

East Farleigh Village Plan Action Group – Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 3rd May 2011

After the initial work to address the original (and most straightforward) objectives proposed by residents in the Village Plan, the Action Group has been focussing its attention on securing a feasibility study that would help us consider the proposal for a Village Green. It was felt that the creation of a village green could also provide an opportunity to resolve the school-time parking problems in Vicarage Lane, and also secure an adjacent orchard for residents' use as 'village orchard'-cum-open space and conservation area.

Discussions were held with Michael Payne, the landowner of one site under consideration. It was acknowledged that the cost of creating the proposed village green etc. would have to be met by money raised through the sale of a strictly limited number of houses that could be built around the proposed green. It was felt that MBC *may* grant planning permission for a limited development as the village would benefit from improved amenities, the resolution of an intractable traffic problem and the creation of a protected nature conservation area. On this basis it was agreed that the feasibility study should proceed. Two volunteer donors agree to contribute to the cost of the study so that, along with a grant from Cllr Paulina Stockell, the cost to the village would be negligible. Sadly, Mr Payne subsequently withdrew his support for the plan unless planning consent was sought and obtained for substantially more housing. The Action Group did not feel that this was either desirable or likely to succeed. It was agreed, therefore, that the owner of a different site should be approached, and this is in hand.

Action is also being taken to secure grant aid to allow the Church Hall to be purchased on behalf of the village. If successful, we envisage the creation of a village centre for continued use by village organisations.

As FLAG will not be organising the village fete this year, two members of the Action Group have joined with representatives from FLAG and the Friends of the School to ensure that the rejuvenated and successful event will continue to play its part in village life.

Meetings of the Action Group have been well attended and the contribution made by members is much appreciated. Sadly, we are saying goodbye to Wally and Jean Adams who are leaving the village and so I would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their enthusiasm and commitment to the Village Plan, and to wish them well in their new home. The Group will, of course, be very happy to welcome new members to take their place.

Ray Morris
Chair