

Spittal

Action Plan

February
2009

SPITTAL



Aiennir a hwyfusir Gweithredu
dros Gymunedau Gwledig gan
Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru

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Spittal Action Plan

Prepared by

SPITTAL COMMUNITY

in conjunction with



Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise
and Development

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The Workshop findings and the results of a community questionnaire have been drawn up into this Action Plan which was circulated to all residents before being discussed and adopted at the public meeting held on 25th March 2009

BACKGROUND TO THE ACTION PLAN

At the end of 2008, following a presentation by PLANED it was agreed by Spittal Community Council to undertake a community Action Plan process in order to reflect local needs and aspirations for the future development of the community. During February 2009, PLANED facilitated two Community workshops at Spittal Primary School which consisted of the following activities:

- ❑ Something Special – celebrating the special qualities of the community
- ❑ A Community Audit – listing the main features and facilities
- ❑ The Community in the bigger Picture – global and local issues
- ❑ Weaknesses, Threats, Strengths and Opportunities
- ❑ The Vision for 2020 – aspirations for the future
- ❑ Skills and Resources Audit – illustrating the variety of local skills
- ❑ Translating ideas into Action – using the information to plan projects.

Findings gathered and other information has been collated into this draft Action Plan which will be circulated to the whole community for it to be reviewed and agreed at a public meeting. A community questionnaire will also be circulated and its findings will be included in the final document.



The Workshop findings and the results of a community questionnaire have been drawn up into this Action Plan which was circulated to all residents before being discussed at the public meeting. The main reason for having difficulty in attending meetings was given as work commitments. A total of 37 families responded to the community questionnaire, representing 93 people, 20 aged 60+, 42 aged 41-59 years, 31 aged 18-40 years and 28 under 18 years. 20 families had lived in the community for more than 16 years, while 12 had lived in the Spittal area for between 6 -15 years. The remainder had lived here for less than 5 years.

Reasons for moving to the community in the first place, if not born here were due to reputation of the primary school, the pretty and friendly community, to be near Haverfordwest for working and for the central location with easy access to the beaches and countryside. Reasons for any proposed move from the community were a lack of affordable housing, family reasons, for education and employment. 6 families recorded the need for local housing in the future, particularly affordable properties for rent and to purchase.

THE ACTION PLAN AREA

The rural community of Spittal is situated in central Pembrokeshire, 5 miles from the market town of Haverfordwest. The parish is bounded on the east by Clarbeston Road, south by Rudbaxton, West by Treffgarne, and north by Wolfscastle.

It is situated on the Western Cleddau, which forms its boundary on the west, and it is intersected by the turnpike-roads leading from Haverfordwest to Cardigan and Fishguard respectively.

With a population of 500 people, Spittal has several meeting places such as the Church Hall, Primary School and Public House.

It states on a village plaque that the village name derives from the village possessing a hospitium (place of accommodation for pilgrims) belonging to the Cathedral of St Davids

A SPECIAL PLACE

During the Community Workshops the residents identified Spittal as a safe and compact place to live with a good balance of population which is friendly and welcoming.



The residents value Spittal for its special rural qualities and its convenient central location. Spittal is seen as an “alive and active community” with many farms and local

The quality of the local environment, its attractiveness and the peace and quiet of Spittal are also viewed highly by residents. With the village green and good walks to enjoy the diverse wildlife, a resident highlighted the joy of being able to “see the stars” due to little light pollution in the village.

The residents are particularly proud of the local primary school which is seen by many as a real ‘village’ school and other amenities and facilities such as the “friendly pub” and the “well used village hall”.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Residents have a vision for the future, making the most of what already exists to its full potential. When asked to envisage their ideal community in ten years time their suggestions included:

- Community Centre that Caters for Youth
- Village Green in Regular Use
- More Community Activities
- Allotments
- Enhanced Flora & Fauna
- Nature Reserve at the Common
- Government Funded Subsidised Sustainable Energy
- More frequent Bus Service
- Cycle Track to Scolton & Haverfordwest
- Encourage Residential Businesses
- Local Business / Skills Directory
- Tennis Courts
- Newsletter
- Comprehensive Community Care
- Affordable Housing
- Mains Gas
- Faster & More Reliable Broadband

GETTING ACTION UNDERWAY

Spittal residents have shown a real commitment to their Community, many participants at the Community workshops were willing to support and get involved with the establishing a Community Forum for Spittal.

The intention of this Action Plan is to provide a focus for the community to plan and develop sustainable projects and activities in Spittal that have been identified by local people.

1. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES & FACILITIES

Commentary:

Due to the compact nature of the community, the residents of Spittal are very fortunate to have several facilities that can be used as focal meeting points for the community.

In 2004 new community primary school was built, located on the western side of the village of Spittal, north of the Southgate Park housing estate. The new school provides modern curricular provision in flexible and adaptable accommodation for the 130 pupils. It is fully accessible and provides additional community facilities. Built to a high standard, the large spacious rooms are naturally lit and ventilated which create an attractive learning environment for pupils and staff. The welcoming entrance has excellent access and security controls. The community is welcomed into the school.



There are various places for worship within the village of Spittal. Salem Baptist Church, St Mary's Church and Zion Hill United Reform Church (URC) all offer a service.

There is also the Church Hall in the centre of the village next to the village green. The hall is well used by the community, and an active

Mother and Toddler group and playgroup meet on daily basis. The Church also organizes a monthly whist drive to raise funds for the church. Line Dancing ,Computer Classes, Music & movement & Keep fit all use the hall.



The village green and adjoining play park are valued highly by residents, it brings a peaceful quality to the community and has great potential to become a venue for outdoor community events. Community exercise on the village green was an aspiration for the future.

The “Pump on the Green” Public House is also used for community activities, hosting a darts group, pool games and a weekly quiz night.



Scolton Health and Leisure club (at Scolton Cottages) is used by many Spittal residents to help keep fit. Daily aqua-aerobics and gym sessions are available, along with personal training, sauna and steam room.

Much as these facilities are appreciated, there was an overall feeling that these facilities could be used more by the community to hold events and activities. The residents see the potential for the Village Green for an annual carnival, with possibility of organise an event to celebrate the unusual name of the village. Also ideas to hold regular community activities such as keep fit classes, cricket matches and craft workshops were identified by the residents.

A community skills and training audit undertaken during the visioning workshops suggested that residents have a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience. These range from gardening and arts and crafts, through to book keeping and IT skills; to writing press releases and food preparation and child caring and musical skills. All these skills can be used when developing activities and projects for the community.

Communication of community events are mainly through the noticeboards (there are currently two noticeboards in the community), the church magazine and by word of mouth. All residents asked agreed that there was a need for better communication in the locality, so everyone can be aware of the activities that are being organised in the community.



Replies to the community questionnaire suggest that most people are interested in looking after their health and would like more opportunities to exercise. Better physical health, improved local footpaths and cycle ways, childcare and local facilities were among suggestions to make it easier to participate in exercise. The most popular ways to exercise are walking, gardening, swimming, running and cycling.

The Community Questionnaire indicated that 5 respondents use childcare, 1 using close family, 3 registered childminders, 1 private creche and 1 use Out of School clubs

Proposals:

Work together with the Spittal Community Council, PCC and other local agencies to:

- Form an events committee to develop more activities in the locality, ideas include:
 - ◆ Community days at village hall / green
 - ◆ Annual carnival
 - ◆ Community fun meals at village hall / green – BBQs, curry clubs, community picnics and music
 - ◆ Car boot sales
 - ◆ Community film nights
 - ◆ Book club
 - ◆ More local sporting activities
 - ◆ Community walks.
- Improve & maintain the children’s Play Area in the village
- Engage with the young people and teenagers in the locality to

support the development of more activities for teenagers and families together

- ❑ Form a communication network, which could develop a community newsletter / e-magazine listing the events in the locality.
- ❑ Investigate the potential of collective bulk purchasing of basic commodities (such as fuel oil)
- ❑ Develop a village website for local produce and skills exchange.
- ❑ Work with Church Hall to investigate the potential for indoor bowls.
- ❑ Enter Spittal into a village competition to bind and provide a focus community

2. ENVIRONMENT

Commentary:

There is existing network of paths and bridleways which are well sign-posted throughout the village. Many residents felt that there is a great opportunity to organize community walks along the local footpaths thereby maintaining the paths and enhancing community spirit, whilst enjoying a healthy activity.



The community feel that the village has an attractive quality and has great potential to form a gardening club, which could exchange useful gardening information for residents, support those who need help with gardening and also developing an 'edible / creative gardening contest'. The residents were also very interested in having allotments available in the community.

Spittal has two areas of common land to the north and south of the community. The southern common is a matrix of wet marshy grassland, wet and dry heath and scrub gorse and willow. Pretty good for a variety of wildlife that you would associate with that habitat - reed bunting, water rail, various insects including butterfly,

dragonfly/damselfly species and bog asphodel, spotted and marsh orchids. There has been a recent programme to try and eradicate Japanese knotweed that was rather rampant in the north eastern part of the common.

The northern common is on the whole scrub woodland with a stream, generally inaccessible apart from the very northern western edge where the right of way runs through for 75metres or so.

Although both of these areas are open access, in practical terms, there are few opportunities in the northern section, and as the southern section has some very wet boggy areas, extreme care should be undertaken if walking away from the Public Right of Way.

There had been plans to further improve both of these habitats, but these have had to be deferred until funding becomes available.

Proposals:

Work together with the Spittal Community Council, PCC and other local agencies to:

- Work with the Community Council and County Council to investigate the potential of having community allotments
- Form a gardening group to work together to:
 - ◆ improve village appearance, develop village floral displays.
 - ◆ creative or edible garden contest
 - ◆ encourage community to “grow your own” & engage with nature
- Investigate the possibility of acquiring lighting for Golden Hill
- Seek to improve access and maintenance of village footpaths
- Work with the Pembrokeshire living Heath Project to enhance the biodiversity value of the commons. <http://www.rhos.org.uk>

3. WASTE, RECYCLING & ENERGY

Commentary:

There is great awareness amongst residents of the global issues that have an impact on the community's future. Many use the

Orange Bag kerb side collection scheme' provided by the County Council to recycle household plastics and paper. The residents felt more could be done in the community with regards to reducing landfill waste e.g. developing community bottle bank Recycling. A new Bottle Bank recycling facility has recently been installed at the 'Pump on the Green'



There was also a great interest amongst residents to form a local energy group to look into the possibilities of other energy sources and bulk purchasing, this group could seek advice from other Energy networks in Pembrokeshire, for example, South East Energy Network and Broad Haven going Carbon Neutral initiative.

Proposals:

Work together with the Spittal Community Council, PCC and other local agencies to:

- Investigate the possibility of:
 - ◆ developing wind power in the community
 - ◆ providing a Community Recycling Centre
- Form an energy forum to look into:
 - ◆ the impact of various sustainable energy sources such as windmills, water energy and solar
 - ◆ cheaper group purchasing of resources

4. HERITAGE & CULTURE

Commentary:

Approximately 100 yards south-east of the church is an ancient ruin, covering nearly an acre of land, and said to have been a hospitium, or hospital, from which the word Spittal is thought to be derived. Tradition reports the erection of this structure to have been by the monks of St David's, at an early period, for the

accommodation of the pilgrims to the shrine of St David's: which is slightly corroborated by the circumstance of the tithes of the parish still belonging to the dignitaries of the cathedral.



In the Parish are also several remains of ancient encampments, here called 'raths' of these, one occupies the summit of a conical hill which rises abruptly in the vale, the area, about two acres, is nearly circular, and is enclosed by a single rampart. Near it was a chapel, dedicated to St Leonard, which together with the church of Rudbaxton, was granted by Alexander Rudebac to the commandery of the knights of St John of Jerusalem, at Slebech. *(Extract taken from "British History Online")*

There was an interest in the community to form a local heritage group to collate local historic information. There are many resources within the locality to help accumulate such information, for example, Scolton Manor Heritage Park.

Proposals:

Work together with the Spittal Community Council, PCC and other local agencies to:

- ❑ Form a Local History Group to:
 - ◆ Explore the Origins of Spittal and its Environs
 - ◆ Compile a History of the Village,
 - ◆ Produce a community heritage leaflet
 - ◆ Put Historic and Heritage sites on a map & display

5. ENTERPRISE, BUSINESSES & TOURISM

Commentary:

Many residents are proud that there are several businesses in the community; currently there are several farms, a photo gallery, pub, holiday cottages and health club, garden nursery, garage, electrician and hairdresser etc. However, it was felt by many that

these services could be supported more and the development of new businesses should be encouraged.

One recommendation was that of developing a local business and skills directory, to ensure all residents are aware of the services in the locality which could lead to a cooperative opportunity to bring and buy local produce.

In an “ideal community” the residents of Spittal would like to have a community shop, however concerns were raised over the viability of this service. The potential of having a mobile shop was discussed. The village Post Office has recently closed to be replaced by a mobile facility calling several times a week. The results from the community questionnaire indicated 13 respondents own or manage a business in the community employing 8 full time and 5 part-time. 9 of them own their own premises. As most are self employed, there is no difficulty in employing staff. Help with marketing, a local post office, more local custom and better public transport would be a great help to local small businesses.

Proposals:

Work together with the Spittal Community Council, PCC and other local agencies to:

- Investigate the possibility of developing a local produce market – selling home grown vegetables, plants and eggs etc.
- Establish a business network to:
 - ◆ develop a local business and Skills directory which is updated on a yearly basis
 - ◆ create a co-operative for fruit and vegetables .
 - ◆ provide a platform for swapping unwanted goods.
- As a community, support local businesses and encourage the development of new businesses in the locality.
- Look into the feasibility of developing a community shop
- Investigate the idea of creating a regular mobile shop.

6. TRANSPORT, ROADS & TRAFFIC

Commentary:

There is limited public transport provision in Spittal (once a week) and there is one bus shelter in the centre of the village. Local people are concerned regarding the viability of the existing service.

The accessibility to Haverfordwest is also important to the people of Spittal, and despite the lack of a more regular bus service to the main market town, many residents do not wish to lose the “Friday Bus”. Some residents would be very isolated and should the service be withdrawn as there would be total dependence on private cars.

The roads are comparatively quiet and there is no need for traffic calming measures through the village at present, however a 20mph speed limit is being sought passing the school. Responsible driving is to be encouraged. It is especially relevant as many people walk, cycle and ride horses.

Many residents are keen to see cycle paths linking Spittal to the Haverfordwest and Fishguard cycle routes. There is also a desire for a cycle route through to Scolton Country park.

The results of the community questionnaire identified the car as the most popular mode of transport for accessing work, shops and facilities. 28 replies stated that it was their main means of transport whilst 24 people who replied would prefer use the bus/ public transport where possible as it is better for the environment, cheaper and allows young people independent access to Haverfordwest. It is also considered to be more sociable. They consider that the lack of a convenient bus service, dangerous roads and long walks to the main road bus stops as reasons not to use public transport.

Proposals:

Work together with the Spittal Community Council, PCC and other local agencies to:

- Look into the potential of building a new modern Bus Shelter (for school children)
- Establish a cycle route lane connecting to Haverfordwest that is also linked to Fishguard
- Establish a cycle route through to Scolton Country Park
- Investigate the possibilities if developing a car sharing scheme and / or community bus.

7. HOUSING & SERVICES

Commentary:

Discussions during the community visioning workshops suggested that future housing development in Spittal should be geared towards encouraging local young people to remain in the area. It was felt by residents that it should be possible for young people to continue living locally if they wish to. This would enable them to use their skills and education to boost the local economy.

At present, there is no main Gas supply in Spittal. Community Support Police Officers organize drop-in surgeries. There is also a mobile butcher, milkman, mobile post office, mobile library and a very good post man!

Residents have expressed the idea of developing a comprehensive community care package of elderly residents. At present there is a Senior Citizens Club which meets in the Church Hall are no Meals on wheels are sent out from Haverfordwest. or other senior citizen services.

Results from the Community questionnaire record that the reasons for moving to the community in the first place, if not born in Spittal are due to reputation of the primary school, the pretty and friendly community, to be near Haverfordwest for working and for the central location with easy access to the beaches and countryside. Reasons for any proposed move from the community are a lack of

affordable housing, family reasons, for education and employment. 6 families recorded the need for local housing in the future, particularly affordable properties for rent and to purchase.

Proposals:

Working together with the Spittal Community Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and other local agencies to:

- Look at the possibility of developing some affordable housing to meet local need.
- Develop further services such as:
 - ◆ care services for senior citizens
 - ◆ gas mains service
 - ◆ better broadband service.
 - ◆ investigate the possibility of a Luncheon Club

IMPLEMENTATION / WORKING GROUPS

In order that the Action Plan can be progressed effectively it is proposed that a Community Forum should be formed. Working groups could progress the proposals – reporting back to the whole Community Forum – and in consultation with the Community Council to liaise with relevant providers e.g. the Highway Authority.

The Working Groups could be centred on:

- Community - facilities, activities and communications
- Environment - including rights of way, energy & waste
- Heritage
- Business and Enterprise
- Work with the Community Council on:
 - Housing & Services
 - Transport, Traffic & Highways

It is important that the Groups:

- Work within the agreed Action Plan and report to a Community Forum
- Work with existing groups, including the Community Council and agencies.

- Meet on a regular basis – at least four times a year.
- Keep the broader community informed of progress.

Support, advice and funding would be offered by PLANED and partner organisations to help progress the Action Plan proposals.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The Wales Spatial Plan provides the context and direction for local development plans and the work of local service boards.

Within the overall Spatial Plan is the Pembrokeshire Haven Spatial Plan which promotes a vision of ‘a network of strong communities supported by a robust, sustainable diverse high value-adding economy, underpinned by the area’s unique environment, maritime access and internationally important energy and tourism.’

The Community Plan-Since the beginning of 2000 a partnership of key public and voluntary sector organisations has been working on Community Planning. The local authority, Pembrokeshire County Council is responsible for taking the lead in achieving the vision, together with support from partners, local communities and local people.

Local Development Plan (LDP)-Pembrokeshire County Council is preparing a new local development plan The LDP is the overarching plan for Pembrokeshire -supported by an array of more detailed partnerships, plans and strategies. Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority is also developing its own development plan for the National Park Area.

It aims to make delivery of services easier and highlights the key ‘quality of life’ issues. It links with the ‘Pembrokeshire -The Havens’ section in the Wales Spatial Plan and with key partners’ plans such as the Children and Young People’s Plan and the Health, Social Care and Well-being strategy.

Communities are consulted on all of these plans, as well as policing strategies, education, transport, housing etc. It is important that local people have a forum to meet and discuss ideas for the future as it prepares the way for making informed responses to the various consultations. It also enables communities to take advantage of support and funding the different authorities may make available in the future.