

HURN PARISH PLAN

Where village life is valued



*Produced by the
Hurn Parish Plan
Steering Group*

2010

FRONT COVER PHOTO

BLACKWATER FERRY 1906

*Photo courtesy of Sue Newman
from her book "Christchurch Through Time"*

The Parish Plan Steering Group wanted a photograph for the front cover of the Parish Plan, that included many of the features of Hurn, such as rivers, housing, people, businesses and countryside, but at the same time captured the historic nature of the Village.

It seemed impossible to find a single photo containing all these elements in modern Hurn.

Although this photo is from a time gone by, the Steering Group considered that its charm and character summed up the essence of Hurn, and some elements still present today.

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INTRODUCTION

In Spring 2008 an invitation was sent to every household in Hurn, asking any resident who was interested in the future of Hurn, to come along to Hurn Bridge Sports Club on 19th March 2008 between 6pm and 8pm to meet the Parish Council and give their views about compiling a Parish Plan. This invitation was also sent to every business at Hurn Airport and other businesses in the Parish. The aim was to see whether there was sufficient interest from local people to get volunteers to help with the Plan. The meeting was successful, and several residents put their names forward to form The Parish Plan Steering Group. Only one business attended the meeting, but they decided not to become part of the Group.



Village Gateway on Parley Lane

Once the idea of a Parish Plan was accepted, a Project Plan was drawn up and application made by the Parish Council, to Dorset Community Action for available grant assistance for its production. The necessary funding having been granted, a Plan Steering Group was set up comprising five interested volunteer residents and two members of the Parish Council, with a target date of May/June 2010 for the launch of the Plan.

Out of this Steering Group, a Questionnaire was prepared to seek comments and observations on the main areas of concern identified by those who had attended the Parish Plan Awareness Meeting and from the day-to-day dealings of the Parish Council. There were 16 questions in all covering 11 identified issues which were:

- **Airport Expansion**
- **Rural Environment**
- **Mechanical Biological Treatment (Waste Incineration) Plant**
- **Post Office Retention**
- **Housing – New and Existing**
- **Gravel Extraction**
- **Youth Facilities**
- **The Recycling Centre outside Hurn Bridge Sports Club**
- **Urbanisation, Noise and Light Pollution**
- **Service Provision by Christchurch Borough and Dorset County Councils**
- **Roads and Traffic**

The Questionnaire was hand-delivered to all residential households within the Parish together with a stamped addressed envelope for its return. These included the main hub of houses in Moors Close and all other scattered housing in the Parish. 197 were distributed with 87 replies representing an above-average return of 44%.



Moors Close in Winter

A full analysis and summary of the responses was carried out, details of which appeared in 'The Eyeopener', the Hurn Parish Council Newsletter, of winter 2008, under the heading 'Update on Hurn Parish Plan'. All Parish Newsletters give updates on the progress of the Plan and remind residents that they can still take part in its compilation at any stage. The summary of questionnaire responses is printed in this Parish Plan.

In addition to the questions formally asked, the Questionnaire contained a section for residents to give their views on any issues not covered, and a selection of these comments is also included. Both the 'official' answers to the Questionnaire and the 'additional comments' have been taken on board in the preparation of the Hurn Parish Plan.



A Rural Cottage in Hurn

SO HOW WILL THE PLAN BE USED?

Once residents' views were known, much research, investigation and consultation was carried out around the issues raised, to inform the direction and content of the Parish Plan proper, and to establish contacts and information sources at appropriate levels.

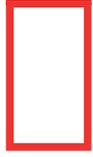
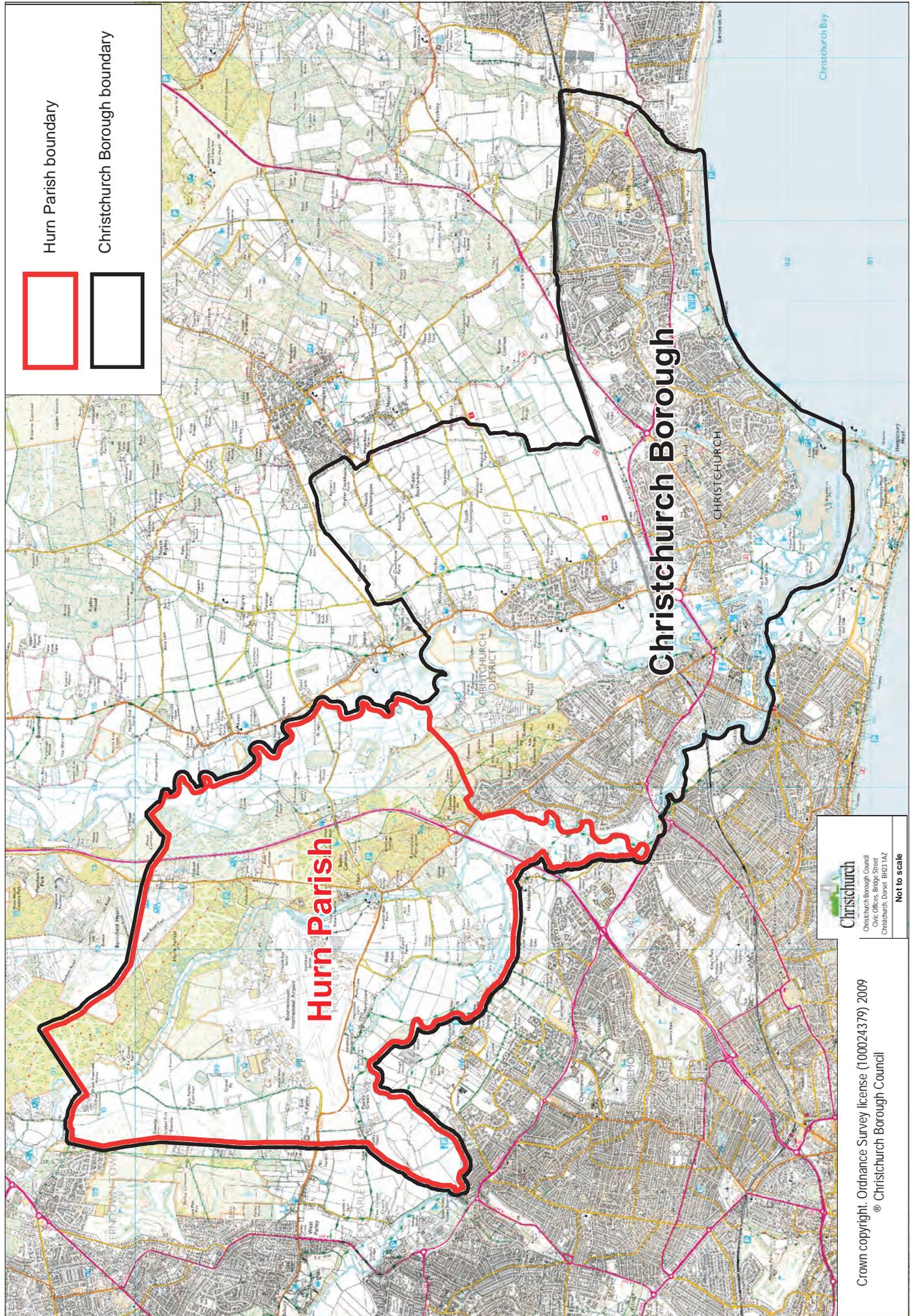
The principle issues requiring attention were then identified, together with the action required and the timescales involved. From this the Parish Plan Steering Group held meetings, to develop an approach, gather evidence, identify and prioritise issues, evaluate options, develop policy and draw up plans and timescales related to each issue area.

This policy was then brought together as a 'Draft Parish Plan' for presentation to an 'Open Meeting' of Hurn residents for discussion, consultation, endorsement and adoption prior to its publication.

You will find that the Plan has been constructed on a series of themes with issues grouped under each theme. Now that the Plan has been published, Hurn Parish Council, together with members of the Parish Plan Steering Group plus any other co-optees and volunteers, will be responsible for its implementation, monitoring and review.

Progress will be reported on regularly at Parish Council meetings and in the Parish Council's Newsletter – 'The Eyeopener'. All residents who have suggestions or new ideas that will be of benefit to the Village are encouraged to pass them on to the Parish Clerk for consideration by the Parish Plan Steering Group and the Parish Council.

The Plan, now established, will feature as an on-going tool for use by Hurn Parish Council in putting forward the views of residents of Hurn (as noted from the questionnaire); lobbying for improvements in the quality of life of the people of Hurn; and for making an appropriate response and contribution to the strategic and planning processes so that, by all working together, we can bring a positive influence on the pressures that constantly surround us.



Hurn Parish boundary

Christchurch Borough boundary

Christchurch Borough

Hurn Parish

Christchurch
 Christchurch Borough Council
 Civic Offices, Bridge Street
 Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1AZ

Not to scale

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THE PARISH PLAN

A Parish Plan is all about residents' ability to have an influence on their future. The Plan concept developed out of a year 2000 Government White Paper that proposed the drawing-up of Parish Plans to “Identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and to demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved”.

This statement was then backed up by the Minister of Rural Affairs who stated that Parish Plans could provide 'blueprints' for the future survival of rural communities. The Government wants “local communities to take more control of their own lives; to say what they want doing in their own neighbourhood and to engage with others to get it done”. Parish Plans “will give the evidence to help inform policy making by a range of organisations, from the Local Planning Authority, to Police, and Health Services”.

A Plan would give residents the opportunity to help shape the future of Hurn Parish, with the completed Parish Plan eventually being part of, not only a wide Christchurch Community Plan, but incorporated into the statutorily adopted Christchurch Local Development Framework. This should give the Parish, supported by the Parish Council, a louder voice and greater influence within the wider community.

The Hurn Parish Plan is a document that identifies the relevant issues of concern and importance in the Parish:

It has been produced by the community for the community. As such, it is based on consultation and discussion with, and input from, the residents of Hurn who have had the opportunity to participate in its preparation.

It is unique to Hurn Parish as regards to design, contents and issues of concern so it is our document.

It outlines how we want our area and community to develop over the coming years including the qualities that we value and the things that we would like to change or want to resist.

It is intended to help us take more control of our neighbourhood by describing what we do and do not want to happen in order to influence those factors that affect us including those that are often thought of as being outside our control.

It is recognised that certain National Policies which are outlined in the South West Regional Spatial Strategy may be relevant to Hurn, for example:

- Protecting important landscapes and wildlife
- Protecting the Green Belt
- Providing additional housing
- Providing for sustainable economic growth

Already the Regional Spatial Strategy sets targets related to the provision of housing including urban extensions, infrastructure proposals and impacts on heathland habitats and a basis for local transport strategy. **The Hurn Parish Plan mentions some of these policies and targets and addresses them in relation to Hurn.**

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO THE PARISH QUESTIONNAIRE

		Agree	Disagree	No opinion
1. Airport Expansion – Future growth of the Airport should be restricted to preserve the quality of life for residents of Hurn	a) Passenger Terminal	70%	26%	4%
	b) Airport Business Park	68%	28%	4%
2. Rural Environment	a) It is important that the Green Belt is preserved around the village of Hurn	93%	6%	1%
	b) Trees should not be felled in order to increase the amount of Heathland in the Parish	81%	14%	5%
3. MBT (Mechanical Biological Treatment)	a) Waste products should not be brought from all over Dorset and further afield to be treated in Hurn	88%	9%	3%
	b) Pollution from the proposed MBT is a cause of concern	89%	6%	5%
4. Post Office	The Post Office and Village Shop is an essential facility in Hurn and should be kept	99%	1%	0%
5. Housing	a) “Affordable” housing should be built in the Parish for local people	46%	42%	12%
	b) More homes should be available to rent in Hurn through Housing Associations	29%	59%	12%
6. Gravel Extraction	No more applications for Gravel Extractions should be granted in the Parish	82%	9%	9%
7. Youth Facilities	a) A youth club would be a useful facility for Hurn	70%	14%	16%
	b) Would any members of your family use the facility?	18%	56%	N/A 27%
8. Recycling Centre Outside HBSC	The Recycling Centre in Hurn is an eye-sore that encourages fly-tipping and should be removed	45%	45%	10%
9. Urbanisation/Light Pollution	Increased street lighting will detrimentally affect the rural character of Hurn	59%	30%	11%
10. Services	Local services provided by the local authorities meet the needs of the residents of Hurn	36%	55%	9%
11. Roads and Traffic	Roads in Hurn should be improved/widened to accommodate additional traffic	36%	63%	1%

SELECTION OF HURN RESIDENTS' COMMENTS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Village

- Having lived in Hurn for over 50 years, I should hate to see it grow too large with lots of houses etc. It would lose its 'village' status which is so important these days.
- This is a country village. It should stay that way.
- Hurn should be left as it is, a village, not lit up or joined up with either Parley or Marlow Drive.
- We have to keep our village safe for our residents, but we also need to keep it looking like a village, not a town.
- Action must be taken to protect Hurn. We are rather a 'special case'. How many villages have to cope with a growing International Airport, Business Park, Gravel Pits, and high levels of traffic?

Rural Environment

- Hurn should be kept rural.
- Keep Hurn green!
- The destruction of trees and heathland is already causing major problems, i.e. flooding and a noticeable reduction in wildlife.
- No more trees should be felled.
- I am very concerned that the proposed MBT (waste processing plant) would be unsafe and harmful to the village.



A place to enjoy the rural environment

Airport

- There is always room for progress, but we are not Heathrow or Gatwick, nor do we want to be!
- The Airport is a vital source of work for the area.
- Airport car parking obstructing local roads is a serious problem, disadvantaging residents with a genuine need to park, and attracting vandalism. Something must be done to manage/remedy this.

Roads

- The one-way section of Hurn Court Lane (between Christchurch Road and Mill Lane) is very narrow and should be closed to vehicular traffic by placing a central bollard at each end. This would stop people driving up it the wrong way creating potential accidents.
- Cars speed too much along Matchams Lane.
- There should be regular use of mobile speed cameras on roads entering and leaving the village.
- What measures can be taken to prevent 'boy racers' driving at high speed down Mill Lane and Hurn Court Lane? A very regular occurrence.
- We do not want or need additional traffic through the village.
- If roads were widened they would only attract even more traffic as well as larger vehicles.
- Roads do not need improving to accommodate additional traffic.
- If the Airport is to be expanded, the road system needs significant improvement to assist traffic flow on the roads around Hurn, which are already gridlocked at certain times of the day.
- Road surfaces need attention. Far too many pot holes in the roads through Hurn village.
- Far too many heavy lorries on village roads.

Bus Service

- We need a bus route to take us into Christchurch, Boscombe and Bournemouth.
- We are poorly served by public transport and have to use cars.
- Limited transport to Christchurch, Ringwood and Bournemouth.
- No bus route except Airport bus which only goes to Castlepoint/Bournemouth.

Housing

- Homes, if any, should be built for local families only, but no more in Moors Close where parking is already a problem.
- With respect to housing, local facilities could not cope, and any land taken would have a detrimental effect on village life.

Recycling/Litter/Fly-tipping

- The recycling centre must be regularly maintained so that it is not an eyesore. It is very important if fly-tipping is to be minimised.
- The recycling centre should be screened, not removed.
- The recycling bins look most disgusting when you enter the village.
- Whilst the recycling centre can be an eyesore, it is the nearest one for those of us in the Parish who do not have kerbside collections due to access problems.
- Could Hurn Court have a recycling unit?
- Matchams Lane needs regular litter picking.
- Council are prompt at removing fly-tipping once advised. How about doing more to prevent/stop it?

Services

- There are no broadband or cable facilities in the village. These would be a positive benefit for householders and businesses alike.
- The household wheelie bins should be emptied every week. Living in a rural area encourages vermin.
- Grass cutting in Moors Close needs to be more frequent.

Hurn Stores and Post Office

- The Post Office must be kept open at all costs.
- The Post Office is a must for local people and must be supported.
- Keep our Post Office.
- Hurn Stores offers a treasured service, especially the Post Office.
- The Post Office is extremely valuable. If I didn't have transport I wouldn't be able to get essentials when necessary.
- It is essential that the Shop/Post Office is retained as a 'life line' for a number of people and as a 'centrepoint' for the village.

HURN – AN HISTORIC VILLAGE

The early history of Hurn is obscure. Tumuli (Bronze Age burial mounds) and recent gravel extraction on and around the Malmesbury Estate provide evidence of settlement during the Bronze Age (c. 1800 BC to 600 BC) through to occupation during the Iron Age (600 BC to AD 43). Later prehistoric and Romano-British habitation and activity have been found in the vicinity. The mention of Hurn in the Domesday Book indicates the presence of a Saxon settlement, but it was probably too small to have left any significant remains.

The Domesday Book of 1086 lists Christchurch Hundred as comprising four Hundreds one of which, Egheiete, contained Hurn. By 1316 the whole district was known as The Hundred of Christchurch, one of whose tithings was, again, Hurn.

At the beginning of the 12th Century the Village of Hurn (Herne, Heorne, XII Cent, Horne, XVI – XVIII Cent.) passed, with the Royal Grant of Christchurch Twyneham to Richard de Redvers, by whom it was passed shortly afterwards to The Priory of Christchurch. The name Hurn means 'the place at the angle or corner of land'.

In 1285 the Prior and the Convent had a free warren (the right to hunt small game) in their demesne lands in Hurn. These were leased lands worked on the Lord's behalf by villeins or serfs) and they held this manor, to which various additions were made in the following centuries until the Dissolution.

In March 1540 the King granted Thomas Wriothesley and William Avery a twenty one year lease of the Manor and in 1553 Edward VI gave the manor to his uncle Sir Henry Seymour Kt, for his life. The 'reversion', being the grant or lease of a property to start after a specified time or event, was granted by Queen Elizabeth in 1574.

Heron Court (Hurn Court) is an E-shaped house on the site of the Manor Farm of the Prior and Convent with parts of the building dating back to the 15th Century. It was originally the Rest House of the Priors of Christchurch where the monks had dug a canal in which they bred and kept their fish for Fridays.



Hurn Court 1910
Photograph courtesy of Sue Newman

At its height the Hurn Estate was approximately 6,000 acres but around the beginning of the last Century it was reduced to about 4,000.

When World War I broke out it had quite an impact on Hurn for the Germans invaded Belgium and many women and children came to England as refugees. About 20 were billeted in Hurn Court with others billeted in the village. After the refugees had left, Hurn Court was first used as a convalescent home but it then grew into a small Red Cross hospital of 50 beds to accommodate casualties injured during the First World War retreat from Mons. Lady Malmesbury was a very assiduous worker for the wounded soldiers.

The current owners of the Malmesbury Estate, where Hurn Court is situated, are the Fitzharris family. The Harris family can trace themselves back to the 1500s to a village called Orcheston St George in Wiltshire.

Sir James Harris negotiated the marriage between the Prince Regent and Princess Caroline of Brunswick who stayed a short time at Hurn Court, where a very large Hornbeam, still in existence, was planted in her honour.



3 Yew Trees at Hurn Court (from 1500)



Hornbeam at Hurn Court (from 1740)

Sir James Harris was created Baron Malmesbury, Peer of the Realm, on 29th December 1799 and advanced to the dignity of Viscount Fitzharris of Hurn Court, Southampton and Earl of Malmesbury.

Hurn Court was altered very considerably by the addition of a new storey, finished in 1815.

In 1823 or 1824 the estate was the first to import the 'Newfoundlers' dog into England. They bought 2 couples and bred them in purpose-built kennels on high ground near Blackwater in Quomp (pronounced 'Coombe') Copse. It was the 3rd Earl of Malmesbury, James, who changed the name from 'Little Newfoundlers' to the appropriate name of Labrador, that we have known ever since and there are still local dogs descended from the pedigree.

Milling is also of local interest as there has been a Mill on the Moors River at Hurn since as far back as 1539 with the last mill converted into a house for a Farm Bailiff in 1908 and subsequently the Estate Office. It is now a private residence.

Another large building of note in Hurn, is the Grade II Listed C18 Parley Court Farmhouse, once owned by the Prideaux-Brume family. The Dampney family have lived there since 1952, first as tenants until 1972, when they purchased it. They have recently changed its name to Parley Manor.

HURN STATION ON THE RINGWOOD – CHRISTCHURCH RAILWAY

Few people, including locals, who drive along the A338 Bournemouth - Ringwood Spur Road realise that, for part of the way, they are travelling along the course of a former railway trackbed that was once the main route from Bournemouth to London.

In 1847 the Southampton – Dorchester Line had opened, promoted by Charles Castleman, a solicitor whose business was conducted in Ringwood and Wimborne and the line passed through both of those places. Routeing the line through Christchurch and Bournemouth was not favoured at the time because of the anticipated high construction costs. However in 1856 another attempt was made for the construction of the line by the Ringwood, Christchurch and Bournemouth Railway Company but this was withdrawn for lack of funding.

In 1858 new proposals were put forward for a Ringwood – Christchurch line with an extension to Bournemouth to be considered later on. On this occasion, shares in the Company were taken up enthusiastically and a revised Bill for its construction received Royal Assent in 1859. The line, costing around £50,000 with two intermediate stations at Hearne Bridge and Avon Lodge, opened in 1862 but it had steep gradients and sharp curves with a maximum speed limit of only 25 mph.

The station built at Hurn opened as Hearne Bridge, but this was changed to Hearne in 1888 and changed again to Hurn on 9th June 1897. Since the line passed through several miles of Lord Malmesbury's land, a Halt was provided at Avon Lodge where the Act of Parliament enabled Lord Malmesbury as occupier of Avon Cottage (later replaced by Avon Castle) to stop any ordinary train as required.

1870 saw the opening of an extension to Bournemouth with the London South Western Railways (LSWR) working the line and providing through carriages from Bournemouth to London. However the LSWR would not stop these trains at Avon Lodge Halt as it was claimed they were not ordinary trains as specified by the Act. The matter was taken to Court, but the case was lost.

However, in 1888 a more direct route from London to Bournemouth was opened incorporating the RC&B's section of line from Christchurch to Bournemouth thus making the Ringwood – Christchurch line a backwater having lost its original purpose. Closure of this section was considered in 1920. At that time, Hurn averaged 22 ticket sales per day and, by the end of the decade, this had fallen to just seven with about half that for Avon Lodge Halt.

Not surprisingly, after the closure of the signal box in 1927, Hurn Station was manned for eight years by just one person, the Stationmaster, who saw away the last train on 28th September, 1935. The track was lifted in 1937 and the principal remnant of the line today is Hurn Station, which is now the Avon Causeway Hotel sitting alongside the A338 Spur Road on the Eastern side, just off the Avon Causeway Flyover. The hotel now promotes its railway heritage with various items of railway memorabilia on display.



'The Old Hurn Station' at The Avon Causeway Hotel

BOURNEMOUTH AIRPORT

Most residents and visitors to the Christchurch/Bournemouth area will be aware that Hurn is host to Bournemouth International Airport, but it is not widely known that the airport was opened as RAF Hurn in 1941 when, as part of its wartime duties, it was home to a range of aircraft including Spitfires, Wellingtons and Typhoons. Towards the end of 1942 it became the base for a number of US squadrons passing into USA Air Force hands for a very short period, before being handed back to the RAF at the end of October 1944 under the control of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

In the period 1944 to 1948 Hurn was the main terminal for international flights into the UK, but in 1949 Heathrow opened and the airline operators moved there. BOAC who had maintenance facilities at Hurn also departed at this time.

Bournemouth Airport was heavily involved in aircraft production. In 1950 Vickers Armstrong moved into hangars vacated by BOAC and started the production of Varsitys, then Viscounts and, eventually, as the British Aircraft Corporation, production of the BAC-1-11 where over half were built. Components for Concorde were also built during this period. The only services at this time were to the Channel Islands.

In 1952 Airwork started operating the Fleet Requirements Unit at the airport and in 1958 the first Palmair flight – a 36 seat BEA Viking aircraft- took off bound for Palma Majorca – one of the UK's first holiday flights. There then followed a period of economic ups and downs until 1969 when the airport was sold by the Government to Bournemouth Corporation and Dorset County Council who ran it in partnership until the airport was sold to National Express in 1995 who extended the runway to 2271 metres, making it one of the longest in southern England.

1996 saw the opening of the longer runway with Concorde the first aircraft to fly in and become a regular visitor to the airport. The same year saw Ryanair starting its Bournemouth / Dublin route.

In 2001 the airport was sold to the Manchester Airport Group, which also owns Manchester, East Midlands and Humberside airports. New operators and new routes were added over the next few years until, in 2006, Manchester Airport Group agreed to commit to a £32 million plan to redevelop the airport. The plan includes terminal development, a new international arrivals hall, improved surface access facilities, realignment of the east apron stands and additional car parking.

The Government Office for the South West approved the airport's planning application in July 2007, Christchurch Borough Council having already approved it, and work began. At the time of going to print, the work is due to be completed in the Summer of 2010.



The Terminal Building 1972

THE VILLAGE TODAY

Hurn is a village of some 197 households and around 350 electors situated in South East Dorset. It is bordered on the South and East by the Rivers Stour and Avon. The rural Parish of Hurn comprises 2,231 hectares (5,512 acres), out of Christchurch Borough's 5,158 hectares (12,740 acres). So Hurn Parish comprises about 43% of Christchurch Borough. It is a huge area with a small population. A section of the A338, the Ringwood / Bournemouth Spur Road, runs North to South with the B3073 crossing it roughly East to West.

The town of Christchurch lies approximately 4 miles to the South; Bournemouth approximately 5 miles to the South West and Ringwood 6 miles to the North.

The Parish is primarily given over to agricultural land, woodland and heathland, the exception being Bournemouth International Airport which, along with its Industrial Park, provides a major source of employment to the area.

The Village is centred on the small Village Green adjacent to the Post Office and Hurn Village Stores, and excluding the Airport, some 90% of the Parish comprises open space. The Post Office is the 'hub' and if this were ever taken away, the Village would be left without a 'soul'.

Hurn Village is dominated by its four major roads – Christchurch Road, Parley Lane, Matchams Lane and Avon Causeway which all meet at a roundabout near the Village centre.

Because of its history, properties throughout the Parish are very scattered with the exception of Moors Close which, with its 55 dwellings built during 1956/7 close to the historic village centre, accounts for almost a third. There is little potential for new housebuilding due to green belt restrictions.



Moors Close contains almost a third of the Houses in Hurn.



The remainder are individual houses scattered around the Parish.

The Village is also unusual in that there is very little by way of central focus. There being no church (the Parish Church lies in Holdenhurst Village which is outside the Parish Boundary), and no Village Hall, although the Hurn Bridge Sports and Social Club is used for this purpose.

Although the Government has promised that every home in the UK will be guaranteed access to broadband internet by 2012 with download speeds of up to two megabits per second, many Hurn residents can either receive no service at all or, where they can, at much lower speeds than the Government's target figure. This we are told is a British Telecom problem due to the age, length and inadequacy of the main telephone cable serving the Village from the Christchurch exchange. A modern high-speed broadband link is urgently required.

The Village also lacks any primary or secondary school, (children have to go by bus into Christchurch), no doctor or dentist, and no easily accessible public house although one does exist on the Avon Causeway to the East of the Village.

Hurn does, however, host a 'special needs' school for children with autism which lies about 2 miles west of the Village Centre on Parley Lane.

There is also a visiting County Library Service and a recently introduced Bus Route, linking the Village to Bournemouth, which is operated on behalf of the Airport.

So far as the children and youth of the Parish are concerned they have to be bussed or driven out of the area to go to school; they have no extra curricular developmental activities such as a youth club, cubs, scouts, guides or brownies. For younger children there are 4 individual dedicated play areas in Moors Close.

The Parish boasts two Golf Courses, a Family Fun Park, Commercial Stables and Equestrian Centre, a Dry Ski Slope, a Paintball Facility, an Aviation Museum, Hurn Bridge Sports and Social Club, a Cricket Academy, Bournemouth Sports Club, a Materials Recycling Facility, a Composting Facility, areas of Common land, Farms, three Forestry Plantations, and a number of Caravan Parks.

The Parish is also home to the Malmesbury Estate, part of which is farmed by a tenant farmer, the remainder which is used as a private shoot with the exception of the land occupied by the historic Hurn Court, now converted into a number of luxury apartments plus some newly-built homes in its grounds.

For residents of the Parish, Hurn is somewhere very special offering mostly rural surroundings and an associated quality of life.

Many of the above mentioned issues are covered in this Parish Plan under the heading "Other Issues Arising From The Questionnaire".

THE HURN CONSERVATION AREA AND LISTED BUILDINGS IN HURN

Hurn Village enjoys a diverse range of buildings of historic value which make up the area's distinctive character. The Parish Plan will need to ensure that these sites are adequately protected from harmful development and preserved for future generations.

The map shown following this chapter covers the extent of the Hurn Conservation Area, and identifies the locally and statutorily listed buildings contained both within it, and also outside of it.

Of national importance are, of course, Hurn Court and all those buildings that are Grade II statutorily listed such as Nos. 1 and 2 Riverside Cottages, and the Granary at Hurn Bridge Farm. In addition to these the Borough Council maintains a list of 'Buildings of Local Interest' that are worthy of conservation as being 'in sympathy' with the area, and these are known as Locally Listed and are also shown on the Map.

Of particular interest, although not instantly obvious as it was re-built in the twentieth century on the original 1823 foundations, is the historic Hurn Bridge which crosses the Moors River SSSI on Parley Lane, close to Hurn Roundabout. The Parish Council has records of a Bridge in this location since 1274, and it was very important, giving access to all those who worked the land around it and, more importantly, to the Hurn Mill (now Mill House) which stands close to the Bridge downstream.

The ever changing nature of our environment means that areas of historic value or distinct character often come under threat from inappropriate development and it is for this reason that Government Policy requires Councils to protect and appraise buildings and areas of historic or architectural significance and also identify and recommend further examples where they exist. This means that the Parish Council has a role in maintaining an 'overview' of what is unique to the Parish, assessing its significance and its vulnerability to change.

Nationally there has been a steady loss of historic assets and we need to ensure that in Hurn Parish we preserve our historic environment to ensure that it is not lost.

We believe that the Hurn Conservation Area contains buildings which are historically, functionally and visually interconnected and preserve and enhance the centre of our Village.

*Two photos of Hurn Bridge both taken from the same location
Both photographs courtesy of Sue Newman, from her book "Christchurch Through Time"*



Hurn Bridge 1910



Hurn Bridge 2010

STATUTORY AND LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS AND FEATURES IN HURN

The following are all Grade II Statutory Listed

TOLE COTTAGE, Avon Causeway - Grid Ref: SZ144976
Mid C19. Tile hung southern façade with red brick wing, eastern façade roughcast.

NOS. 1 AND 2 RIVERSIDE COTTAGES (INCLUDING ADJOINING ONE STOREY BUILDING), Avon Causeway - Grid Ref: SZ127970
Early C19. Red brick and with wide eaves and slate roof. Single storey extension possibly former blacksmiths.

FARMHOUSE AT FIRGROVE FARM, in Hurn Forest - Grid Ref: SUI06002
Late C18/early C19 façade.

CHAPEL GATEHOUSE, Chapel Lane - Grid Ref: SZ104980
1862-3 Small Chapel of red brick with stone dressings, originally also used as a school.

NOS. 1 AND 2 BLACKWATER, Hurn Road - Grid Ref: SZ135959
C18; remodelled and also extended to rear in C19.

NO. 4 BLACKWATER, Hurn Road - Grid Ref: SZ135959
Early C19. Red brick with eaves cornice.

NO. 5 BLACKWATER, Hurn Road - Grid Ref: SZ135959
C18 Red brick with thatched roof. 2 windows early C19 casements.

NOS. 6 TO 8 BLACKWATER (BLACKWATER COTTAGES), Hurn Road - Grid Ref: SZ134961. C18 Red brick with slate roof.

DALES HOUSE, Dales Lane - Grid Ref: SZ115970
Late C17/early C18. Red brick, string course at first floor with slate roof.

HURN COURT, Hurn Court Lane - Grid Ref: SZ122959
Large house of irregular plan and varying dates, occupying the site of a mediaeval grange of Christchurch Priory.

WALL TO COURTYARD AT HURN COURT, Hurn Court Lane - Grid Ref: SZ122959
C19. Tended walls pierced with quatrefoils around courtyard.

STABLE BLOCK AT HURN COURT, Hurn Court Lane - Grid Ref: SZ122959
Probably Tudor core, but early C19 alterations and additions.

WALL TO ENCLOSED GARDEN TO SOUTH WEST OF HURN COURT - Grid Ref: SZ121957. C18/early C19. Red brick coped, 10ft. high garden wall.

ICE HOUSE AT HURN COURT, Hurn Court Lane - Grid Ref: SZ119962
Early C19. Ice house with arched entrance facing north.

MERRITOWN FARMHOUSE, Merritown Lane - Grid Ref: SZ110973
C18. 3 Storeys and basement, slate roof and brick stacks.

BARN AT MERRITOWN FARMHOUSE - GRID Ref: SZ110973
C17/C18.

GRANARY AT HURNBRIDGE FARM, Parley Lane - Grid Ref: SZ125970
C18/C19. Rectangular building raised on saddle stones.

THATCHED COTTAGE AND ADJOINING BUILDING, Parley Green - Grid Ref: SZ097971. C18 or earlier. Red brick. Attached barn has tiled roof.

PARLEY COURT FARMHOUSE, Parley Green Lane - Grid Ref: SZ097971
Early C18. Red brick with wide eaves.

BARN AT PARLEY COURT FARM - Grid Ref: SZ097971
Late C19. Very large barn. Red brick with slate roof.

PITHOUSE COTTAGE, Pithouse Lane - Grid Ref: SZ137980
C18/early C19. Rendered (probably over cob). Thatched roof.

FARMHOUSE AT PITHOUSE FARM, Pithouse Lane - Grid Ref: SZ139982
C18. Red brick with old tiled roof and buttress.

DEMOLISHED TWO COTTAGES OPPOSITE HURNBRIDGE FARM - Grid Ref: SZ125970. C18/early C19. Adjoining cottages, red brick, thatched roof.

THROOP MILL SLUICE GATES - Grid Ref: SZ112189
Sluice gates flanking aprons and piers. C19 with earlier origins.

The following are all Locally Listed

Building Reference

8/362	Mill House, Mill Lane
8/344	Farmhouse at Hurn Bridge Farm, Parley Lane
8/342	L shaped range of farm buildings to south west of Hurn Bridge Farm House
8/358	Red Brick Cottages (opposite Home Farm), Christchurch Road
8/359	Keepers Cottage, Quomps Copse, Christchurch Road
8/332	Wood Farmhouse and attached barn, Holdenhurst
8/333	Barn at Wood Farm, Holdenhurst
8/360	Home Farm House and attached farm building, Christchurch Road
8/361	Builders Merchants Store (eastern part), Christchurch Road
8/338	Troublefield Cottage, Matchams Lane
12/404	Farm building to the north west of Parley Court Farmhouse



Riverside Cottages

Many of the above statutory and locally listed buildings have historic group value.

THE ROLE OF HURN PARISH COUNCIL

Hurn Parish Council is classed as 'a small Local Authority', and is a Statutory Body, unlike Residents' Associations which are not. Today, especially in relation to The Hurn Parish Plan, its role is more important than ever.

The first Hurn Parish Council Minute book shows that following the Local Government Act 1894 the first Parish Meeting was held in the School Room, West Parley at 6.30pm on 4th December. The Earl of Malmesbury was in the chair and six Councillors were elected. The first full meeting of The Parish Council was at 4pm on 22nd March 1895 in the School Room.

The second Minute Book opens with a Parish meeting held on 3rd May 1912 in the Club Room, West Hurn. No meetings are shown for 1914. Over the years meetings are shown in different locations. On 27th June 1929 the meeting was in the Recreation Room at Hurn Court but by May 1963 meetings were being held in the Malmesbury Estate Office. Nowadays meetings are held at Hurn Bridge Sports Club on the 2nd Monday of every month at 7.30pm.

Parish Councils are the closest tier of local government to the people. Hurn Parish Council has six voluntary Councillors who are each elected for a term of four years, and it is non-political. The Parish Councillors know the Village intimately, and represent its views to other authorities such as Christchurch Borough Council and Dorset County Council, as well as to Government Ministers and Non Government Organisations. They also work closely with the two Christchurch Borough Ward Councillors who represent Hurn.

The Parish Council is entitled to be consulted on all planning applications within the Parish and to put the Parish case to Public Inquiries. It regularly lobbies for improvements in areas such as services, road safety, and the protection of the environment.

The Parish Councillors determine and set policies for the social, cultural, welfare and environmental needs of the Parish and they employ a Parish Clerk to assist with communication and the implementation of various policies.

Parish Councils are the most unbureaucratic and most economic type of local authority. They receive no Central Government grant, unlike Borough and County Councils, so raise their income from a precept, a small tax that is levied on all 197 properties within the Parish as part of their Council Tax.

The Parish Council has a surprising number of powers to assist it in carrying out its role of improving the quality of life for its parishioners, although as with most small Parishes, there is a limit to what it can achieve.

Hurn Parish Council has, on average, 12 meetings a year including an Annual Assembly and an Annual General Meeting. Details of these meetings are printed quarterly in 'The Eyeopener', the Parish Council's Newsletter distributed to all residential addresses within the Parish, and displayed on the Notice Board outside the Hurn Village Stores.

Due to the pressures that we all face, it is therefore vital that the community acknowledges, understands and supports both the Parish Council and The Hurn Parish Plan. To this end, provision is made at all regular meetings of the Parish Council for questions to be put by members of the public and for responses to be made. Alternatively, the Parish Council Clerk or its Chairman and Members can be contacted at any time.

THE GREEN BELT AND THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

The 'Green Belt' is one of the best-known planning designations and has proved effective over many decades in preventing the encroachment of urban development into the countryside.

'Green Belt' designation is a policy designation which means that land within it is not chosen for its landscape or conservation value, but rather to control urban sprawl.

The response to Question No. 2a) of the Parish Questionnaire was overwhelming. 93% of residents agree that it is important to preserve the green belt around the village of Hurn.

Our area of 'green belt' was established in the early 1980s and covers the whole of the Parish, with the exception of the 80 hectare Airport Business Park. Its benefit to us is to prevent development that would link us up with other areas. To put it simply it is a 'buffer', an arbitrary boundary.

Currently, the biggest threat to local green belt is in the Regional Spatial Strategy. There is a recommendation for thousands of new homes in East Dorset over the next 20 years, 2,400 of them to be built on 'green belt' land, 900 of which are proposed for the neighbouring Parish of Parley. This is a major concern for local people and is strongly opposed by many.

The National Planning Policy on 'Green Belts' has changed little over the years i.e. it seeks to protect land from 'inappropriate development' such as housing, employment and other commercial developments 'unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. However the Regional Spatial Strategy will override this principle, by allocating green belt land for "strategic" purposes.



Fillybrook, Hurn

Hurn is renowned for its special, and often rare environment. Large areas have already been protected by law and through planning policy, but it is important that we protect this natural asset for its own sake and for future generations.

However, as pressures on the surrounding areas grow – traffic and commercial development – this will put greater pressure on those areas that are valuable to residents. This means that we need to recognise and manage this pressure, which will have a fundamental impact on the development and management of land.

Recent examples of these pressures have been: the development of Bournemouth International Airport and especially the use of a 'greenfield' site for additional parking; gravel extraction at Hurn Court Farm and Avon Common; and the ever increasing pressure for the mass felling of trees on our public recreational spaces.

Our Questionnaire response to question 2b) showed that the majority of residents, 81%, prefer a wooded environment rather than open habitat, and Parish Council policy should reflect this view.

Future proposals which will encroach further into the rural environment are: more gravel extraction sites in the Parish; major road alterations to include a Hurn Southern Bypass and changes to the Blackwater/A338 junction; and the building of 900 houses on the fields adjoining Parley Cross traffic lights which, although not in the Parish, are adjacent and will impact heavily on the environment of Hurn.

The Parish already has many nature conservation sites which are protected by legislation from being adversely affected by any type of development. Of particular relevance are the Dorset Heaths and areas of protected wetland of importance to birds under the Ramsar Convention. We also play host to several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that provide a habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna, including some species of invertebrates and birds that are protected in their own right through legislation. In particular the Moors River SSSI is home to otters, and at the Troublefield Nature Reserve an otter holt has been constructed to encourage this rare and protected species to breed.

Government Planning Policy states that planning policies and planning decisions should 'aim to maintain and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests'. The Regional Spatial Strategy then adds to this by encouraging a policy that promotes the enhancement of designated sites.

The Parish Council has the important role of protecting and enhancing the environment and doing its best to ensure that this important aspect of Parish life will be both monitored and maintained.

ACTION – The Parish Council to reflect residents' overwhelming view of preserving the green belt and wooded environment, in any consultation, on any issue.



The Moors River



Banded Demoiselle



Bell Heather on the Heathland



Conifers in Hurn Forest

HOUSING

Dorset has been named as the least affordable place in the South West for families looking for their own homes with houses costing almost 15 times the average income and Hurn is no exception. For statistical purposes of house price comparison Hurn is grouped with Christchurch which has the highest ratio of 19 times the average income of £17,909, with Bournemouth more affordable having house prices at 12 times the average income.

Nationally more than 14,000 families are on the waiting lists for 'affordable' social housing and this presents a major problem especially for the children of lower income families who were raised and brought up in the Parish but have little opportunity of purchasing their own home in the Village where the majority of the properties are above their price range.

Out of all of the properties in the Parish only around 27 could be considered as affordable 'social' housing and these are owned by the Twynham Housing Association Ltd. who built some 70 affordable homes in the 1950s, 50 of which have now been sold and are privately owned.



Moors Close

The response to the Parish Questionnaire, Nos. 5a) and b) was interesting, with residents generally split as to whether further 'affordable' housing should be built in the Village. 46% thought that it should, 42% thought that it should not, and 12% had no opinion. However when asked if more homes should be available to rent in Hurn through Housing Associations, the majority of 59% disagreed with only 29% in agreement.

Any additional 'social' housing being built in the Parish is unlikely, but some may be available in the neighbouring Parish of Parley, if the Regional Spatial Strategy proposal for many thousands of new homes to be built in Dorset goes ahead.

In particular the Spatial Strategy has called for 900 homes to be built on green belt land to the south of Parley Cross Roads, and despite much local opposition, this scheme may yet go ahead. Some of these homes, in line with Government Policy, would have to be 'affordable' housing.

Although this land is not in Hurn, building on it, so close to Hurn will inevitably affect our Village, mainly by a huge increase in traffic passing through.

Everyone who is interested in housing being built for future generations, albeit in Hurn or its surrounds, should ensure that they take part in any forthcoming consultations on this issue.

ACTION – The Parish Council to ensure that residents are aware of any consultations regarding housing proposals, and ask their opinion.

BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

To a great deal of people Hurn is primarily known for its airport that lies wholly within the Parish approximately 3 miles from Christchurch and 4 ½ miles from Bournemouth.

It is approximately 1 mile from the A338 Bournemouth Spur Road but with no purpose built access, our Village roads and the main road through Parley are used for all vehicular access. It has no rail connection, the nearest being Christchurch, but it does have an hourly bus service that connects with Bournemouth.



Old Terminal Entrance

The site extends to some 366 hectares, 67 of which are designated as areas of nature conservation interest. It has 3 main access points: the main Passenger Terminal Entrance off Parley Lane, and commercial access points off Matchams Lane in the east and Chapel Gate in the West.

The Airport is a major employer in the area and fulfils two distinct roles: that of primary airport for the area, and that of a growing Business Park that provides a strategic employment role within South East Dorset. There are significant aviation-related businesses, small to medium employers and high quality office space at Aviation Park. This Business Park, of which the Aviation Park forms a part, has continued to be an important employment centre providing work for around 2,500 people, some of whom live in Hurn. In addition the Airport often acts as a base for the famous National Display Team “The Red Arrows” when they are in the area.

The past six years has seen significant growth in passenger numbers, in 2007 breaking through the 1 million-passenger figure. As such, it features heavily in the Bournemouth Dorset and Poole Structure Plan and the emerging South West Regional Spatial Strategy. However, from a commercial point of view the development of the Airport as a whole has been constrained, not just because of lack of required funding, but by sensitive nature conservation designations which lie within and adjoining the site, and the inadequacy of the local transport infrastructure. All of these constraints are of vital importance to the residents of Hurn, as fulfilling the potential of the site will depend on overcoming these problems. What will this mean for our quality of life?



The Red Arrows visit Hurn

In this connection, it is significant to note the responses to Question No. 1 of our Parish Questionnaire. 70% of residents agreed that future growth of the Airport Passenger Terminal should be restricted to preserve the quality of life for residents of Hurn, with only 26% disagreeing. Similarly with the same question asked about the Airport Business Park, 68% agreed and 28% disagreed. Overwhelmingly, Airport expansion in general is not supported by the majority of residents.

We should be concerned with closely monitoring the following areas, each of which are influenced by Government Policy and over which we have little control:

- Airport Growth
- Climate Change
- Promotion of Economic Development
- Green Belt Policy
- Biodiversity and Conservation
- Transport Infrastructure
- Noise and Light Pollution

Airport Growth

Government Policy on Airport Growth is set out in the Civil Aviation Act 2006. This supports the principle of providing additional terminal capacity at the Airport in the context of 'minimising impacts on environmentally sensitive sites and providing improvements to transport access'.

In response to this the Airport prepared a Master Plan showing how they would accommodate their projected levels of growth up to 2030, a date identified in the Government's 'Future of Air Transport' White paper.

In 2007, the Airport's owners, Manchester Airport Group, announced a £32 million investment in the redevelopment of the Airport which mainly focused on creating new car parking spaces in two separate car parks and the creation of a new International Arrivals Terminal. Part of these plans included screening off the current arrivals terminal with a three metre screen, with plans to ultimately phase out the use of the building. In June 2007, planning permission was granted to the scheme by Christchurch Council Planning Committee, despite public objections and protests. This was conditional, however, on a maximum of three million air passengers per annum, and required financial contributions to road systems, bus routes and the use of quieter aircraft.

With the budget increased to £45 million in July 2008 the upgrade was modified to include replacement of the arrivals terminal and an upgrade of the check-in and departure lounge area. Re-building of the terminal will increase its size by 62% and work on this started in August 2007.

The overall development work started in August 2008 with the runway being re-surfaced and associated ground lighting improvements being carried out. The main apron has been expanded to provide stands for 11 aircraft of Boeing 737–800 size; a new car park has been created opposite the new terminal and another car park on the southern boundary has been constructed.

Work on the terminal itself is now in progress, where the check-in areas, security control and departure lounges are being upgraded. Improvements to the infrastructure around the Airport propose improved bus services to Bournemouth Interchange and future road changes, including a Hurn Southern Bypass, to improve access.

The new terminal is expected to be complete by summer 2010.

Climate Change

Government policy is that all airports should adhere to a framework for achieving a 'zero carbon' status, reducing emissions and stabilising climate change, taking into account unavoidable consequences. This has a positive effect for Hurn and is welcome. It is certainly better than there being no policy in place at all.

Economic Development

The Government promotes economic development compatible with environmental objectives. This means that sufficient land must be provided for employment development well served by infrastructure. In the context of Bournemouth International Airport development, the infrastructure constraints must be addressed to provide a sufficient supply of land and premises, in such timely manner as to meet business requirements and, to this end, the 80 hectares of Business Park have already been removed from the Green Belt to promote employment at the Airport. This search for more development land is important to us, due to the significant reliance placed on the Airport site in providing land to meet future employment needs for both the local and wider population.

Green Belt Policy relating to the Airport

The Southern Operational Area of the Airport is currently set within the 'green belt', whilst the Northern Business Park area is excluded.

Biodiversity and Conservation

As the Airport site includes and abuts several international, national and locally designated sites of nature conservation importance, the Airport is required to assess the impact of any land-use plans against the conservation objectives of a European nature conservation site and, where significant effects are identified, examine alternatives to avoid any potentially damaging effects.

Transport

Government has ruled that any future development of the Airport should offer a realistic choice of access by a range of transport modes with particular emphasis on the role of public transport. It is universally recognised, however, that current (2010) access to the Airport and its Business Park is poor and for development to proceed, the impact of transport within and through the Village is going to be materially affected.

It is proposed that there will be a whole raft of road improvements from Parley Cross, through Hurn to Blackwater in an attempt to improve traffic flow. (See Paragraph on Roads and Transport).

Noise and Light Pollution

Government states that future development at the Airport should consider current levels of noise and light exposure and any increase that can reasonably be expected in the future. They are also required to ensure that development does not cause an unacceptable level of disturbance.

The Airport acknowledges, in its Master Plan, that airports give rise to three groups of noise sources:

- From aircraft in the air approaching or departing from the airport
- From aircraft on the ground, other ancillary operations e.g. engine testing, use of auxiliary power units and the operation of the terminal and associated buildings
- Road traffic noise generated by staff and passengers

They also accept that air noise associated with the Airport extends beyond its boundaries and into nearby residential areas and that aircraft noise is often transitory with quiet periods of inactivity interspersed with short intense periods of relatively high noise levels. Unless there is an emergency, engine testing is not carried out after 8pm, before 7am, on Sunday or on Armistice Day.

The noise generated by individual aircraft varies. Since 1999 the Airport maintains that there have been reductions in the level of noise generated due to the removal of older, noisier aircraft from service. They also state that this trend will offset the predicted increase in the number of aircraft movements.

The Airport's view is that whilst noise generation will increase during the Master Plan period, its impacts are limited. They also say that they will consider the introduction of proposals to offer sound insulation to any properties subject to moderate and high noise levels as well as introducing fines for operators who use overly noisy aircraft. They will also control the approach and departure routes used.

So far as night flying is concerned the Airport state that there are, at present, limited night-time flights (as defined between the hours of 2300 to 0700) from the Airport with occasional late returning charter flights and scheduled flight departures between 0600 and 0700. They say that this situation will not change significantly during the period of the Master Plan.

Between 1st July and 21st October 2009 the Airport published a Draft Noise Action Plan Consultation in order to comply with the EU Environmental Noise Directive and UK Regulations. There was significant local interest and comment regarding night flights.

When planning permission was granted for the new terminal building in 2007, a legally binding Section 106 Agreement (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) was attached to the consent. This sets out maximum quotas for night flying. The document can be viewed via The Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council. In 2009 the Airport did not use all of its allocated night flight quota and their Noise Action Plan states that there are no proposals to increase night flights in 2010. The Parish Council have requested that night flights are not increased at all from their current level in the future, despite the Section 106 quota.

Whatever is said we are talking about degree because, although noise levels can be measured, their effects are subjective. It is therefore up to us all to be aware of what is happening and to monitor any adverse effects on our quality of life, raising them in appropriate forums.



Old Aerial View



Aerial View 2009 with the New Terminal nearing completion

Summary

Taken that the politicians accept that Airport development is supported by the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Dorset Structure Plan, and the Christchurch Local Plan, and that development may raise concerns that Airport growth may contribute to increased noise levels, pollution and traffic congestion, we need to address Hurn's priority issues which should determine the limits to which growth at the Airport should be controlled.

This means that, as residents of Hurn our views are strategically important, as each of these issues will have a significant effect on the Parish and we ignore them at our peril.

- What is our view on the infrastructure issues that should be considered as part of the transport requirements of the Airport and their potential impact on the Village?
- What type of business activity should we be supporting at the Airport?
- How can we monitor and control areas of unwanted and unacceptable noise and light pollution?

**ACTION – Residents to monitor and inform The Parish Council of concerns.
The Parish Council to ensure that residents are informed of any consultations, and update them via the Parish Newsletter.**

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Dorset County Council has produced a 'Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy' for the County to guide the way that waste will be dealt with over the next 25 years.

The objectives are to:

- Reduce the total amount of waste that is produced.
- Achieve even higher rates of recycling and composting.
- Recover value from residual waste that can't be recycled or composted.
- Minimise the amount that is sent to be buried in the ground at landfill sites.

As part of this strategy they say that they need to procure sufficient residual waste treatment capacity to ensure the treatment of their targeted levels of recycling and composting.

They recognise that economies of scale are particularly relevant to the treatment of residual waste and they see co-treatment of commercial waste as providing better value for money. To this end they are seeking opportunities for working in partnership with other Dorset Councils for joint working wherever possible.

They are, therefore, suggesting the procurement of one County waste treatment plant that will:

- Minimise waste to landfill and provide some spare capacity for –
 - Higher levels of waste growth
 - Locally produced commercial waste
 - Other Local Authorities' waste
- Provide a cost-effective solution for Dorset.

On current information they consider it prudent to plan for a residual treatment capacity of approximately 150,000 tonnes per year. Their preferred site was (up until December 2009), in Hurn at the north western end of Bournemouth Airport, just behind Chapel Lane. Dorset County Council had been moving forward to procure this site. However, in the interim, they entered into a short-term contract elsewhere for diversion of waste from landfill until 2012.

The type of new treatment plant required had not been decided in the light of continually developing technology. Originally a Mechanical Biological Treatment Works (MBT) was proposed by the County Council, but now this could change to a Direct Energy from Waste Plant (EfW). Whichever Plant is chosen, the recovery of renewable energy from waste is seen as a major priority, and will involve incineration of waste. Had the site in Hurn been chosen, then further air pollution in the area would have been a concern.

At the time the Parish Questionnaire was circulated to residents, it was still proposed to locate a County Waste Incinerator in Hurn.

Question No. 3 of our Parish Questionnaire referred to the MBT, and 88% of residents agreed that waste should not be brought from all over Dorset or further afield to be treated in Hurn. 89% felt that pollution from the proposed Plant was a cause of concern. This was an overwhelming 'no' from Hurn residents to the location of this Plant here. The Parish Council fully supported this view.

Hurn Parish Council and local Resident Associations have continuously offered strenuous objection to the siting of this Waste Plant in our area, and we believe that because there was so much local opposition, the scheme was withdrawn.

At the time of publication of this Parish Plan (summer 2010), Dorset County Council had decided against pursuing a loan of £80 million under the Government Private Finance Initiative, to design, build and operate a plant to burn refuse-derived fuel in Hurn.

The County Council issued a press release saying that increased recycling rates lay behind their decision. Apparently this had reduced the volume of waste requiring treatment and enabled them to use local private sector facilities instead of building their own facility.

The Parish Council are delighted with this decision, whatever the reason, and through the Parish Newsletter have thanked all those who supported campaigns to prevent this Incinerator being built in Hurn.

ACTION – The Parish Council to remain vigilant in case this issue arises again in the future. The Parish Council should lobby to ensure that it has a representative on any Waste Management Committee.

TRANSPORT, ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Travel is fundamental to our village way of life and those residents without cars are badly served by public transport. Our Parish Plan must, therefore, seek to ensure that parishioners are enabled to travel safely, economically and conveniently to meet their needs.

Hurn is close to both Christchurch and Bournemouth, with access to the A338 enabling travel to the North and West, and the B3073 (Christchurch Road) to the South. There is no railway station, the nearest being Christchurch 3 miles away, and the bus services, although improving, are both infrequent and relatively expensive.

Many residents of Hurn drive to work and to access the main shopping centres in Bournemouth, Castle Point, Christchurch, Ringwood and Ferndown as well as the supermarkets situated 'out of town'.

Over the last 20 years traffic on our roads has more than doubled raising problems of congestion, road safety and environmental impact. This is especially so in our Parish whose roads are heavily used each day by thousands of non-resident drivers to reach local employment, or as 'rat runs' to avoid other major black-spots.



Non-residents driving on Hurn's four major roads – Christchurch Road, Parley Lane, Matchams Lane and the Avon Causeway - will talk of frustration, bottle-necks and holdups, especially during the morning and evening peaks and at holiday times. In fact, traffic using Christchurch Road and Parley Lane is often backed-up in both directions from the Blackwater Junction with the A338 in the South, and Parley traffic lights in the west. Add to this, highly increased volumes when traffic is diverted through the Village due to roadworks or repeated accidents closing sections of the A338 and chaos often ensues.

Future indications are that traffic flow through the Village can only get worse. The Airport is growing; the Business Park in the Northern Sector of the Airport is expanding; there are further plans for more local gravel extraction and increasing pressures on motorists to use the Hurn roads as a through-route to other destinations.

The C156 Matchams Lane, not suitable for heavy traffic but used as a 'rat run' to avoid problems on the A338

In theory, planning proposals and policies should make it easier for people to get to work and to key facilities using sustainable transport modes – walking, cycling and public transport – but, for various reasons so far as Hurn is concerned, this is largely impracticable with private vehicular traffic taking precedence due to road inadequacy elsewhere. The Government's view is that, where required, traffic management measures should improve and enhance local neighbourhoods, the natural environment, and improve road safety.

As part of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy, recommendations are made that will directly affect Hurn. These include:

- Increased 'demand management' by transferring more road space to 'priority' vehicles i.e. Bus Lanes.
- Prime transport corridor improvements.
- A package of measures to improve access to and from the Airport.

They also recommend a strengthening of the requirement for Local Authorities in South East Dorset to work together to deliver transport improvements. So, where does this leave the Village?

On the one hand we are currently experiencing traffic volumes that create pollution from exhaust fumes, vehicle accidents, speeding and difficulties for pedestrians, cyclists and horses using and crossing our roads. On the other hand we have a whole raft of proposed improvements that could potentially, impact upon the natural environment, attract even more traffic, more pollution, and more problems for local residents. It will also lead to a greater proliferation of signs and associated street lighting not in keeping with the rural area.

To indicate the extent of the threat that this imposes on the area, the following are the subject of a Dorset County Council application for Regional Funding to cover a major scheme of works within, or directly affecting the Parish of Hurn:

- A347 / B3073 Parley Cross Junction improvements. (A gyratory system is suggested).
- B3073 / Aviation Business Park access. Chapel Gate Roundabout improvements.
- Improvements to the B3073, Parley Lane, including a 'third lane' for bus occupancy and high-occupancy vehicles.
- A new traffic-light-controlled access into the Airport's proposed Western Car Park, which is yet to be built adjacent to Parley Lane on the apron, to the rear of the Air Traffic Control School.
- Traffic lights at the junction of the B3073 Parley Lane with Hurn Court Lane and the main Airport Terminal Entrance Road.
- A Hurn Southern By-Pass, including a Bus Lane, starting on the B3073 Christchurch Road near Home Farm, cutting through Mill Lane to join a new roundabout about 200 yards West of the existing Hurn roundabout.
- A338/B3073 Blackwater Interchange improvements including an additional bridge deck on each carriageway.
- A third lane on both sides of the A338 Spur Road between the Blackwater Junction and the Cooper Dean Roundabout.



*The narrow and rural Hurn Court Lane
so close to the main Airport Terminal entrance on Parley Lane*

Question No. 11 of our Parish Questionnaire asked if roads in Hurn should be improved or widened to accommodate additional traffic. A significant majority disagreed, with 63% saying 'no' and 36% saying 'yes'.

These plans could have wide ranging implications for the residents of Hurn both in the short and long term as one can argue that so-called 'improvements' may make the Hurn through-route more attractive as a 'rat run' and will attract even more traffic. Such continuous and increased traffic could have serious implications for our rural environment, air quality, sound and light pollution and, above all, residents' safety.

On the other hand, a straightforward through route from Blackwater Junction to Parley, and return, could be perceived as a positive enhancement to Hurn "Village". No longer will all traffic need to queue at Hurn Roundabout or go over Hurn Bridge, making the Village centre much quieter. Also it will be safer for horseriders from Hurn Bridge Equestrian Centre to access Mill Lane, Ramsdown Plantation and Sopley Common.

The major downside to this proposal is that 'passing trade' for the Village Stores and Post Office will be much reduced and may severely and detrimentally affect its viability.

This raft of proposed "road improvements", if instigated, will commence around 2016.

There has been much talk about the construction of a link road directly from the Airport to the A338, and an area of land in the north of the Parish was designated in the Christchurch Local Plan for this purpose. However, Dorset County Council is currently of the opinion that this link will not be built, as to do so, would also require the widening of both carriageways of the A338 from Ashley Heath Roundabout to Blackwater, to take the volume of traffic, and there are no funds available for such an extremely expensive scheme. It is considered that the above mentioned raft of local road improvements will suffice to alleviate traffic problems in the foreseeable future.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Speeding

All entrances to the Village have a defined “Village Gateway” with very visible 30 mph Limit signs, yet, from all directions, when volume of traffic permits, very few motorists observe them. Particular problems relate to Parley Lane and Matchams Lane where approach speeds to the Village within the 30mph zone can be much higher. This, linked to the often-continuous volume of traffic can make it difficult to cross the roads or gain access onto them by vehicle.



The Village Gateway on Parley Lane



Horses from Hurn Bridge Equestrian Centre on Parley Lane

Hurn Bridge Equestrian Centre has a particular problem in this respect with horses and their riders crossing to and from grazing and the Cross Country Course in Mill Lane, or using Parley Lane and the Avon Causeway to access rides on Ramsdown Plantation or Sopley Common. They also experience difficulty crossing the Christchurch Road at the top of the Hurn Court Lane one-way system.

Road Safety

Due to the volume and speed of traffic travelling through Hurn, road safety may continue to be an issue.

Unauthorised Parking

This issue was highlighted under “Residents' Comments” in the Parish Questionnaire.

Unauthorised parking in the Village is a growing problem possibly occasioned by the charges levied for parking at the Airport. Travellers seem to prefer to risk their vehicles by parking them on Village roads, often inconsiderately and inconveniently and to the detriment of local residents, other road users and the environment. Long-term parked vehicles, especially in poorly lit areas tend to attract theft and vandalism. This may cease to be a problem if the raft of suggested road improvements eventually goes ahead.

Problems have occurred in the lay-by outside Hurn Sports and Social Club; in Moors Close, where 'warning' signs have been erected and residents issued with stickers to attach to 'unauthorised' vehicles; in Hurn Court Lane where double yellow line restrictions have been imposed; and outside the Village Stores where formal parking restrictions have had to be introduced by the Council. Mill Lane also suffers where, as well as churning up to 6ft of the verge, 'concealed entrances' are often obstructed for days, requiring the police to assist in vehicle removal. Wide farm and delivery vehicles are faced with major problems due to the narrowness of the Lane which carries a 6'6” width restriction.

To address this problem, both the Police and the Parish Council have combined in a PACT initiative (Partners and Communities Together). Letters have been distributed to properties in Moors Close and other Lanes affected by the parking problem, suggesting that residents phone the Police or the Parish Council with the registration number of the offending vehicle. The Police have agreed to contact the owners in an effort to deter them from inconsiderate parking in the future.



'Residents Only' sign in Moors Close

ACTION – Residents to contact The Parish Council with any traffic related concerns. The Parish Council to monitor all traffic related issues and inform Residents via the Parish Newsletter.

GRAVEL EXTRACTION

Hurn has a long and on-going history of gravel extraction with the remains of small gravel pits being found across the Parish. Already there are two major operational sites within the Parish – Hurn Court Farm, and Avon Common – with proposals for additional workings at Parley Court (Phase 3), East Parley Residual Reserve (off Chapel Lane) and a Hurn Court Farm Extension. Obviously these quite extensive workings can, and do, have a major effect on our roads and general quality of life so it is important that we understand the roles and processes that bring them into being.

Dorset County Council, as the local planning authority for mineral extraction sites, is responsible for all land-use planning in connection with mineral working as well as the handling and disposal of waste (landfill is often used to reinstate sites after sand and gravel digging has finished). As such, they are required by Central Government to prepare strategic policies and plans in relation to the same, which are overseen and approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment. This means that, whilst all interested parties can input to the consultation process, the final decision as to what will, or will not happen is down to the County Council and the Secretary of State, leaving us in a fairly vulnerable position.

The County Council's actions are governed by Central Government's 'Planning Policy Guidance Notes', particularly PPG1 – 'General Policy and Principles' and PPG12 – 'Development Plans and Regional Guidance'. Both refer to the need for the planning system to contribute towards the objective of sustainable development and ways of achieving this in the context of 'aggregate supply' as set out in 'Mineral Policy Guidance' MPG6 – 'Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England'.

Minerals are considered a **national** asset and the County has a duty to know their location, quality and extent, at all stages of their planning process. Hurn Parish has, therefore, always been a centre of interest due to the existence of extensive deposits of Valley Gravel that have only been marginally worked in the past. These gravels, usually three to four metres deep, have been deposited by the Avon and Stour river systems within the last 10,000 years. They now remain as terraces lining existing valley sides and underlying recent river silts.

In looking to extract this sand and gravel, the County is required to overlay areas of planning constraints on the geological map of mineral resources, and to identify those areas of 'unconstrained' resource. Those sites passing this Stage 1 Assessment are then subject to a more subjective assessment made by an on-site examination. This will consider such factors as visual intrusion; proximity to dwellings; other types of nuisance; unsuitability of access; and potential problems with transportation such as the effect on local roads. The result is a list of 'Preferred Areas' that will meet the County's estimated need.

The County's national requirement to provide, and landowners and mineral companies desire to supply, leaves residents in a relatively weak position to protest. Identified 'constraints' are really our only weapon, bearing in mind that the landowners and mineral extraction companies will normally hire professional planning consultants to promote their case.

The response to Question No. 6 of our Parish Questionnaire was overwhelming. 82% thought that no more applications for gravel extraction should be granted in the Parish.

CURRENT WORKINGS

Hurn Court Farm

Probably that best known to us is Hurn Court Farm whose main processing plant lies directly opposite the entrance to the Bournemouth Airport Terminal.

This site, for the extraction of Valley Gravel, comprises 48 hectares of arable land mainly of agricultural Grade 2, forming part of the northern terrace of the River Stour. The site lies on the south side of the B3073 Parley Lane, and is bounded on its west, south and east sides by narrow unclassified Lanes – Hurn Court Lane and Mill Lane. On its eastern side lies the Hurn Conservation Area and the Moors River SSSI. The nearest properties are: four in Mill Lane, with one being only 10 metres away, and four in Hurn Court Lane to the south, about 12 metres away. The site is level, and is surrounded by banks and mature hedging.

The projected life of the quarry is some eight to ten years. It will produce some 1.4 million tonnes of sand and gravel, and be restored for agricultural use at a lower level, without importation of fill.

This application was strongly fought by Christchurch Borough Council and Hurn Parish Council in the late 1990s but was 'lost' at the County Council by just one vote despite extensive objections. The site commenced working in 2005.



Hurn Court Farm Quarry

Avon Common

This site runs along the eastern side of the A338. It is behind, and to the north of the Avon Causeway Hotel on Forestry Commission land. It currently has no direct access onto the A338, although this is proposed.

This site, also for the extraction of Valley Gravel, comprises some 75 hectares of land mainly given over to forestry but with some more open areas and a scattering of heathland. The Week Common SSSI (not in Hurn Parish) lies immediately to the north. The eastern boundary abuts the Avon Valley SSSI. The western boundary is the A338. The nearest dwellings are located around the southern side of the site. 'The Bungalow', Pithouse farm and Railway Cottages are all within 150m of the site. In addition, 'Pithouse Cottage' is within the 'Preferred Area'. To the north, Week Farm is some 300m distant. The site is mainly level and generally well screened by an embankment along the A338 and the retention of a belt of trees along the road frontage.

The site carries no statutory nature conservation designation but it is very sensitively located with regard to adjoining and nearby areas of national or international importance and may, in part, have an important role in providing ecological continuity.

This site carries a requirement to phase working and to restore the site to lower levels, without the importation of fill, to provide a net increase in the quality and diversity of the ecological habitats within the site. Hence trees will not be replanted, and this site will become more heathland in the Parish.

CURRENT PROPOSALS

According to Dorset County Council 'It is considered that the Hurn area of Dorset is a valuable sand and gravel producing area and there is a need to continue to extract mineral into the long term to supply a local market'.

In October 2008, Dorset County Council drew up a 'Minerals Site Allocations Document' for consultation, identifying suitable sites for the extraction of sand, gravel and other minerals. This document identified all the sites that had been suggested by landowners and mineral operators to be considered for inclusion as future locations for quarrying. Three new areas lie within Hurn Parish, as shown below, and the Parish Council has already given their views to the initial consultation which ended in December 2008. These comments along with those of other interested parties were submitted to the Dorset County Council Minerals and Waste Policy Joint Advisory Committee in March 2009 and a report, including a summary of responses received, is now available on the County website.

The three new sites proposed for Hurn are as follows:

Hurn Court Farm Extension

A new site has been suggested on land situated between the current Hurn Court Farm Quarry processing site at the Airport end of Hurn Court Lane, and 'Adventure Wonderland', fronting onto Parley Lane, the B3073.

The suggestion is that New Milton Sand and Ballast, who currently operate the Hurn Court Farm site, spend an additional four years excavating 600,000 tonnes of sand and gravel from what is currently an agricultural site of 14.2 hectares. It would be restored to ground level with inert fill.

Access would be off Hurn Court Lane opposite the Processing Plant entrance, using the current B3073 turn-off for transport.

Properties directly affected would be, Dales House in Dales Lane; Wallis Cottages; Lupin Cottage and the Butterflies, all in Hurn Court Lane, all of which are situated on the boundaries of the site.

Also affected in terms of 'setting' would be Grade II-listed Dales House; Merritown Farmhouse and the Barn at Merritown Farm.

East Parley Residual Reserve

This site, currently under agricultural use, lies on land to the north of East Parley in the area of Eco Composting (off Chapel Lane bridleway). This is an area that has seen extensive mineral working in the past. The site consists of two areas of land which lie either side of the eastern arm of Parley Common which is an SSSI and Natura 2000 site. Restoration to heathland is proposed, using inert fill, to form a habitat link between the main part of Parley Common to the west and Hurn Common to the east.

The site would be in the form of a Borrow Pit for the extraction of sand and gravel to a depth of 2–3 metres from a site of 12 hectares yielding 0.5 million tonnes over a five year life.

Access would be via the B3073 and Chapel Lane bridleway with an anticipated 40 traffic movements a day.

Residential properties that could be affected (within 250 m of the site) lie along Chapel Lane and Barrack Road, Parley, to the north west.

Parley Court Phase 3

This site lies in the area of Parley Manor situated between the River Stour and the B3073. This, currently agricultural land, comprises 71 hectares where it is intended that 1.3 million tonnes of sand and gravel be extracted over a period of 10 years before in-filling it with inert waste.

Restoration, over a period of three years, would be to agricultural land with small pockets of woodland.

Access would be via a new road through fields to the north of the site ending with a mini-roundabout on the B3073, Parley Lane which has already received a comment from the County that "The development of this site raised highway concerns as the roads in the area are already over capacity". Traffic movements are estimated at 63 per day in years 1–3, rising to 150 per day from year 4 onwards.

Properties affected would be Parley Manor; Parley Court Barn and Farm; Swallow Barn and Tudor Lodge all of which lie within 200 m to the north.

To the south of the River Stour residential areas of Muscliffe and Redhill in Bournemouth would have views of the workings.

GENERAL CONCERNS

Hurn Parish has a long and ongoing history of proposals for sand and gravel extraction and this is likely to continue. There are already two operational sites within the Parish and we should all be concerned about the cumulative effects of adding more, and certainly concerned about any suggestion of concurrent working.

It is worrying that four of these sites (existing and proposed) lie within 2 km of each other and all exit onto the B3073 with existing and anticipated movements of HGV gravel lorries peaking at 318 a day.

These sites form essential buffers between residential properties and, with the possibility of a major new housing development of some 900 new homes at West Parley; the development of the Airport, improved road access and a talked about County Waste Incinerator off Chapel lane, we must be concerned with cumulative over development, and all that it brings with it.

ACTION – The Parish Council, in line with resident opinion, to maintain its objection to the new proposed sites. The Parish Council to keep residents informed via the Parish Newsletter.



Hurn Parish boundary



Existing minerals extraction sites



Draft proposed minerals sites (indicative location)

Hurn Parish

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PUBLIC OPEN SPACES, NATURE RESERVES AND WILDLIFE

The Parish of Hurn has a wealth of open space, and much of it has access for the general public. The majority of such land in Hurn is managed by the Forestry Commission, whilst other areas are managed by Dorset Wildlife Trust, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and Dorset County Council.

The Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission have three areas within Hurn. These are:

Hurn Forest – 377 hectares, of which approximately 250 hectares is in Hurn Parish;

Ramsdown Plantation – 51 hectares; and Sopley and Avon Common – 63 hectares. All of these have open access for all, including walkers, dogs, cyclists and horseriders. Only horseriders have to purchase an annual permit, for everyone else access is free of charge.

Hurn Forest is located between the eastern margins of the Moors River SSSI and Barnsfield Heath to the north. The car park entrance in Hurn is off the western side of Matchams Lane which separates it from Sopley Common, which is accessed from the eastern side. Bournemouth International Airport lies to the south west and the Bournemouth /Christchurch conurbation is approximately 3 miles to the south.

Ramsdown is located immediately south of Sopley Common close to Hurn Village. Both of these areas can be accessed from the Avon Causeway. The B3073 runs along the south western boundary of Ramsdown and the A338 lies immediately to the east. The outlying urban areas of Bournemouth/Christchurch are located approximately half a mile to the south.

Hurn Forest has flat topography with the land generally lying 20 metres above sea level, whilst Ramsdown lies mostly on a western facing slope rising to a plateau some 50 metres above sea level. From here there are extensive views over Bournemouth and the Isle of Wight to the south, and even as far as Ringwood to the north.



Hurn Forest

Crossbills thrive in Conifer Forest



The current woodland structure of Hurn forest is predominantly conifers, planted, grown and felled on a rotational basis to provide wood for the timber industry. There are elements of broadleaf woodland within the forest as well as bog woodland adjacent to the Moors River. The age structure of the woodland is largely between 20 and 60 years with a small amount of younger and older trees. Open space exists throughout, both as a result of ride widening and heathland restoration carried out as part of the Forests and Heathland Initiative. Although there is scope to develop more heathland, the local community remain firmly opposed to such expansion.

This view is borne out by the response to Question No. 2b) of the Parish Questionnaire, where 81% said that trees should not be felled in order to increase the amount of heathland in the Parish.



Roe Deer in the forest



Green Woodpecker



Great Spotted Woodpecker

The Forestry Commission part of Sopley Common is also mainly conifers, but Ramsdown Plantation is more diverse with a wider range of conifer species planted in the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, the age structure is fairly uniform with most woodland being 40 to 50 years old. It is proposed by the Forestry Commission that Ramsdown is managed on a continuous tree cover basis to further develop the diverse nature of the woodland.

As far as wildlife and conservation is concerned, the Moors River SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) runs along the eastern boundary of Hurn Forest; parts of Hurn Common SSSI lie within the Hurn Forest boundary comprising bog woodland to the north; Sopley Common has heathland SSSI within the Forest Boundary as does Ramsdown Plantation. There is a heathland block within the southern section of Hurn Forest alongside the Barnsfield Heath SSSI which is on land owned by QinetiQ, (previously owned by The Ministry of Defence).

The Forests are home to very many species – from the larger ones such as deer and badger; all manner of birdlife, with tall trees providing songposts for small birds and lookout posts for birds of prey; ground cover for small mammals (mice, voles etc.); deadwood for bat roosts and all types of insects; down to butterflies which use the ride edges in the summer to lay their eggs. The forest is an ever-evolving eco-system in itself providing a habitat for an enormous amount of wildlife.

Hurn Forest in particular is an example of what could be called a marvellous 'wild forest' - not over-managed with signage or commercial activity, where the public can go to walk, cycle, horseride and generally enjoy themselves in the open air, without restriction. It is a magnificent asset for Hurn's residents and wildlife.

Dorset Wildlife Trust

Dorset Wildlife Trust is responsible for two areas in Hurn Parish. One of them is part of Sopley Common (the other part being managed by the Forestry Commission). They manage 10 hectares of woodland and 23 hectares of heathland SSSI as a Nature Reserve, which is a site of national and international nature conservation importance.

The fauna on this site includes healthy populations of Sand Lizard and Silver-studded Blue Butterfly. There are also breeding Nightjar, Woodlark and Linnet which are all priority protected species. Smooth Snake, Heath Grasshopper, Wood Tiger Beetle and breeding Dartford Warbler also occur.

The Reserve is still a registered Common and there are existing common rights to grazing, timber, minerals and sport, also the general public have free access.

The Wildlife Trust's second area in Hurn is Troublefield Nature Reserve, accessed off Matchams Lane, and running alongside the Moors River SSSI. This is an area of unimproved wet grassland (called grazing marsh), and wet woodland in the Moors River flood plain. Both of these are priority protected habitats. It is a nationally important dragonfly site with a total of 18 recorded species. In addition, there are Otter in the Moors River in this area and it is a potential breeding site for this nationally protected species. An Otter Holt has been constructed to encourage this rare mammal to breed.



Speckled Wood Butterfly



The aptly named Wasp Spider

Oblong Leaved Sundew

Since 2004, Town Common has been the subject of great attention from residents of Hurn and St. Catherines, bearing out the result of our Questionnaire that local people do not want to see more trees felled. At that time an application to fell 15,000 trees on Town Common/St. Catherines Hill was submitted to the Forestry Commission. This resulted in Hurn Parish Council and West Christchurch Residents Association working together with the residents they represent, to have the application refused. Local people were successful and Christchurch Borough Council objected to the Forestry Commission that this amount of felling was 'excessive'. In turn the Forestry Commission refused the application.



One major concern is that if significant amounts of trees are felled, both Blackwater Hill and St. Catherines Hill will be subject to erosion and flooding may occur on the lower slopes. These hills are between the Rivers Avon and Stour, both of which can flood significantly during periods of heavy rain.

A professional Facilitator has now been employed to 'bring together' those who wish to manage Town Common as heathland and those who wish to minimise the felling to preserve the public amenity and woodland wildlife. The aim is to create a Management Plan for Town Common and St. Catherines Hill. Hurn Parish Council has a seat on the Steering Group and will be fully involved in the formation of the Management Plan, putting forward residents' views.



*River Avon Floodplain
Avon Causeway*



Female Adder

Male Sand Lizard



Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (formerly The Herpetological Conservation Trust)

This Organisation is also responsible for two sites in Hurn. The first is 14.33 hectares to the east of Ramsdown Plantation, and the second is the part of the 146 hectare Town Common site which is in Hurn Parish, and includes Blackwater Hill.

Both of these areas are designated as heathland SSSI and are managed in much the same way as the Sopley Common SSSI mentioned above. They also house the same type of species.

These areas are all open to the general public.

Dorset County Council

The County Council Environment Team is largely responsible for the heathland sites within Bournemouth International Airport boundary, one of which is Merritown Heath SSSI. These are also managed in the same manner as other heathland sites in the Parish.

These areas are not open to the general public.

Heathland Mitigation

In this section it is pertinent to mention heathland mitigation.

In order to mitigate the impact of the public using the internationally protected Dorset Heaths for recreation, there is a scheme in place to encourage people to use alternative areas instead. These alternative areas may be specially constructed projects, for instance in Christchurch there are currently two mitigation schemes, one is the Arena BMX track at Stony Lane, and the other is improvement to land at Chewton Bunny for use by the public.

Ramsdown Plantation in Hurn has been proposed as a future mitigation area. The idea is to encourage increased use of Ramsdown as an alternative to Sopley Common and Town Common SSSIs. So far, this proposal is in its infancy, but the suggestion is “to improve access and attractiveness for visitors from the local area and car borne visitors currently using Sopley Common and Town Common”. This could hugely increase the number of people using this forest.

ACTION – The Parish Council to ensure that residents' views regarding retention of forest and woodland in the Parish are made known in relevant consultations, and to keep residents updated regarding the proposed Ramsdown heathland mitigation scheme, via The Parish Newsletter.

FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS and CYCLEWAYS

Definitive Footpaths and Bridleways

Hurn is a beautiful part of Dorset. Those of us who live here are very fortunate indeed to be in such a rural setting and it is easy to take it for granted. Not only do we, as residents, enjoy Hurn's countryside, but on a daily basis hundreds of people visit us from urban areas, to walk their dogs, or just take advantage of the open air.

The Parish has 12 definitive footpaths and 6 definitive bridleways, which we believe are on the whole well signposted and in reasonable condition. These are all marked on the definitive map in this Plan.

11 Paths in all, may not seem like many Rights of Way for such a large Parish, but in addition, we all have open access to huge areas of Forestry Commission and Common land, being Hurn Forest, Sopley Common, Ramsdown Plantation and Town Common (part of which is in Hurn). These areas are covered in more detail in the section on Open Spaces.

The definition of a 'footpath' is as follows:

A public right of way for walkers, but not at the side of a carriageway. It can run on a farm track. Access by foot only.

The definition of a 'bridleway' is more detailed:

A public right of way for walkers and those on horseback or leading a horse, but not a way at the side of a carriageway. Pedal cyclists also have a right of way but must give way to walkers and horseriders. A bridleway can run along a farm track. Motorised vehicles are prohibited.

Gates and styles are allowed on footpaths and bridleways.

Two of our footpaths which adjoin each other, are particularly worthy of special mention, as they lie in the flood plain of the River Stour.

Once the River Stour is crossed from the Bournemouth side into Hurn at Throop Mill, Footpath No. 1 runs south along the riverbank towards the end of Pig Shoot Lane, while Footpath No. 2 runs north, first by the River and then it cuts across the fields to Dales Lane, Merritown. This path is very aptly named 'Muddy Lane'. Both of these footpaths are prone to severe flooding as can be seen from the photograph taken in February 2009.

In 2009 Dorset County Council put forward proposals to upgrade one or both of these footpaths to 3 metre wide cycleways. This was strongly opposed by the Parish Council and residents in the immediate vicinity, due not only to the danger from flooding, but also because it was considered that 3 metres was too wide – in fact wider than Dales Lane – and would result in urbanisation of Hurn's rural countryside. The County Council Roads and Rights of Way Committee agreed that these routes were unsuitable for upgrading.

Instead, the County Council are now considering constructing a new bridge across the River Stour at the site of the old Pig Shoot Ford, and upgrading the bridge over the Leaden Stour, and to this end the cycling organisation Sustrans has pledged £300,000 towards the costs. The Parish Council will be consulted on this proposal in due course and will keep residents updated via the Parish Newsletter.



Flood on footpaths 1 and 2 – February 2009

Hurn Footpath and Bridleway Map Summary

Route Code	Route No.	Status	Length (metres)
E62/1	1	Footpath	479.70
E62/2	2	Footpath	1455.98
E62/3	3	Footpath	1214.13
E62/4	4	Bridleway	2976.51
E62/7	7	Bridleway	1284.28
E62/8	8	Bridleway	397.71
E62/11	11	Footpath	327.67
E62/26	26	Footpath	351.54
E62/28	28	Footpath	767.60
E62/29	29	Bridleway	1341.29
E62/31	31	Bridleway	830.22
E61/41	41	Bridleway	1642.78
E61/45	45	Footpath	602.88
E61/46	46	Footpath	365.33
E61/47	47	Footpath	66.51
E61/48	48	Footpath	75.93
E61/49	49	Footpath	435.56
E61/58	58	Footpath	956.73

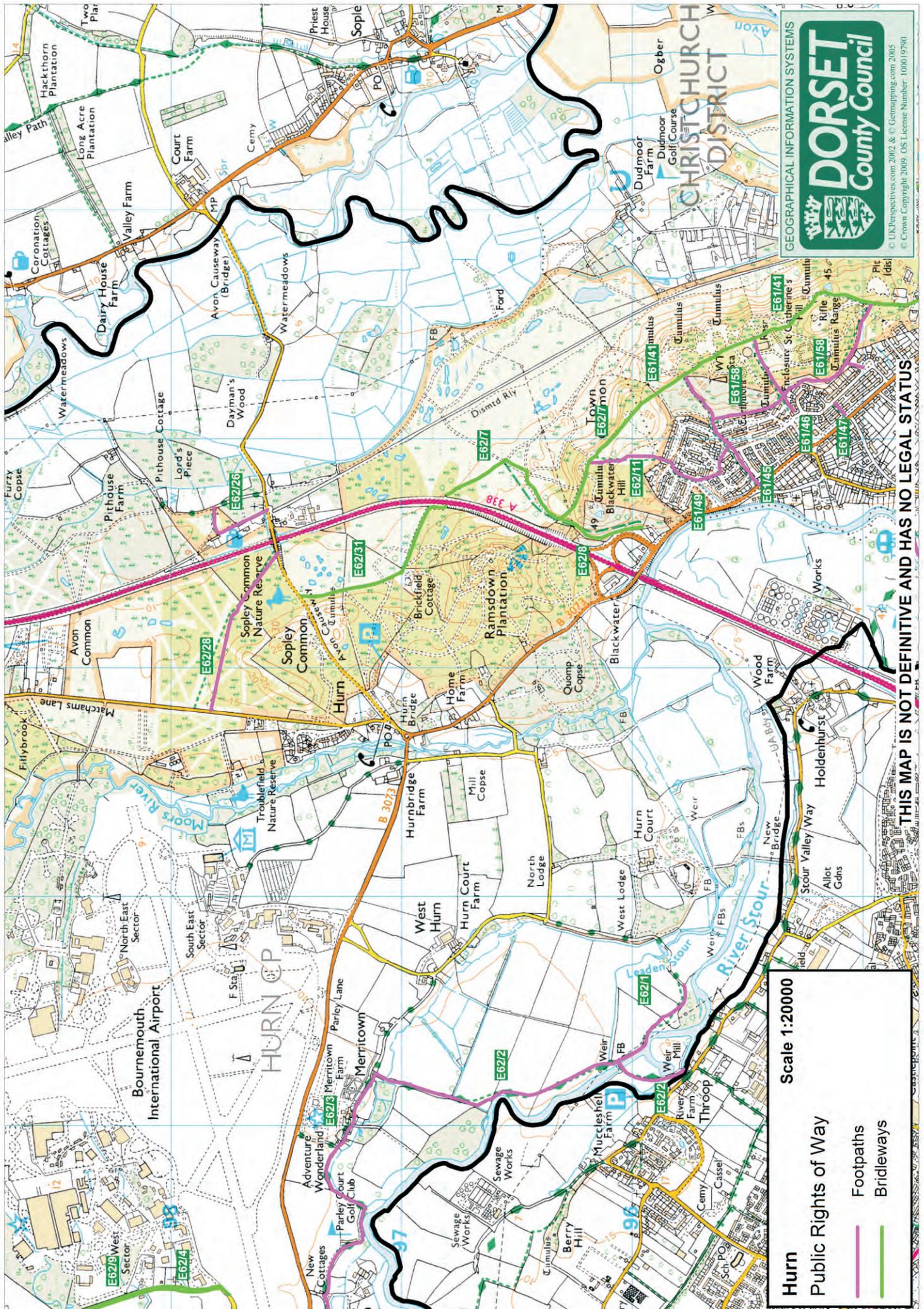
Cycleways

Government policy is to promote cycling, both for getting to work and recreation. In the last few years Hurn has seen the establishment of a network of cycleways. These have mainly come into being to allow airport employees to safely cycle to work and to generally promote cycling instead of using the car.

The path which runs from St. Catherines Hill, through Blackwater Junction and then along Christchurch Road to Hurn Roundabout, has now been redesignated as a shared pedestrian and cycling route. Likewise, the path from Hurn Bridge along Parley Lane past the Airport Terminal entrance to the Chapel Gate Airport Business Park has been redesignated in the same way. In 2009 Dorset County Council constructed a wide cycleway from Parley traffic lights to Chapel Gate in Hurn. This was specially constructed along the broad verge, independent from the carriageway. Special dropped kerb cycle crossings have also been installed at relevant points to allow cyclists and pedestrians to safely cross the roads. In particular this has been done within the Hurn Conservation Area giving a crossing point at Hurn roundabout, from Christchurch Road, across the Avon Causeway into Hurn Village, and also at Blackwater Junction.

Although some cyclists are using these new facilities, residents have noticed that many are not, and they continue to cycle on the road or weave through traffic, especially at Blackwater Junction. The Parish Council are hopeful that over time, all cyclists will start to use the special routes which have been designated for their safety.

**ACTION – The Parish Council and Residents to ensure that all Footpaths and Bridleways remain unobstructed. Any obstructions to be reported to the Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council.
Monitor that Cycleways are being used by the general public.**



THIS MAP IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND HAS NO LEGAL STATUS

THE ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING

The Environment

The response to Question No.2 of the Parish Questionnaire clearly showed that Hurn residents are proud of, and concerned about their environment. 93% want the Green Belt preserved, and 81% value the trees and wooded areas in the Parish.

One of the main causes for concern which is regularly raised at Parish Council meetings is litter. This seems to be a major problem in two particular areas: on roadside verges; and on the path between the Post Office and Moors Close.

Roadside Verges - These are inspected by a representative from Christchurch Borough Council on a regular basis, and each verge is given a rating as to whether it is urgently in need of litter picking or whether it is not too bad and can wait until a further inspection. The inspection includes detritus, litter, weeds etc. and is scored on a points system, 1=excellent, 10=appalling, with a score of 5 being the intervention level, when an area is scheduled for clearance. If anyone thinks that an area is in need of urgent attention, then they should contact either the Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council direct.

The Path between The Post Office and Moors Close – This area accumulates quite a lot of litter, mainly because the path is well used and is the route from the Village Shop to Moors Close. The path is regularly inspected in the same manner as the roadside verges, however, in addition, the Parish Council have ensured that there are 2 large litter bins outside the Post Office and a third bin at the Moors Close end of the path. A request for a fourth bin at the Greywell end of the path was refused due to lack of funds. However, a request has been made to the Borough Council that they litter pick this path with more frequency.

Verge cutting in Hurn is carried out twice a year, in late spring and autumn. Additional cutting will only be carried out if a request is made in order to maintain sight lines for Health and Safety reasons. This request can be made through the Parish Council.

Recycling

The Recycling Centre in the layby outside Hurn Bridge Sports Club is inspected and any flytipping cleared by Christchurch Borough Council, on a weekly basis. However, it is interesting to note the response to Question No. 8 of the Parish Questionnaire:

Question No.8 of the Parish Questionnaire asks if residents think that the Recycling Centre is an eye-sore that encourages fly-tipping and should be removed. Residents were 'split' evenly in their opinions with 45% saying 'yes', and 45% saying 'no', (10% had no opinion). Clearly the location of this facility in Hurn has both advantages and disadvantages.

It is certain that this Recycling Centre will remain in Hurn as it is well used and falls in line with all National and Local Environmental Policies. All we can do is try to keep it as tidy as possible. In 2008 The Parish Council successfully applied for a grant and was given a small sum to plant screening on the verge between the Avon Causeway and the Recycling Bins. It is hoped that as these shrubs grow, the visual impact of the bins will be reduced.

One comment on the Questionnaire was that the area should be enclosed completely, but it was thought that this could make it easier for fly-tippers as they would be out of sight.

Both the Parish Council and the Borough Council continue to monitor this area in an attempt to ensure that it is kept as tidy as possible, and it is hoped that residents will also be vigilant and report any fly-tipping so that it can be dealt with promptly.

Most of Hurn, except inaccessible areas, now has Kerbside Recycling. Special bins or bags are provided for plastic bottles, cans, glass bottles, paper and green waste. With the exception of the green waste, all of the recycled items are taken to a 'Materials Recycling Facility' (MRF), which is located in Hurn, off Chapel Lane. Here the items are sorted and sent to 'reprocessors' who prepare them for use in the manufacture of new products.

As the MRF in Hurn takes recycling from all over Dorset, this means there are recycling lorries accessing the Facility, via Hurn's roads, on a daily basis.

Other Issues

In a rural area such as Hurn, with quiet Lanes, unfortunately fly-tipping will always be a problem and impossible to stop. It is well known that many of our Lanes suffer from this problem. Please phone the Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council as soon as you see a problem, so that it can be dealt with and the Parish kept clean.

Litter bins in the Village have already been mentioned above, and all other litter and dog bins are emptied regularly by the Borough Council.

ACTION – Residents and The Parish Council to be aware of litter, fly tipping and any other environmental issue, and report it to the appropriate Authority.

POLICE AND CRIME



These days everybody is concerned about crime, both as it affects them and also how it affects their community. The problem is that very little crime is obvious to us, a lot of it being unseen. 'Recorded' crime does not always present the whole picture, for instance, when does uncouth/threatening behaviour, vandalism, fly-tipping or speeding become a chargeable offence? We therefore owe it to ourselves and to our neighbours to be forever vigilant with regard to crime and to know how and to whom such incidents should be reported.

The policing of Hurn Parish comes under the auspices of Dorset Police whose pledge is 'to reduce the level of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage in our community'. They also inform us that they are 'committed to reducing crime and disorder as well as increasing community access to policing' and they 'pledge to continue to tackle the crime most important to residents'. So, how do they fare; what are the statistics for the Village; how do we get to know them; and where, and how, do we contact them?

Both the Village and the Parish as a whole are now part of PACT – Partners and Communities Together – which is a multi-agency initiative where community service providers (Christchurch Borough Council, Hurn Parish Council, the Police, Youth Service, etc.) aim to work together to identify local issues and then to address them. This takes place through local 'street corner meetings' in the Village where our local Police Officers and visiting members of our local 'PACT Panel' made up of representatives from local organisations are present to listen to our concerns. These meetings take place in various locations and are advertised by flyers distributed to householders. They give you the opportunity to raise any issues or concerns you may have, by talking directly to your local Police Officer. From each meeting issues are given priority and appropriate action is planned. None of the issues raised will be ignored.

Dates and locations of these meetings can be found on the web at www.christchurchpact.org.uk and up-dates on resolving the issues raised will be presented at follow-up public meetings, through local newsletters and on the PACT website.

As part of the Safer Neighbourhood Initiative, PACT is very much in its infancy and requires our wholehearted support if it is to have the required effect on our community.

In addition to the above, we can now access details of what crime has been happening in our community 'at the push of a button' by 'logging on' to the Dorset Police website at www.dorset.police.uk or at www.myneighbourhood.dorset.police.uk. There you will find details for total crime in our area, as well as other areas of the County, broken down into categories such as burglary, robbery, vehicle crime, violent crime and anti-social behaviour. These figures are up-dated each month and will help improve the engagement between the community policing team and ourselves.

So, what is the crime situation affecting Hurn? The following crime statistics give an indication of the low domestic crime rate in Hurn Parish (figures do not include the Airport Terminal or Business Park which have their own Police Security Officers):

14th December 2009 to 8th January 2010

Total of 2 incidents: Wounding (dog bite), and Burglary non-dwelling (shed).

9th January 2010 to 7th February 2010

Total of 2 incidents: Burglary non-dwelling (shed), and Possession of drugs.

These figures are just for two months, but they do give an insight into the fact that Hurn Parish is a very safe place to live with very low crime statistics, especially when you bear in mind that the Parish covers approximately 43% of the whole of Christchurch Borough.

ACTION – The Parish Council to remain part of the PACT initiative.

Residents to inform the Parish Council of any issues which they would like given priority through PACT.

OTHER ISSUES ARISING FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND COMMENTS

Some of the questions asked in the Parish Questionnaire have not yet been covered in this Plan, and in addition, residents were invited to add comments about any other issue. This section discusses and addresses some of those issues.

Question No. 4 asked if The Post Office and Village Shop is considered an essential facility and should be kept. The response was overwhelmingly in support of this valued facility: 99% agreed.

There cannot be much more to say on this issue, except that both Residents and The Parish Council understand the great importance of Hurn Post Office and Stores to the community.

ACTION – Resist any attempt to close or undermine Hurn Post Office and Stores.



Hurn Post Office and Village Stores

Question No. 7 asked about Youth Facilities. It was very interesting to note that 70% thought that a Youth Club would be useful in Hurn, however, only 18% said that a member of their family would use it, while 56% said they would not.

It would seem that the problem here could be the viability of a Youth Club if it were set up. Having said that, The Parish Council would welcome, and assist, any residents who wished to set up a Club for the benefit of young people in the Parish. Funding might be available.

ACTION – In future Newsletters, The Parish Council to invite Hurn residents to discuss the possibility of setting up a Youth Facility. Any interested residents, to contact The Parish Council. If interest is shown, The Parish Council to investigate funding.

Question No. 9 was about urbanisation and light pollution. 59% thought that increased street lighting would detrimentally affect the rural character of Hurn, whilst 30% did not.

Currently, it is understood that there are no plans to increase street lighting in Hurn. Moors Close, where the majority of houses are located, and the Village Centre, already has such lighting. Rural areas are not normally lit, and it seems that the majority of residents are in agreement that lighting in the Lanes would spoil their character.

ACTION – Residents to approach The Parish Council to request additional lighting if considered necessary in any particular area.

Question No. 10 asked if local services provided by the Local Authority meet the needs of the residents of Hurn. Only 36% thought that they did, whilst 55% felt they did not.

From the 'comments' section, it seems that most dissatisfaction is with litter picking, fly-tipping, pot holes in the roads, verge cutting and the fortnightly (rather than weekly) household waste collection. All of these issues have been mentioned in the content of this Plan, and some of them tend to be specific to certain areas, at certain times of the year.

ACTION – Residents to contact The Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council with any specific problem.

Broadband

One of the additional comments on the questionnaire was about the lack of broadband in the Village, and in an effort to find out more, a member of the Parish Plan Steering Group contacted British Telecom.

They were told – The way BT expand their broadband coverage is by the number of requests they get, for instance, if a lot of people request it, that place is favoured over where no-one asks for it. People have to register their requests at www.bt.com/broadband. BT also said that they are in the process of regrading all cables by December 2011 ready for the digital switchover, and this may assist with better connections. However, there could be a potential opportunity presented by the close proximity of Bournemouth International Airport and Business Park, to improve connectivity.

ACTION – Christchurch Borough Council to work with Hurn Parish Council to facilitate consultation with external agencies to identify if a solution can be found, in particular to investigate opportunities of a Broadband extension from Bournemouth International Airport. The Parish Council to co-ordinate bringing pressure to bear on BT to provide broadband facilities, on behalf of residents.

Bus Services

Many residents made the comment that bus services through Hurn are poor. Unfortunately Bus Companies operate for profit, and if a route is not viable, then they will not operate it.

However, although maybe not ideal, there are in fact four bus services which operate in Hurn. These are of course subject to change. Full details are on the Parish Noticeboard outside The Post Office. Currently services are as follows:



The Airport Shuttle Bus

THE AIRPORT SHUTTLE

This shuttle service stops at Hurn Bridge on its way to Bournemouth at 32 minutes past every hour – starting at 7.32am with the last service into town at 6.32pm. From Bournemouth, the bus arrives into Hurn at 10 minutes past the hour – the first one stopping at Hurn Bridge at 7.10am and the last at 6.10pm. Hurn Bridge is a request stop and it is necessary to 'flag' the bus down.

DAMORY SERVICE 324 – MONDAYS ONLY – HURN/CASTLE POINT /BOURNEMOUTH SQUARE/BOSCOMBE/CHRISTCHURCH – AND RETURN.

This is a request service which comes down Matchams Lane into Hurn Village. The bus will stop almost anywhere if you flag it down, but it does not go via the Hurn Bridge bus shelter. The bus passes along Matchams Lane and through Hurn Village at 10.12am and arrives at Christchurch 45 minutes later, after a round trip via Castle Point, Bournemouth Square and Boscombe. The return bus leaves Christchurch Market Square at 1.10pm and does the trip in reverse arriving in Hurn 45 minutes later.

THE SCHOOL BUS

On Schooldays, Service 750, from Moors Close to Twynham School, Christchurch and return is also available to other passengers. It leaves Moors Close at 8.05am and returns, leaving Twynham School at 3.35pm.

SATURDAYS ONLY – SERVICE TO CASTLE POINT

On Saturdays there is Service 88 to Castle Point operated by Nordcat. The bus picks up at Hurn Bridge bus stop at 11.32am and 1.47pm, and returns to Hurn from Castle Point at 4.28pm

Obviously, bus service times may change, so it is best to check timetables first. All contact details for these bus services are listed under 'Useful Contacts' at the rear of this Parish Plan.

**ACTION – Residents to give feedback to The Parish Council regarding bus services.
Parish Council to support any request from residents for additional services.**

General

No general comments were received from residents as to how they may like Hurn to develop in the future. Indeed, the general impression given, was that respondents are generally happy with where they live, and do not want to see any major changes at all. Therefore, this Parish Plan does not set out any definitive “plan of action” to achieve any overall “vision”. Instead it aims to address the specific issues raised by residents. The overall aim is to maintain Hurn as a rural Parish.

SUMMARY OF ACTION PLANS

The Green Belt and Rural Environment	The Parish Council to reflect residents' overwhelming view of preserving the green belt and wooded environment, in any consultation, on any issue.
Housing	The Parish Council to ensure that residents are aware of any consultations regarding housing proposals and ask their opinion
Bournemouth International Airport	Residents to monitor and inform The Parish Council of concerns. The Parish Council to ensure that residents are informed of any consultations, and update them via the Parish Newsletter
Waste Management	The Parish Council to remain vigilant in case this issue arises again in the future. The Parish Council should lobby to ensure that it has a representative on any Waste Management Committee.
Transport, Roads and Traffic	Residents to contact the Parish Council with any traffic related concerns. The Parish Council to monitor all traffic related issues and inform residents via the Parish Newsletter.
Gravel Extraction	The Parish Council, in line with resident opinion, to maintain its objection to the new proposed sites. The Parish Council to keep residents informed via the Parish Newsletter.
Public Open Spaces, Nature Reserves and Wildlife	The Parish Council to ensure that residents' views regarding retention of forest and woodland in the Parish are made known in relevant consultations, and to keep residents updated regarding proposed Ramsdown heathland mitigation scheme, via the Parish Newsletter.
Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways	The Parish Council and Residents to ensure that all Footpaths and Bridleways remain unobstructed. Any obstructions to be reported to The Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council. Monitor that cycleways are being used by the general public.
The Environment and Recycling	Residents and The Parish Council to be aware of litter, fly tipping and any other environmental issue, and report it to the appropriate Authority.
Police and Crime	The Parish Council to remain part of the PACT initiative. Residents to inform The Parish Council of any issues which they would like given priority through PACT.

ACTIONS RELATING TO OTHER ISSUES ARISING FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND COMMENTS

Post Office and Village Shop	Resist any attempt to close or undermine Hurn Post Office and Stores.
Youth Facilities	In future Newsletters, The Parish Council to invite Hurn residents to discuss the possibility of setting up a Youth Facility. Any interested residents to contact the Parish Council. If interest is shown, the Parish Council to investigate funding.
Urbanisation and Light Pollution	Residents to approach the Parish Council to request additional lighting if considered necessary in any particular area.
Local Services	Residents to contact the Parish Council or Christchurch Borough Council with any specific problem.
Broadband	Christchurch Borough Council to work with Hurn Parish Council to facilitate consultation with external agencies to identify if a solution can be found, in particular to investigate opportunities of a Broadband extension from Bournemouth International Airport. Parish Council to co-ordinate bringing pressure to bear on BT to provide Broadband facilities, on behalf of residents.
Bus Services	Residents to give feedback to Parish Council regarding bus services. Parish Council to support any request from residents for additional services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND USEFUL CONTACTS

Acknowledgements:

All of the following people and organisations have freely given their help and support in a variety of ways to make the Hurn Parish Plan a reality. We take this opportunity to thank them.

Warwick Temple, Hurn resident, for writing many of the chapters.

Margaret Phipps, Chairman of Hurn Parish Council, also for writing chapters, compilation, production, and woodland photographs.

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Dorset Wildlife Trust, for heathland wildlife photographs.

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Special thanks to the Parish Plan Steering Group, who all gave up hours of their time to ensure that this document was drafted, edited and finally produced.

Steering Group Members:

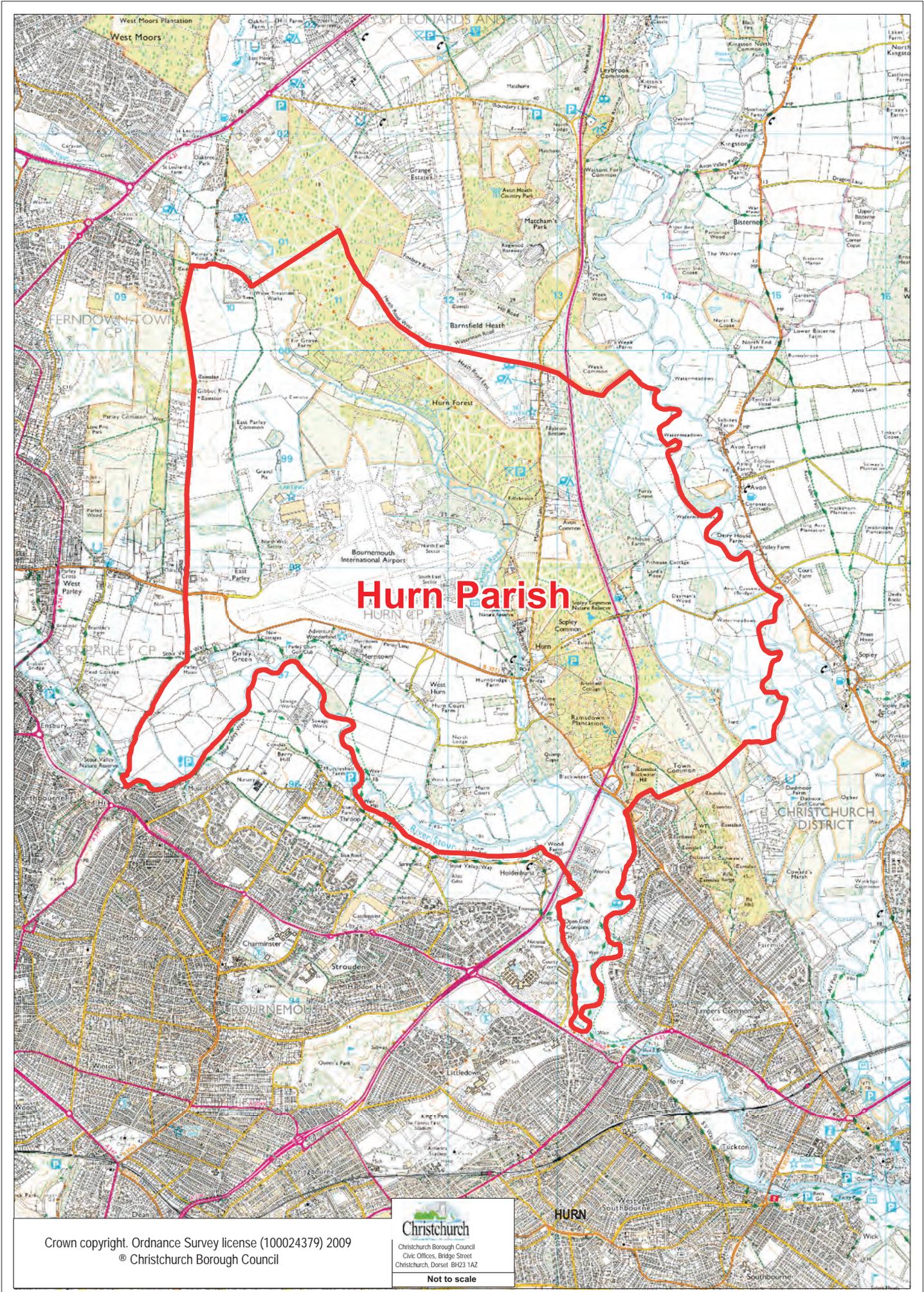
Margaret Phipps; Yvette Greatrex; Ian Evans; Lyn Moreland; Joy Thompson; Alfreda Pickersgill; Judy Morgan

Useful Contacts:

Hurn Parish Council	Clerk, 01202 872056 hurnparishcouncil@talktalk.net <i>Parish Council meetings held at Hurn Bridge Sports Club second Monday of every month 7.30pm.</i>
Christchurch Borough Council	All departments 01202 495000
Dorset County Council	All departments 01305 221000
Bournemouth International Airport (including Noise Complaints)	Auto attended number 01202 364500 environment@bournemouthairport.com
Police, non emergency	01202 222222 northchristchurch@dorset.pnn.police.uk
Bus Companies:	
The Airport Shuttle Bus operated by Discover Dorset	01202 557007
Damory Monday Service	01258 452545
The School Bus	01305 225165
Saturday Service to Castle Point	01305 225165

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Hurn Parish

HURN GP

CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT

HURN

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Christchurch
 Christchurch Borough Council
 Civic Offices, Bridge Street
 Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1AZ

Not to scale