

CORNHILL PARISH PLAN

INTRODUCTION

In 2004 the Government, through the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) announced a new policy for the delivery of all rural programmes. The role of the Countryside Agency would draw to a close, whilst Rural Community Councils would continue to provide advice and support on parish planning. Grants were available for parishes to conduct studies into their long-term development needs. Cornhill Parish Council reviewed the potential for the initiative. In due course the Parish Council delegated this work to a Steering Committee, who applied for and received a grant to conduct a study which could lead to the production of a Parish Plan. This document is the product of that work.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

There is little doubt that there has been a settlement at Cornhill since the dawn of time. The fertile banks of the river would have been highly cultivated and thickly peopled, whilst forming a natural barrier for defence against roving tribes. The high ground to the North of the village of Cornhill commands a 360 degree view of the surrounding countryside, although it fails to dominate the river itself. On maps going back to the 15th Century, the hill is known as Camp Hill, which tends to support the idea that it served as a military encampment of some sort.

The name 'Cornhill' is found in ancient documents as 'Cornaul' or 'Cornhall'. 'Aula' was the term for a Hall. Other local names like Berwick are derived from Barlewick (the town where they took the barley), and Coldstream, which was originally Lynhall (the hall at the pool), which became Lennal, then Lennel.

The earliest reference to the area is in 833, the year in which Berwick is first mentioned in standard texts. In a battle just to the East of Wark, 11 English bishops and two Counts died. Later, in 1018, at the battle of Carham, which was actually fought on the same general site of the battle of 833 to the East of Wark, Owen the Bald, King of the Strathclyde Barons, along with Malcolm II of Scotland soundly beat off an assault by Northumbrians. This battle established the River Tweed as the border between England and Scotland for the first time.

At the time of the Bolden Survey in 1183, Cornhill was held in demesne under the Castle of Norham and was let for 12 livres per annum. Bishop Pudsey soon afterwards gave it in exchange for Horncliffe to the ancestor of William of Cornhale. Bishop Pauper confirmed the gift in 1233.

The land was divided into two estates. In 1328, Bishop Beaumont granted part to William, son of William de Denum and his wife Isabella. His son, Edmund, sold his part to William Heron of Ford. In due course that part passed through an heiress to Carr.

The other portion of the estate went to the Grey family, who seem to have owned the land on which Cornhill House stands until Mary Grey married William Swinhoe

of Scremerston. This was no love match. In 1385 the Earl of Fife with a mixed band of Scots and French took and destroyed the Pele Tower which had stood there for centuries. It seems that one of his lieutenants was William Swinhoe, who stayed on. Their son, Robert, is credited with having rebuilt the tower.

Cornhill Village and its manor house were regularly attacked as Scots and English rampaged up and down the Borders. Wark Castle, just two miles to the West, was stormed by the Scots 11 times between 1136 and 1523.

In the Border Survey of 1542, Cornhill House is described as 'Newe and embattled, covered and put in good reparacion with stout barmekin about by one Gylbert Swynhow, gentleman and inheritor of the said tower and towne of Cornell.' In 1549 the French General d'Esse, at the head of a troop of Scots, took the tower and found it well stored with fresh provisions, especially salted salmon.

A Victorian historian, renowned for his books on castles and keeps, was responsible for the myth that Cornhill Castle sat on the bank of the river opposite Lennel. No map before 1840 ever showed a castle or keep on that site, and most military commanders would agree that it would be an unusual and impractical position. Today the Ordnance Survey show a castle and earthworks at Grid 855405, although they admit they have no evidence other than the direction of English Heritage. When challenged, English Heritage offered the idea that the castle had been built there to guard the bridge. The rationale is deeply flawed for there was no bridge until several centuries after the alleged construction of the

'castle.' Moreover, the distance between bridge and 'castle' is significantly further than the range of any weapons of the period. On the other hand, Cornhill House appears as a bastle on maps from 1560 onwards.

More recently evidence of the antiquity of the village of Cornhill was unearthed when bulldozers moved into the field opposite Cornhill Farm. They quickly discovered the site of a medieval dwelling of some size



Medieval Manor discovered 2006

GEOGRAPHY

The Parish is bounded to the west and north by the waters of the Tweed and Till respectively. It covers some 5,930 acres (2,400 hectares) of prime farming land, with the highest point above sea level, 92 metres, being midway between Melkington Farm and New Heaton. The lowest point above sea level is 16 metres along the Tweed bank opposite Lennel.

There are two principal villages in the Parish. Cornhill sits at the junction of the A697 and A698, close to the south western perimeter of the Parish. A little over a mile along the A698 towards Berwick upon Tweed is the hamlet of Donaldson's Lodge. Principal outlying farms include Campfield, Cramond Hill, Melkington, St. Cuthbert's, Stickle Heaton, Castle Heaton, New Heaton and Thrieprig.

Communication with Scotland used to rely heavily upon a range of fords across the River Tweed but in 1762 the architect, Smeaton, completed his stunning bridge at the exit from Coldstream

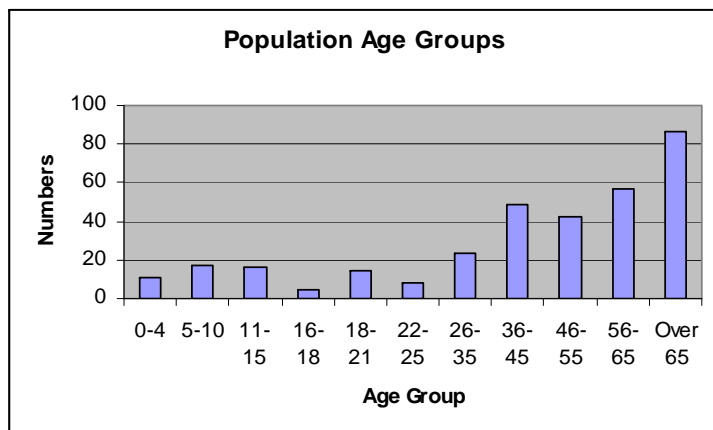


POPULATION

Year	Homes	Male	Female	Total
1801	-	321	347	668
1811	-	355	370	725
1821	-	413	450	863
1831	148	373	392	765
1841	160	380	443	823
1851	188	470	503	973
1861	167	408	445	853
1871	153	391	390	781
1881	140	-	-	688
1891	135	319	315	634
1901	131	300	323	623
1911	138	301	343	644
1921	131	274	311	585
1931	145	258	284	542
1941	-	-	-	-
1951	140	243	235	478

1961	124	206	195	401
1971	110	154	166	320
1981	125	150	158	308
1991	135	164	153	317

Today there are 164 houses occupied in the Parish.



EMPLOYMENT

It has not been possible to extract a precise statistic on employment, for some households declined to answer any questions, others refused to answer individual questions, and some households provided ambiguous answers. But taking the responses in the round, it would

be fair to submit that the pattern of employment is as shown below:

Employment Status	Households %
Employed part-time	12
Employed seasonally	2
Full-time employment	29
Self employed	19
Wholly retired	43

NB: the figure adds up to more than 100% because some households reported on the employment status of everyone in the household.

78% of households said that they would like to see more job opportunities available in the Parish, although only 6% said that they were actively seeking work.

PLANNING ISSUES

The Parish has a very stable population: in responding to questionnaires, it transpired that the average period of residency within the Parish for all households was 22.23 years, with people living in their current property for an average of 15 years.

The community accepts that the village envelope will spread over time but there is a very strong sentiment that development should be measured and appropriate. They would strongly resist any scheme which markedly increased the density of housing or which sought to multiply the population by a significant factor. Indeed, during the period of the Parish Plan initiative, the community made robust representations to the Borough Planning Committee challenging a development plan for

the construction of 22 houses. The proposed density of houses was ten times that of the existing village format, whilst the potential population increase in the village of Cornhill itself would have been a little under 25%.

A chance to involve the whole community Some financial help Current and future planning Enlargement of the community First village in England Tourism Internet promotion	solutions
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SWOT

Strengths

Tight knit community
 Mutually supportive
 A sense of 'place'
 Stable population
 'Last' village in England
 Part of wider Borders community
 Outstanding natural beauty
 Sporting and leisure pursuits
 Sound village halls

Weaknesses

Few job opportunities
 Parochialism
 Large empty commercial premises
 Rural isolation
 Modest public facilities
 Local leadership and initiative
 Public apathy
 Public transport
 Lack of 'doers' for community events

Opportunities

The making of this plan
 A chance to design where we are going

Threats

Rural isolation
 Youth departing for cities
 Government bureaucratic

KEY FINDINGS

People live in the Parish because they specifically enjoy the rural nature of the community. Many people have stressed that they have no desire to live in a dense urban environment. They accept that rural life provides the balancing limitation that goods and services are less readily available. Overall people say that the quality of life in the Parish is very good.

Inevitably an older, very stable community will vote for little change. Nevertheless, the general thrust of opinion is in favour of some clear improvements. They include issues of planning, social and leisure activity and communications. The statistical responses to the questionnaire are at Annex A.

Planning. Two garage sites in the village have been derelict for many years. Both sites are independently owned and the community is appalled that there is no power to force the owners to



contribute to the wellbeing of the Parish by maintaining or developing their property. The larger site has been empty for five years, whilst the smaller one, which has recently received planning consent for two dwellings, has been empty for at least twenty five years.

The Derelict Station Garage

Social and Leisure. The committees of the Village Halls in Cornhill and Donaldson's Lodge resolved to work together to develop the usage and profitability of their facilities. This will become one of the two key planks of the Parish Plan.

Communications. It must be said that only a small percentage of the community are computer literate, so the notion of internet communication has not been warmly embraced. But there is widespread agreement that the Parish has it in its power to do infinitely more to promote itself and its products through a blend of paper and digital media.

Employment. The community is small and almost half are retired. Job opportunities are extremely rare in the Parish. Nevertheless there are people who need to find work, and others who have no financial pressure to do so, but would like to work



The Village Shop

THE PLAN

The core of the plan is based upon the development of the two village halls. Each hall has its own trustees and management committee. The buildings are in relatively good repair, although Cornhill will have to address burgeoning problems with the roof at some time in the future. Both are used regularly, but the survey completed for the development of this plan revealed the surprise that they are not as fully used as people imagined. Curiously, the survey also revealed overt gaps in service delivery, with many respondents offering positive ideas on additional activity.

It has become clear that the traditional system of management, which has kept the halls running for almost fifty years, is limiting the entrepreneurial spirit which would generate a proper return on capital. In the last financial year, for example, Cornhill published a modest net profit of some £500 on turnover of £8,000. With an

asset valued at a little under £300,000 (excluding an area of open land which would realise a very significant amount if developed), the Return on Capital Expended is just 0.2% . These two financial measures strongly suggest the need for more energetic development.



Cornhill Village Hall



Tillmouth Village Hall

Internet Café. The community survey highlighted services and activity which the halls could deliver. Many people liked the idea of an internet café backed by on-site tuition. It is interesting, for example, that Age Concern England has experienced a significant increase in contact with older people in those centres which offer internet services. It seems that grandparents really do want to learn about digital technology in order to communicate better with their grandchildren.

Coffee Shop. Many people felt that one of the big gaps in community life was the lack of an informal coffee shop.

Whilst the Collingwood Arms has the resources to fulfil the function, it does not appeal to the whole community and shuts its doors to all business for two hours every afternoon. Both village halls, however, have excellent kitchens and the space to entertain large numbers of people. Indeed, given some careful promotion, both halls could attract travellers and tourists. In the longer term, there may be some merit in developing a restaurant service, which 69% of respondents felt they would use.

Community Activity. Although the halls host a range of special interest groups, there are considerable gaps – both in the usage of the buildings, and in the services offered. The community survey revealed a muted desire for film and art shows, skills development, lectures, sport and education.

The catalyst which will translate aspiration into action is the appointment of a paid manager with responsibility for the development of both halls. Subject to funding, which is available for both revenue and capital schemes, this single initiative will satisfy a further desired outcome of the plan: employment.



A draft three year budget is attached at Annex B.

SUMMARY

The community is stable with a high proportion of older and retired people. Whilst the atmosphere is intimate and there are some strong special interest groups, few people take a lead on organising activity. In response to a detailed questionnaire, many useful ideas for the use of existing facilities were suggested. A number of people commented that they would be prepared to help organise activity but no-one expressed the desire to seize the initiative. As a result, the Village Planning Group believe that the most positive way forward would be to seek funding for a permanent manager of the two village halls

The property will satisfy needs for next five years	85
The property is a second home solely for the owner	4
The property is a holiday home rented to others	1

ANNEX A - RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Home

Average number of years lived in the Parish	22.23
Average number of years lived at this address	15.1
Living in Tied accommodation	4
Living in privately rented property	8
Living in Council rented property	19
The property is owned by the resident	71
The rent is affordable	20
Recent rent increases have been a problem	4
Resident in receipt of housing benefit	5
Number of adults aged 18-21	9
Number of adults aged 22-25	5
Number of adults aged 26-35	15
Number of adults aged 36-45	31
Number of adults aged 46-55	27
Number of adults aged 56-65	36
Number of adults aged over 65	55
Number of children aged 0-4	7
Number of children aged 5-10	11
Number of children aged 11-15	10
Number of children aged 16-18	3
Number of children working away from home	18
The property satisfies current needs	94

Transport

The household owns a car	90
The household has just one car	58
The household has two or more cars	32
It is necessary for the household to use a car daily	59
Using a car for work	46
Using a car for school	9
Using a car for shopping	86
Using a car for health visits	71
Average number of miles driven annually/household	12269
Using a bus for going to work	5
Using a bus to attend health visits	8
Using a bus to go shopping	18
Using a bus for going to school	11
Using a bus to attend social activity	12
The bus service is satisfactory	30
The bus service is NOT satisfactory	28
The bus stop is too far to walk to	6
Unable to use the bus because wheelchair bound	3
Bus is not suitable for travelling with young children	2
Visual/Hearing difficulty make it hard to use the bus	2
Some other physical disability prevents use of bus	4
Would consider using the bus if there were more	43

Number of households using train from Berwick	54
Average train journeys per household annually	12.43
Average plane trips per household annually	1.5
Limited activity because of poor transport	8

Employment and Training

Employed full time	30
Not employed but seeking work	1
Not employed and not seeking work	2
In full time training	2
Wholly retired	45
Employed part time	12
Employed on a seasonal basis	2
Permanently sick or disabled	2
Self employed	20
Actively looking for full time employment	2
Actively looking for part time employment	4
Looking for retail employment	1
Looking for professional employment	5
Looking for clerical/admin employment	1
Would like to see more jobs available in Parish	81
Would not like to see more jobs in Parish	2

There should be opportunities in the following trades:

Fishing	25
Retail	27
Domestic	21
Light industrial	42
Professional	25
Farming	28

Tourism	45
Heavy industry	8
Catering	29
Place of work:	
Working from home	13
Working in Edinburgh	6
Working in Newcastle	1
Working in Cornhill	19
Working in Berwick	11
Volunteering and Training:	
I undertake voluntary work	23
In need of training or education	6
Attending College or training centre	3
Undertaking training at home	3
Undertaking training at work	6
Parish should have some light industrial workshops	79

Health

Healthcare in the area is adequate	74
Healthcare in the area is NOT adequate	17
In the past few years the household has used:	
Doctor	93
District Nurse	18
Health Visitor	7
Home Help	1
Ambulance	9
Chiropodist	26
Child Healthcare	8
Midwife	5
Meals on wheels	2

Household has problems with healthcare because of:

Lack of transport	4
Long waits for appointments	8
Travelling distances	3
Lack of local specialist care	5
Visiting relatives in hospital or residential care	2
Registered disabled	7
Knows of someone who is isolated and would benefit from a friendly neighbour	17

Knows of someone in the Parish who would benefit from a good neighbour project	28
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Education and training	22
Information Technology	20

The household currently uses the Village Hall for:

Exercise classes	5
Children's parties	11
Senior citizen's Christmas party	21
Coffee mornings	34
Celebrations	27
Meetings	44
Special interest groups	18
Prepared to help organise activities	21

Social and Leisure

The household uses:

Village Hall	52
Hotels and local pubs	32
Private homes	35
There should be more social activity in the Parish	49
We don't need more social activity in the Parish	16

The household would like to see the Village Hall used more for:

Hobby/special interest clubs	31
Ceilidhs/dances	15
Sports facilities	31
Community festivals/family events	24
Drop in clubs for the young	34
Parent toddler groups	11
Soft play and children's activities	16
Exhibitions	24
Christmas parties	24
Youth group meetings	18
WI	17
Bingo, whist and similar activity	18
Musical events	22
Coffee mornings	24

Planning Issues

The Parish needs more housing	57
Average number of houses people believe the Parish could sustain over next five years	8.71
Average number of houses people believe the Parish could sustain over next ten years	14.81

The community believes we need:

Council Houses	26
Homes for young single people	7
Housing Association houses	16
Disabled housing	13
Affordable housing for first time buyers	58
Mid price houses and bungalows	40
Executive housing	6
Holiday homes	1

The Environment

Dog fouling is a problem	21
The street lighting is adequate	67
Using the recycling facilities in Cornhill village	66
The siting of the bins is inappropriate and they should be by:	
Cornhill Village Hall	24

Station Gardens	2
Current site	1
The speed restrictions in the villages are suitable	61
The speed restrictions are NOT suitable	32
Households content with the appearance of Parish	52
Households not content	38

Northumberland Tourist Board could do more	43
Berwick Borough Council could do more	40
The Parish Council could do more	19
Members of the Parish could do more	18
I could do more to promote tourism	6
We could do more to promote:	
History	43
Scenery	50
People	10
Amenities	6
Heritage	34
Sport	6
Employment	8
Public transport affects our ability to attract tourists	33
Public transport does not affect the issue	17
Households which use the public phone box	17

Local Facilities and Resources

Households using local footpaths and bridleways	77
The footpaths are well maintained	33
The footpaths are NOT well maintained	37
Would use a designated cycle route if available	28
Use local hotels and pubs	55
Use the local shop	100
Would use an independent restaurant if there were one in the Parish	71
Would like to be able to use a local internet café	15
The existing churches should be retained	89

The School

More use could be made of the School specifically for:

Adult education	43
Extended childcare	15
Social and health purposes	22
Computer access	21
A Library	47

Tourism

The Parish is promoted adequately for tourists	24
The Parish is not adequately promoted	53

<i>Your view of the provision of leisure facilities for particular age groups</i>				
	<i>Good</i>	<i>Reasonable</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
Children 0-9	5	16	20	34
Children 10-13	6	5	27	33
Children 14-19	1	5	35	30
Young Adults 20-29	2	8	24	33
Adults 30-59	10	21	18	24
People Aged 60 plus	18	29	10	22

<i>Your view of the provision of Public Services</i>				
	<i>Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Awful</i>
Electricity	43	49	5	
Sewerage	36	44	7	

Post	50	42	5	1
Snow Clearance	12	35	38	10
Gritting	12	38	35	9
Bus Timetable	6	24	28	10
Level of Policing	5	23	38	17
Paramedic Ambulance Service	17	36	5	1
Refuse Collection	36	54	7	1
Street Cleaning	13	44	22	7

NIC					
Motor Mileage Allowance	116	116	116	116	464
Telephone	80	80	80	80	320
Electricity	150	150	150	150	600
Oil	150	150	150	150	600
Water	50	50	50	50	200
Insurance	800				800
Cleaner / Gardener	195	195	195	195	780
Miscellaneous Expenditure	150	150	150	150	600
Advertising and Marketing	250	250	250	250	1000
Repairs and Maintenance	250	250	250	250	1000
Total Revenue					
Expenditure	6057	5257	5257	5257	21828
Income less Expenditure	-3747	1304	1961	3644	3161

ANNEX B – DRAFT FIRST YEAR BUDGET FOR VILLAGE HALLS

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year 1 Totals
Income					
Coffee Shop	150	225	270	300	945
Internet Café	360	480	720	1440	3000
Special Interest Groups	240	276	317	381	1214
Film Nights	540	540	720	900	2700
Exhibitions	90	120	150	180	540
Sport and Exercise	360	480	600	720	2160
Hall Hire	1920	2640	2640	4680	11880
Major Events	1800	1800	1800	1800	7200
Total Income	5460	6561	7217	10401	29639
Expenditure					
Capital					
Computers	3000			1500	4500
Broadband wireless internet	150				150
Total Capital Expenditure	3150	0	0	1500	4650
Revenue					
Salary	3500	3500	3500	3500	14000
National Insurance	366	366	366	366	1464
Performance bonus incl					0

THREE YEAR PROJECTIONS

Year 1 Totals	Year 2	Year 3
945	1418	2126
3000	3750	4688
1214	1518	1897
2700	3375	4219
540	675	844
2160	2700	3375
11880	14850	18563
7200	9000	11250
29639	37286	46962
4500		
150		
4650		
14000	14700	15435
1464	1536	1613

0		
464	464	464
320	336	353
600	630	662
600	630	662
200	210	221
800	840	882
780	819	860
600	630	662
1000	1050	1103
1000	1050	1103
21828	22895	24020
3161	14391	22942