secondary schools, 3 pubs, a post office, shops, chemist, GP surgery and dentist, a community hub & library, pre-school nursery and eating places.

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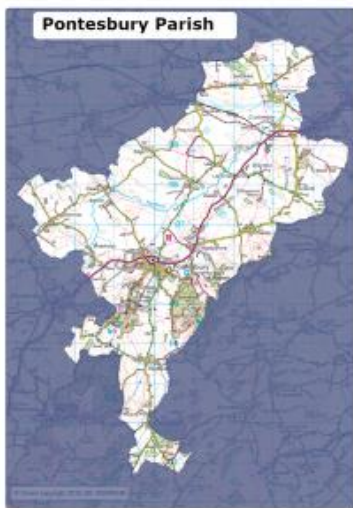
<sup>1</sup> Taken from 2021 Census

<sup>2</sup> Arscott, Edge, Farley, Hinton, Lea Cross, Malehurst, Nox and Westcott

For electoral purposes, the parish is divided into four wards and has a total of fifteen councillors. The electorate in 2023 was 2640. The parish council owns The Pavilion community building which houses the library and is a base for the local neighbourhood policing team. Other facilities the parish council is responsible for are The Pavilion, a play area & BMX track, a village green, public toilets, 120 streetlights, many trees, hedges and numerous bus shelters and street furniture. The Parish council employs a full-time Parish Clerk and part-time Deputy Clerk, Finance Officer and Building Assistant/Cleaner for The Pavilion.

The parish council has a number of sub-committees and working groups who are responsible for or advise on various aspects of the council's work;

- Finance & General Purposes
- Personnel & HR
- Planning
- Pavilion
- Climate Emergency Action Group
- Newsletter
- Emergency Planning



## Introduction

### Mission Statement for the parish council:

To protect and improve the quality of life for all Pontesbury parish residents

### Purpose of this Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan is a strategy that provides a framework for the council to work within and to aid consistency and co-ordination of service delivery. This Strategic Plan will evolve through community engagement and will assist in the decision-making process. It will also provide stakeholders with a better understanding of parish council activities and responsibilities.

As a 'live' document this Strategic Plan will be monitored and updated regularly to demonstrate progress against key priorities.

### Community Involvement in the Strategic Plan process

To ensure that this Strategic Plan adequately represents the best interests of the parish, members of the local community are invited to participate in its development. This will help to keep its aims and objectives up to date. There will be an annual consultation and update process launched each year at the Annual Parish Meeting.

### Monitoring the Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan will be considered by members at parish council meetings on a regular basis, at least annually, so that progress can be monitored. It will be updated when actions are complete and where progress is impeded the council will consider what actions are necessary and whether further work is required.

This Strategic Plan is a 'living' document. Any updates will be given via the website, Pavilion website/facebook page, the village newsletter and the parish council annual report.

The Strategy does not include general ongoing responsibilities for facilities and legal responsibilities such as annual audit, maintenance of streetlights etc. – just developmental work planned

Theme 1  
Parish Council Governance

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	Resources required
<b>To improve communication between the parish council and residents and businesses to ensure that council activities reflect community need/desires</b>	Develop a communications Strategy to ensure greater community involvement in strategic plan for the community with particular emphasis on communicating with under 30s and including the settlements across the whole parish	Strategy to be completed by January 2025	No	Clerk time Possible volunteer time Local community consultation time
	1.Continue to review and improve website 2.Undertake a website accessibility audit and accessibility statements and procedures put in place for parish council website, Pavilion website and Neighbourhood Plan website	1.Ongoing 2.Ongoing	1.Possible	Councillor and Clerk time
	1.Continue to publish a parish newsletter 2.Produce a 2024-25 Annual Report	Ongoing	Adequate amount budgeted each year for both	1. Clerk time 2.Clerk/Chair time
	1.Review content of notice boards. 2.New community noticeboard on School Green 3. New community noticeboard in Habberley	1.Ongoing 2.Completed 3. Ordered	Printing costs included in Stationery budget 3. CIL Neighbourhood Fund	Clerk time
	1.Build reach of Pavilion Facebook page 2. Communication & Marketing Strategy for Pavilion 3.Social media policy to be produced 4. To produce glossy folder with Pav info to promote hire of the building to businesses 5. Review and update/rewrite Pavilion website	1.Ongoing 2.completed 3. By January 2024 4. 2024-2025 5. 2024-2025	£500 in Pavilion earmarked reserves for website development and promotions  4. £1,000 5. £500	1.Deputy Clerk/Building Assistant time 2.Clerk time 3. Deputy Clerk 4. Design & Print & deputy clerk time 5. Pav Committee & Deputy Clerk time
	Councillor Surgeries in Pavilion – public drop-in sessions Councillor surgeries in Cruckton/Habberley tied to local events	Ongoing	No	Councillor time

<b>To improve effectiveness of the parish council</b>	1. Induction plan for any new councillors 2. Succession planning for key roles	1. Available for new councillors 2. Ongoing	Cost of training if necessary (see below)	Clerk and Personnel Committee time
	Improve links and lines of communication and consultation between all the different settlements within the parish, continue to hold meetings in village halls across the parish.	Ongoing	No	Staff and Councillors and local residents
	Review training needs of councillors and parish council staff.  Training policy reviewed biannually	Annually	£1000 allocated in training budget each year	
	Work towards and maintain Local Council Awards Scheme standards.	Spring 2025	£150 in 2024-25 budget for foundation award	Clerk and councillor time
	Continue to carry out staff appraisals	Annually	Cost of training if necessary	Personnel Committee and staff time
	Investments policy and Reserves policy to be drawn up	By April 2024	No	Staff and Councillor time
	1. Full insurance review for council portfolio of assets and activities 2. Complete review of insurance to combine Pavilion/general council insurance	1. annual 2. Pavilion insurance not renewed in February 2025, insurance. Insurance combined Oct 2025	No	Staff and F&GP Committee time
	Annual budget and 3-year forecast in place with reference to the approved Strategic Plan	By April 2025		Staff and F&GP Committee time
	4 yearly Election Cycle 1. Raise profile of council in 12 months prior to election 2. Allocate funds annually to cover election fees	1. Ongoing (May 2025) 2. Annually	£1,000 2024/5	



## Theme 2 - Leisure and Community Services

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	Resources required
<b>To ensure the Pavilion realises its potential as a value for money community resource.</b>	<p>1.Ensure all members of the community and wider Rea Valley communities are involved in developing the Pavilion programme of activities – cultural, information and support, to be inclusive for all -through representation on Pavilion Committee</p> <p>2. Communications and Marketing strategy for the building.</p> <p>3.Work through the Pavilion Committee to roll out the Comms &amp; Marketing Strategy to ensure that activities are inclusive, accessible and reflect the needs of the wider community</p> <p>4. Continuous updating of Pavilion website and Facebook page as directed in Communications and Marketing strategy</p> <p>5. Recruit caretaker on zero hour contract for Pavilion</p> <p>6. Evaluation – annual evaluation period for one week as a snap-shot take to look at improving systems and hiring experience</p>	<p>1.Ongoing</p> <p>2. Completed</p> <p>3. Ongoing</p> <p>3. Ongoing</p> <p>4. 2024-25</p> <p>5. Ongoing</p> <p>6. Autumn annually</p>	5. Salary budget required	<p>Steering Group and staff time devising programme of activities</p> <p>Possible Pavilion volunteer involvement</p> <p>Building Assistant/Deputy Clerk time drawing up strategy and maintaining website and Facebook</p>
<b>Ensure long term sustainability of Pavilion</b>	<p><b>1.Ensure Pavilion income increases</b> - work through Pavilion Committee to attract hirers for building</p> <p><b>2.Continue to work in partnership with Shropshire Library Service noting a review of lease hire arrangement in 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>3. West Mercia Police</b> – continue to work with PCC team regarding strategic lease matters &amp; with Safer Neighbourhood Team locally on building matters – review of lease in Autumn 2025</p>	<p>1. Ongoing</p> <p>2. Ongoing – review 2024-2025</p> <p>3. Ongoing – review 2025-2026</p>	<p>1. Target of £3,500 income for 2024-5 room hire</p> <p>2. Shropshire Council Library Service income in 2024-25 is £5000 (Estates budget)</p> <p>3. West Mercia Police – 2024-2025 = £4,000 + proportional contribution to service charge</p>	Steering group and staff time
<b>To ensure maintenance arrangements of communal green/flower beds/ trees/hedges are</b>	1.Assess maintenance and development required for green open spaces on Hall Bank development	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>3. completed</p>	<p>1.Budget provided by Shropshire Homes</p> <p>2. Climate Emergency budget for 2024-25 £1000</p>	<p>1.Staff and Councillors</p> <p>2. Staff and Climate Emergency Action Group</p> <p>3. Clerk/volunteers/CPRE</p>

<b>adequate for maximum enjoyment.</b>	2. Work with Climate Emergency Action Group to assess biodiversity potential of green open spaces on Hall Bank and elsewhere in parish 3. Work with CPRE to plant hedge along the fence by the large meadow area		3. Hedging supplied by CPRE/SC	
	1.Continue with biennial Tree survey and associated recommendations for tree work 2. Tree and hedge survey throughout parish to ensure that any valuable hedge/tree not currently covered by a TPO is registered	1.Tree survey in Summer 2023 completed 2. Ongoing	1.Inspection and additional work will need to be budgeted for in 2025-26 for 2025 survey	Councillor and public time
<b>To develop Trading Post as a community resource</b>	1. To explore potential for the provision of community parking on Trading Post land 2. To explore potential for provision of E.V. charging points for public use	1. Timescale to be considered by Facilities working group? 2. Following completion of 1.	1. Not known 2. Not known	1. Councillor and staff time (Facilities Working Group)? 2. Councillor and staff time



OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	Resources required
<b>To support, foster and celebrate community cohesion and resilience</b>	1. Partnership work with Good Neighbours Scheme on community support activities 2. support, initiate and develop other community groups and activities to aid and support further community cohesion and resilience 3. Develop an annual Open Day at The Pavilion for all hiring groups to take part to showcase their organisation	1. Ongoing  2. Ongoing  3. Spring 2025	£250	Councillor and staff time  Deputy Clerk / Clerk time – publicity & refreshments
	Annual programme of activities to promote local community groups in Pavilion building through Feelgood Friday events at The Pavilion	1.Ongoing		Councillor and Clerk time
	Rural Watch – explore setting up a Rural Watch scheme for the Parish	2023-24	?	Councillor/resident working group

### Theme 3 Parish Appearance, Environment, Planning, Public Services

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	RESOURCES REQUIRED
	Neighbourhood Steering group work to be adopted	Referendum and submission 2023 – completed		Neighbourhood Steering Group, Consultant and Clerk time
	Continue to promote and engage local community with Neighbourhood Plan through website, public events – particularly in smaller communities outside Pontesbury			Councillors
<b>To alleviate flooding issues around Brook Road which affect residents of Mary Webb close</b>	1.Flood alleviation measures to be included in Hall Bank Junction improvements	1. ?	See Hall Bank Junction under Traffic section	Councillor time in partnership with Severn Trent, Rural Housing Association and Shropshire Council Highways and Flood prevention team
<b>To convert remaining streetlights to LED</b>	Contractor employed	Summer 2024 completed	£30,000 – CIL Neighbourhood Fund agreed	Clerk/Councillor working party
<b>To provide community allotments</b>	1.Explore possible location for community allotments 2. Community garden built – irrigation system and water storage to be extended	Ongoing	£? from Cil Neighbourhood Fund Ongoing budgetary revenue demands	Clerk and Councillor working party
<b>Upgrade public toilets</b>	1.Redecorate/steam wash 2.Facilities Working group to look at refurbishment and capital expenditure project to improve public toilets	1. annually 2. 2024-25	1. annual budget 2. CIL Neighbourhood Fund + building Earmarked reserves in each financial year/grant funding	Clerk/Councillor/Volunteer working group CIL Local funding application
<b>Play area maintenance and development for maximum, safe enjoyment</b>	1.Facilities Working group set up to draw up a plan for play area update work/replacement/re-surfacing for both play area and BMX track? 2. draw up plan and budget	1. July 2024 2. Spring 2025 3. Spring 2025 onwards	Budget will be needed for future years for increased maintenance and then	Working group of staff, councillors and local residents

	3. Sort funding – possible S106/CIL or grant funding		possibly match funding for any bid submitted	
<b>Ensure bus shelters and benches are maintained for safe use</b>	1. Review of bus shelters and benches and plan put in place for any refurbishment/replacement necessary. (Asbestos survey completed – no work required)  2. Bus shelter at top of Hall Bank requires refurbishment	1. Completed  2. Spring 2025	Budget will be needed for future years or CIL Neighbourhood Fund?	Facilities Working group of staff and, councillors
<b>To ensure local emergency solutions are in place that support county and national emergency plans.</b>	1. Work with Shropshire Council and emergency services to raise awareness of how the local community can respond in emergencies. 2. Draw up Emergency Plan for parish	1. Ongoing 2. Spring 2025	No	Deputy Clerk & Councillor time and in partnership with Minsterley Parish Council
	Support and work with Rea Valley First Aid Responders to maintain these services along with programme of first aid courses.	Completed review in 2025	No - use of village/community halls for training	Clerk time working with Rea Valley First Aid Responders

#### Theme 4 Highways, Transport and Access

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	RESOURCES REQUIRED
<b>To seek solutions to speeding traffic and pedestrian safety concerns.</b>	PPC working group continue to work with Hanwood and Minsterley Parish Councils and Shropshire Council on traffic calming solutions and ANPR camera project Safer Speed Shropshire	Ongoing	Possibly some CIL Local Fund monies for strategic approach matched with percentage from CIL Neighbourhood Fund Consider implications if MPC withdraws from partnership	Working group time in partnership with police and Shropshire Council Highways team Ongoing contribution for administration of partnership
	Hall Bank Junction Improvements	?	£40,000 CIL Neighbourhood Fund earmarked	

	Bus and coach park at Mary Webb	2023-24?	£10,000 CIL Neighbourhood Fund allocation agreed	
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## Theme 5 Climate Emergency

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	RESOURCES REQUIRED	
<b>To fulfil resolution of reaching zero carbon levels for the parish council by 2030</b>	Work with Climate Emergency Action group to draw up an Action plan to reach zero carbon with yearly targets for each year until 2030	Spring 2025	No	Clerk, Councillor and CEAG time along with wider community	
	Carbon Audit for parish council activities and quick win projects	?		Clerk, Councillor and CEAG time along with wider community	
	1. Carbon Audit for Pavilion carried out in 2022 2. Explore recommendations and possible actions 2024-2025 a. look at project and install air source heating b. roof survey for solar panel project to be done in 2025-2026 c. Solar Panel specification for project 2025-2026 3. Install solar panels on Pavilion roof	1. Completed  2a. 2024-2025 2b. 2024-2025  2c. 2024-2025  3. 2025-2026		2a. £10,000 (poss CIL?) 2b. £1,000  2c. £5,000  3.	Deputy Clerk and Pavilion Committee
	Roll out action plan and various projects over years to 2030	Ongoing	Will need to be a budget allocation each year	Clerk, Councillor and CEAG time along with wider community	

<i>Draft Adopted:</i>	9 December 2020
<i>Minute no:</i>	89.20
<i>Reviewed</i>	13 November 2023
<i>Reviewed</i>	14 October 2024 meeting
<i>Next review date:</i>	October 2025 for budget setting 2026-27