

Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Plan



Summer 2008

Introduction

Why produce a parish Plan?

The creation of a Parish Plan has allowed the residents of the 3 villages in the Parish (Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford) to say how we wish our Parish to develop into the future and to take an active part in how that future is shaped. Without a clear view of what we want and why, the Parish Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and all of the other service providers involved cannot provide either the right focus or resources for the Parish.

We live in a competitive world where resources are scarce and we will have to fight to get our rightful share. We can only win the fight if we are organised and if the community speaks efficiently with one voice; the Parish Plan will do this but, without everyone's positive involvement, the plan is simply a set of ideals.

How did we involve the community?

Each village within the Parish held a meeting and appointed a steering group comprised exclusively of village residents. Over the ensuing months these groups met on a monthly basis and designed a questionnaire to be issued to every household. Many hours of debate and consultation took place and eventually three similar questionnaires were produced, each one reflecting the specific needs of the village it served.

These questionnaires were delivered to and collected from every household in the Parish by a dedicated band of volunteers and, as a result, a response rate of 56% was achieved. The data was analysed and combined into a single Parish Plan, which involved a phenomenal amount of work both in terms of inputting data from the questionnaires and especially analysis of that data and compilation of the results.

The process started with many volunteers but only a few had the stamina to follow it through to completion. Funding was extremely tight and the whole exercise was completed for around £1500 which was raised via donations from the Parish Council, the Rural Community Council and various fundraising activities within the Parish.

In any population, however large or small, there are always a minority who are happy to get involved and the silent majority with other priorities. Without those volunteers this excellent document would simply not exist, so, on behalf of the silent majority a big "thank you" to those who completed this first phase of the work.

Where do we go from here?

The Plan is now complete and to make it "live", and to make a real difference to the community in which we all live, we will need "Champions" from within the community to take the lead on particular issues. We can abdicate responsibility and simply hand it to the Parish Council and say "get on with it" or we can make a positive contribution and help the Parish Council by all getting involved.

There have already been several benefits arising from the Parish Plan:

- The Parish Council has at least 4 new members who have increased their awareness of local issues via involvement with the planning process.
- The community is now supporting the Scouts in their gala to be held on 31 August.
- The Three Views News has been born and is proving both successful and popular with residents and local businesses.
- The first village litter pick has already taken place
- As a result of all of these activities many people have met new friends and the community is already stronger as a result.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who helped produce, advertise, deliver, collect, complete and analyse the questionnaire.

Results¹

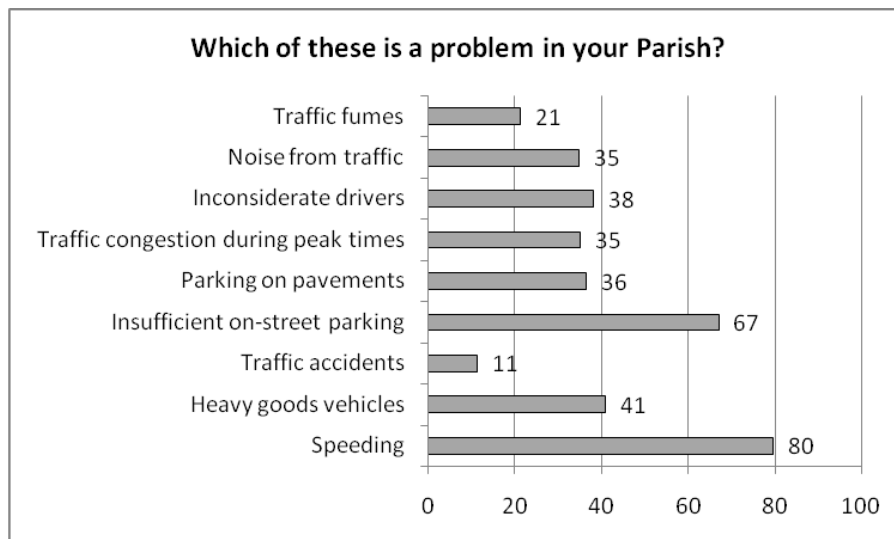
The results from the returned questionnaires have been split up into sections and summarized below along with some of the comments that people made

Traffic and Transport

Speeding (80%) and Parking (67%) are the highest priorities to be tackled, closely followed by adding a bus services at evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays (52%). It was highlighted that young people can get stranded in Ashby if they miss the School bus and therefore are missing out on afterschool activities and use of the local leisure centre. Bus users would like bus stops to be marked more clearly and more bus shelters in certain locations.

Parking on pavements, too close to junctions and at school drop-off time are Parish-wide irritations. Oakthorpe has specific issues at the junctions of New Street and School Street with Measham Road, where people are parking too close to the junctions and making it very difficult to pull out safely onto Measham Road. This is exacerbated by the speed of traffic on Measham Road – which also makes it dangerous to cross the road at the zebra crossing as the cars just don't stop.

Traffic calming measures are also necessary in various positions around the Parish, as people are worried about the speed of traffic entering the villages and the speed of traffic travelling through the villages (See graph below). 84 people (12%) volunteered to help with a Community Speed Watch program, with a further 33% in support of such a scheme.



'No lollipop lady at busy junction at school times a major hazard.'

'Lorries and buses on Hill Street do not see nursery kids and cycles'

'School needs own drop off/pick up area off main road'

'Measham Road has a flashing 30mph sign but this does not slow down much of the traffic'

Health

Most people seem reasonably happy with the current health provision in the Parish, with Measham Medical Unit praised highly in the comments section. It was suggested that the 'out of hours' service could be more local, and

¹ Data presented is a combined response from all questionnaires returned, unless stated otherwise

it would be nice if the surgeries were open into the evenings and weekends. Public transport links also need to be improved to allow greater accessibility for people without cars.

91% of the respondents are registered with a Dentist; however travel on average 10 miles to access such services, therefore a NHS dentist within the Parish would be well supported.

'Measham medical centre is excellent and efficient'

'We have to travel to Burton, Leicester or Loughborough for out of hours care when children are ill at night or weekend as been told we cannot use Ashby Hospital which is annoying and proves very difficult when you have two young children taking them on a long journey when they are ill'

'Appointments at the doctor do not fit in with working lifestyle'

'Measham Medical unit is good, but hard to get to if ill/elderly. Only good if you have a car.'

'Measham Medical Unit - first class, 'Out of hours' service needs improvement'

'Public transport is abysmal you cannot go anywhere at night. If I am ill I have to be ill when my husband is on the right shift'

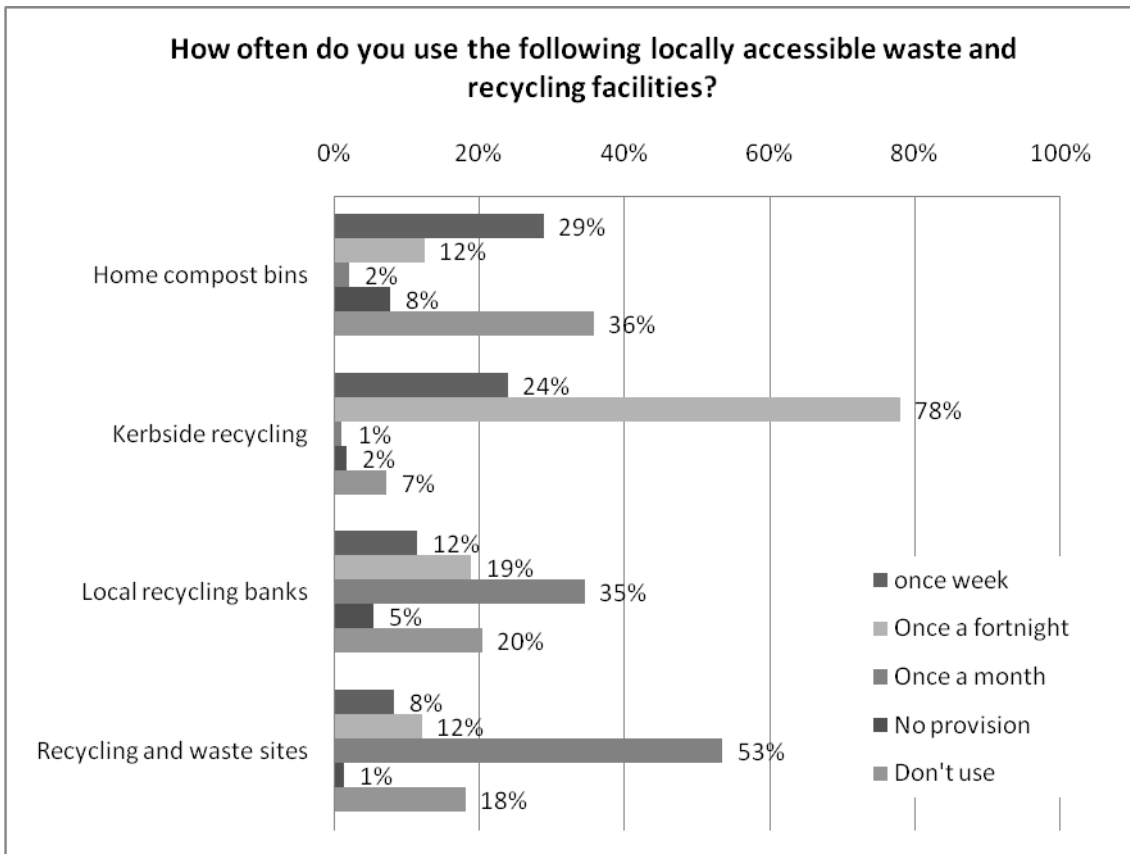
'Mobile doctor's surgery from Measham Medical Unit held in Donisthorpe.'

Environment

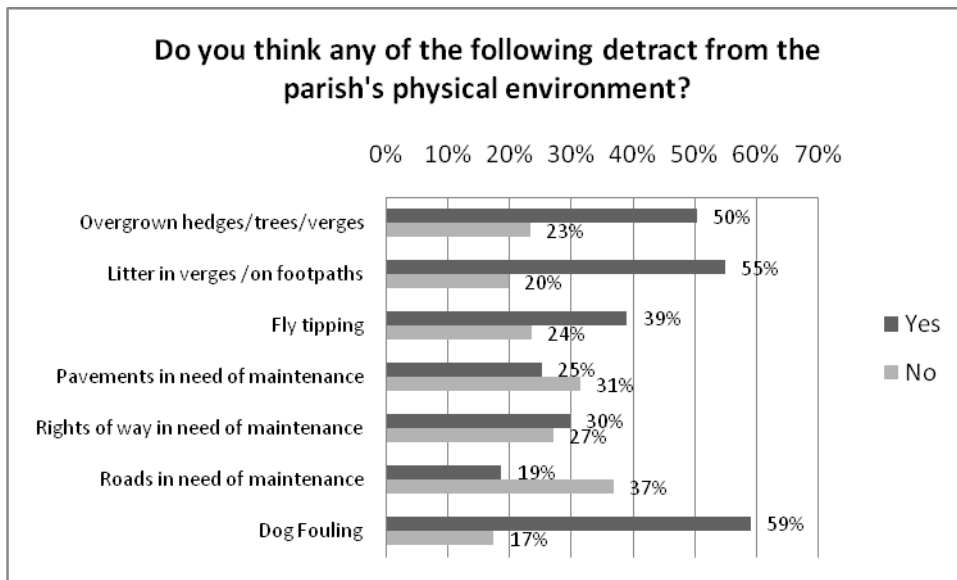
If you look at the graph on the following page you can see that recycling facilities are widely used by residents in the parish. There is great interest for the Council to provide more kerbside recycling for Glass, Cardboard and more types of Plastic.

'Making it more clear what goes in what bin - it is very frustrating if you do recycle and for some reason the men don't take it! It puts you off.'

'A village skip once a month in different locations for larger items. Village clean-up day - I rarely walk around the village but on my patch I am ashamed of litter (especially in and around the cemetery). Weeds in kerbside gutters especially the approach to DM's. Hedgerow between Cockspur Row and Ashlar Drive'



Dog Fouling (71%) and litter (59%) are major problem across Parish (see below). 56% of the Parish would like to have a Parish Street Cleaner to improve the appearance of the area. There were many suggestions to join a 'Best kept Village' competition and respondents would like to see rough areas tidied up and planted.



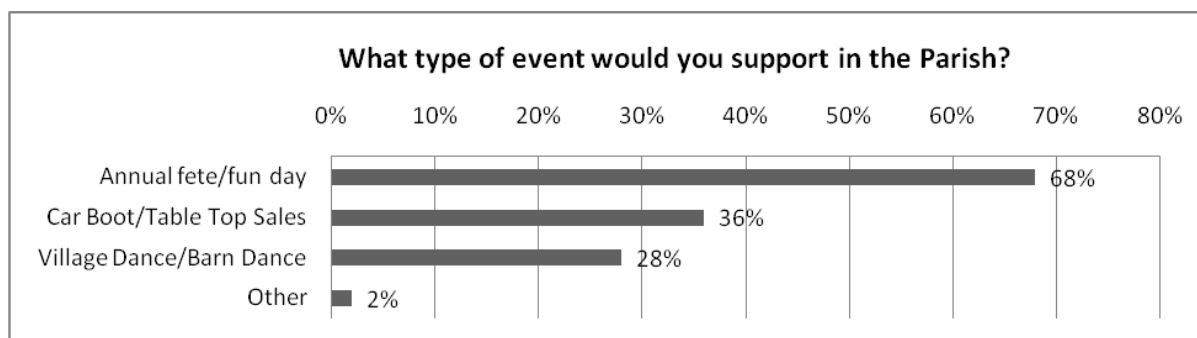
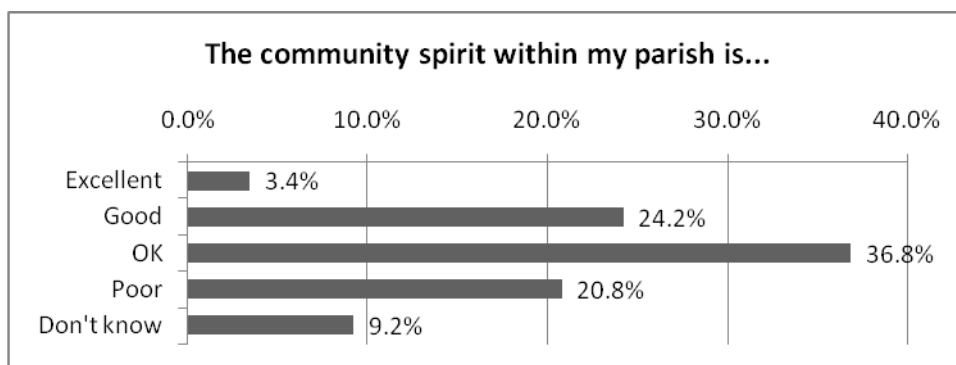
'My main concerns are dog fouling and footpaths in need of attention'

'More 'no fouling' notices needed on Donisthorpe Country Park. People access this from many paths & not many have notices up. This is particularly bad near Poplar Avenue.'

Local Amenities

There was a good response from the questionnaire for more community events, a Gala/Fun Day and a local newsletter. Oakthorpe Leisure Centre and Donisthorpe Woodlands Centre could be more widely used by the community. Communication was highlighted as a big problem in the Parish, with 65% of respondents wanting to see a Parish Newsletter created which could advertise local events and services.

Elderly people often feel excluded from events and more must be done to prevent this. Many people feel the profile of the Parish Councillors needs to be raised, as most people do not know who they are or how to contact them. 72% of Donisthorpe respondents think that it is important for Ashby Canal to be reconnected to the Canal Network. A high priority in Donisthorpe is the provision of a shop: 92% of Donisthorpe respondents want a Village Shop and 20 % said they would use it every day.



'Anything that builds community spirit'

'Village event on lines of Heather scarecrow festival'

'Activities like a summer fete and Village in Bloom'

'Re-instatement of family values, and community awareness'

Youth

The response was good from the youth questionnaires. Communication was again highlighted as an issue, as some events are poorly advertised but would be well attended if this problem could be solved. The 13-18 age group would like a youth club/drop-in centre where they could access the internet, play computer games etc. Further events could include outdoor activities (canoeing, bike rides etc). A Cinema Club would also be well supported. Younger children would like to see the play equipment in the parks updated and new play areas created.

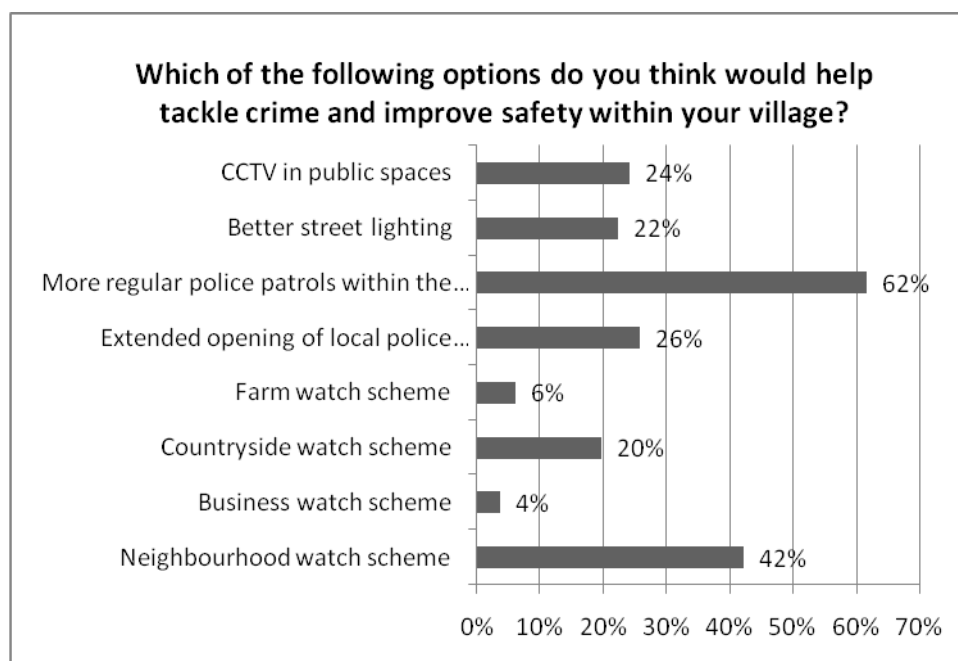
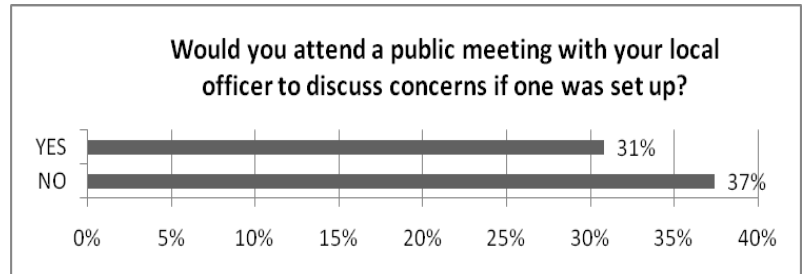
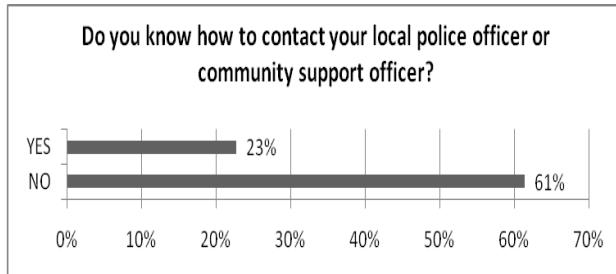
Accessibility

Parking on Pavements causes large problems for wheelchair and pushchair users around the Parish. Due to the frequent use of stiles the paths and trails around the Parish are not very accessible. This could be improved with the use of dog grates and kissing gates.

'Pathways on the canal walk are not very good for disabled and wheelchair people to use, also car park on Moira Road could be a lot better for people to use.'

Crime and Safety

The questionnaire showed that people generally feel safe around the Parish (92% during the day, 84% at night), however it did highlight that most people would like to see the Police patrol the area more frequently and that a neighbourhood watch scheme could be beneficial to the whole Parish.



'Definitely don't want CCTV or extra lighting - it's a village.'

'Where is the local police station?'

'Motor bikes on Woodland Park are a danger to walkers/cyclists.'

'It would be nice to have a better community policing and for our local officer to attend the school and to know his name'

Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Action Plan

Below is the action plan which lists all of the actions that have been put in place to tackle the issues that arose from the questionnaire. The action plan also shows the partners who will be involved with implementing the action along with the predicted timescale resources for each project.

No.	Section	Action	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
1	Transport & Traffic	Buses that run more reliably. Buses that run in evenings and on bank holidays.	Medium	6 months	Bus Companies, Leicestershire County Council O.D.A. Parish Council NorthWest Leics District Council	Minimal
2	Transport & Traffic	Survey current bus stops and timetable information, assess where new stops/shelters are required and how information can be displayed better. Advertise www.travel.org.uk	Medium	6 months	Bus Companies LCC O.D.A. Parish Council	Minimal
3	Transport & Traffic	Publicise and raise awareness of community transport schemes already in place, review services and identify if more provision is required.	Medium	6 months	LCC NWLDC NWL Council for Voluntary Service O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
4	Transport & Traffic	Provide parking/drop off for parents taking/collecting children at Parish Primary schools.	High	Within 3 months	LCC O.D.A Parish Council Head & Governors Donisthorpe & Oakthorpe Primary Schools	Minimal until costs are determined

5	Transport & Traffic	Set up & carry out community speed watch.	Long	12 months	Leicestershire Constabulary Leics County Council O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
6	Transport & Traffic	Request police enforcement of weight limit restrictions on:- Moria Road & Measham Road.	Long	12 months	Leicestershire Constabulary Leics County Council O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
7	Transport & Traffic	Liaise with to Highways re traffic calming measures on - Donisthorpe - Hill Street (road narrowing) Oakthorpe - Chapel Street (narrow road sign) Acresford - Traffic turning off A444 onto Measham Road (speed drops from 40 to 30 but no sign until further down road).	Medium	6 months	Leics County Council Highways O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
8	Transport & Traffic	To liaise with Highways over the junctions of Measham Road & New Street, School Street & Measham Road Oakthorpe - over difficulties caused by parked cars.	Medium	6 months	Leics County Council Highways Bus Companies O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
9	Transport & Traffic	Produce a considerate parking leaflet for the Parish.	Medium	6 months	Leics County Council Highways Leicestershire Constabulary O.D.A Parish Council Parish Plan Group	Printing Costs
10	Transport & Traffic	Liaise with Donisthorpe School over travel plan to successfully implement a school crossing patrol on Moira Road/ Ashby Road Crossroads.	High	Within 3 months	Leics County Council O.D.A Parish Council Community Support	Minimal until costs are determined
11	Health	Request NHS Dentist for parish.	Medium	6 months	Leics and Rutland Primary Care Trust Dentistry Association	Minimal

12	Health	Request extending GP opening times to evenings and weekends.	Medium	6 months	Leics and Rutland Primary Care Trust	Minimal
13	Health	Request if out of hours service could be more local.	Medium	6 months	Leics and Rutland Primary Care Trust	Minimal
14	Health	GP outreach surgery/health visitor available at Donisthorpe Woodland Centre.	Medium	6 months	Leics and Rutland Primary Care Trust Donisthorpe Woodland Centre	Minimal
15	Environment	Investigate the cost-effective use of employing a dog warden.	High	Within 3 months	O.D.A Parish Council NWLDC	Minimal until costs determined
16	Environment	More bins are required to dispose of dog mess, purchase more signage.	High	Within 3 months	O.D.A Parish Council NWLDC	Minimal until costs determined
17	Environment	Identify areas which could benefit from extra planting/flower troughs/general tidying.	Medium	6 months	O.D.A Parish Council NWLDC	Minimal until costs determined
18	Environment	Enthuse support for, and launch a clean-up campaign in the Parish.	Medium	Within 6 months then review quarterly	O.D.A Parish Council NWLDC	Minimal
19	Environment	Investigate the cost effective use of a Parish street cleaner or more regular clean-ups by council.	Medium	6 months	O.D.A Parish Council NWLDC	Minimal until costs determined
20	Environment	Identify when a glass and all plastic collection service will be available and publicise.	Medium	6 months	NWLDC	Minimal
21	Environment	Cut back overgrown vegetation on footpaths and canal to path. (Request mowing and pruning schedule and review).	Low	12 months	Leics County Council	Minimal

22	Environment	Review suitability of public seating on walks and pavements, review maintenance schedule.	Low	12 months	O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
23	Environment	Review condition of existing pavements within Parish and inform PC.	Medium	6 months	Leics County Council Highways O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
24	Environment	Request improvement of street lighting on: - Church Street Donisthorpe, Foot path between Shoulder of Mutton Pub, Stretton View Oakthorpe.	Medium	6 months	Leics County Council Highways O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
25	Environment	Inform planning services that 90% parishioners want to preserve the green spaces within the parish. Improvements to local facilities are a must before further development is agreed.	Medium	6 months	NWLDC Leics County Council	Minimal
26	Environment	Contact PC/LCC re:- Acresford Quarry. Ask to investigate redevelopment and the agreement to develop the site for leisure use.	Medium	6 months	O.D.A Parish Council Leics County Council Minerals Planning NWLDC	Minimal until costs determined
27	Local Amenities	Identify what is required to organise an annual Parish Fete/Carnival.	High	3 months	Parish Plan group Scouts, other youth groups, Church NWLCVS O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal until costs determined
28	Local Amenities	Investigate and set up a parish newsletter.	High	3 months	Parish Plan Group Leics County Council Community ICT	Minimal until costs determined

29	Local Amenities	Investigate possibilities of a grant to Acresford Church to enable the schoolroom to be used for general activities and protect it against closure.	High	3 months	Methodist Church Parish Council NWLDC Leics County Council Historical Society Rural Community Council Funding Officer	Minimal until costs determined
30	Local Amenities	Look into ways in which the older members of the Parish can be included in local activities.	High	3 months	O.D. A Parish council NWLDC Age Concern Help the Aged Leics County Council Adult Social Care Leics County Council Adult Learning Youth Groups	
31	Local Amenities	Oakthorpe Leisure centre - increase range of activities offered (art club, language courses, local history club, bingo, coffee mornings).	Medium	6 months	Oakthorpe Leisure Centre Committee O.D.A Parish Council NWLDC	Minimal until costs determined
32	Local Amenities	Contact Parish Council and discuss ways to raise their profile within the Parish.	Medium	6 months	O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
33	Local Amenities	Look into mobile library timetable and stops find ways of advertising the service within the Parish.	Medium	6 months	Leics County Council Library Services Parish Plan Group	Minimal
34	Local Amenities	Look into possibility of supplying Mains Gas to all of Parish.	Medium	6 months	Mains Gas Providers	Minimal

35	Local Amenities	Publicise current organised walks and events locally.	Medium	6 months	RCC Parish Plan Groups LCC rights of Way Team	Minimal
36	Local Amenities	Look into feasibility of running a local village shop in Donisthorpe.	Medium	6 months	RCC Leics County Council Parish Plan Groups	Minimal
37	Youth	Investigate possibility of installing play area at school end of Donisthorpe village. Review present play areas and age limits. Install new equipment where necessary across the Parish.	High	3 months	O.D.A Parish council NWLDC LCC Youth Services Youth Groups Other relevant organisations	Minimal until costs determined
38	Youth	Look into providing transport for young people to events within and outside the Parish.	High	3 months	O.D.A Parish council, NWLDC LCC Bus Companies Youth Groups and other relevant organisations	Minimal until costs determined
39	Youth	Enthuse support from youth for a bi-monthly youth news/ what's on (pref written by youth).	Medium	6 months	Youth groups Local School Parish Plan Group www.leicestershirevillages.com www.thejitty.com other relevant organisations	Minimal until cost determined

40	Youth	Investigate starting a youth club/cinema club/art club/fishing club/drop-in centre/ internet cafe/ band practice room.	High	3 months	O.D.A Parish council NWLDC Leics County Council Leicestershire Constabulary Youth Groups Other relevant organisations	Minimal until costs determined
41	Youth	Investigate outdoor activities for families (canoeing/organised walks/race day/bike rides) and publicise.	Medium	6 months	NWLDC LCC Rights of Way Team Youth groups Oakthorpe LC Other relevant organisations	Minimal until
42	Accessibility	Clarify regulations regarding disabled access for parks, trail, woods and orchard and improving further facilities.	Medium	6 months	O.D.A Parish Council Ashby Woulds PC Land Owners NWLDC Leics County Council	Minimal
43	Accessibility	Discuss with PC, NWLDC & LCC about replacing worn stiles with kissing gates to provide better access for wheel chair users and push chairs. At present consider installing dog grates.	Long	12 months	LCC Rights of Way Team Parish Council, NWLDC Land Owners	Minimal
44	Accessibility	Discuss with NWLDC wheelie bin services for elderly people - can bins be collected from door instead of kerb side.	Medium	6 months	NWLDC Waste & Refuse	Minimal
45	Accessibility	Pursue funding for disabled and elderly access to canal and local park.	Medium	6 months	NWLDC RCC Funding Officer	Minimal

46	Crime and safety	Organise and publicise meeting with local community officer	High	Within 3 months	Leicestershire Constabulary NWLDC O.D.A Parish Council	Minimal
47	Crime and safety	Promote the importance of reporting instances of crime to all relevant organisations no matter how trivial it may be. Advertise community support officer contact details.	Medium	Continuous	O.D.A Parish Council Leicestershire Constabulary Neighbourhood Watch Parish Plan Group LCC	Minimal
48	Crime and safety	Discuss with Police about more regular police patrols within the Parish.	High	Within 3 months	O.D.A Parish Council Leicestershire Constabulary Neighbourhood Watch LCC	Minimal
49	Crime and safety	Enthuse support for neighbourhood watch schemes throughout parish.	Medium	Continuous	O.D.A Parish Council Leicestershire Constabulary Neighbourhood Watch LCC	Minimal