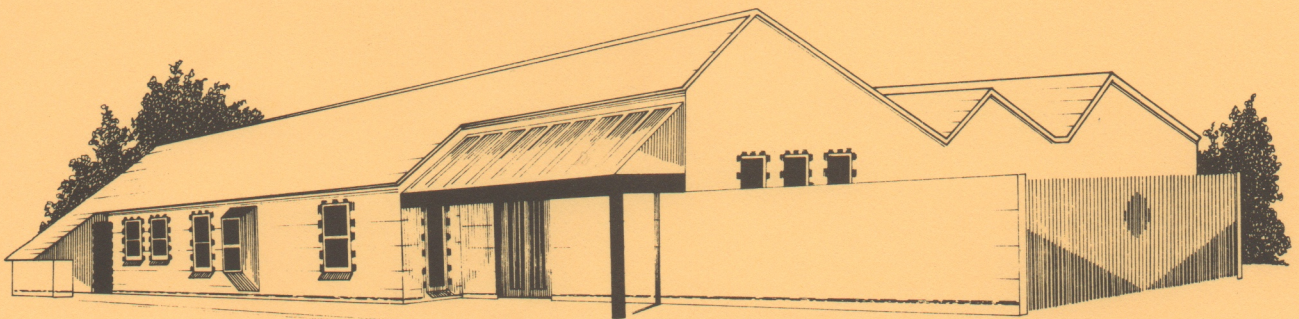


TURVEY THE FUTURE



OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS

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TURVEY - THE FUTURE

INTO THE 80s AND BEYOND — THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE OF TURVEY

To verify facts about Turvey at present, and to obtain the views of people about the future of the village, a survey using the questionnaire principle, was undertaken at the beginning of 1981. Because of expense a detailed analysis is not included as an Appendix but it does contain a great deal of helpful information of use to anyone concerned with improving Turvey. It can be made available on request to any bona fide enquirer.

The questionnaire was in two parts, one part being addressed to the householder concerning the organisation of the household and the other allowing each member of the household to express his or her own views on matters related to the village. In this way, everyone was given an opportunity to contribute including the younger age group. Over 71% of house holders replied with returns showing that thought and consideration had been given, the flippant and facetious response being the exception. In most cases, the questionnaires were delivered by hand and collected personally with the purpose of the questionnaires being explained and help in understanding it being given if required. Amongst the 29% who did not respond were some of the older members of the community, for whom the completing of a questionnaire was tedious and an imposition.

OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE VILLAGE IN GENERAL

Whilst there may be concern to improve or change some of the detail there is no doubt that the people of Turvey do not wish for major or radical change in the size, character, appearance and general functioning of their village.

Recommendation: The wish to keep Turvey fundamentally the same, though improved as appropriate, should be made known particularly to central and local Government departments and public bodies when any future major planning or developments are being considered.

2. CONSERVATION

Replies to the questionnaire indicate a strong desire on the part of Turvey's inhabitants for the retention and conservation of the trees, woodlands and open areas which together with stone buildings and walls make up an attractive landscape.

As soon as this became clear during the analysis stage of the survey, plans were put in hand by the Appraisal Committee and through the Parish Council, to improve the area between the bridge and the mill with selective tree planting and the discouragement of further 'spoil' tipping adjacent to the Three Fyshes Inn. Likewise, 'eyesores' such as the car park in Bridge Street, will be developed and planted with trees.

Many people expressed concern at the erosion of stonework fronting roads and thought to be caused by salt laden spray thrown up by vehicles in the winter months.

Most people are anxious to retain and conserve the historic stone buildings (see Appendix 2) and to keep the village at its present size. Improvements noted this year have been the renovation of property such as the Tythe Barn near the Three Cranes Inn and cottage renovation in Carlton Road. There is however, considerable concern that planning consent should reflect rather than dilute the character of the village.

Recommendations:

1. That in consultation with the Parish Council selective tree planting in different sites should continue.
2. That the Parish Council should continue to draw the attention of North Bedfordshire Borough Planning Committee to the expressed concern of the residents that planning consent should be more in keeping with the village character.
3. That the Appraisal Committee being concerned for the future, should take the initiative to call together a group of interested people in the village to seek advice on the cause of, and remedy for the stonework erosion damaging properties fronting the main road, to enable individual owners to take action.

3. PLACES OF WORSHIP

The questionnaire did not specifically seek comment on places of worship, though the opportunity existed if anyone held strong views. Without doubt, All Saints' Church is held in high regard both as a building of historic and architectural interest and because it is a focal point around which many village activities revolve.

Some Roman Catholics were concerned at the distance they had to travel for their religious services but the opportunity to worship at the Priory of Our Lady of Peace, Turvey Abbey will be welcomed.

Conclusion

The people of Turvey are well content with their places of worship.

4. EDUCATION

When invited to comment on the service provided by the public sector for the education of their children, there was a response from 470 people (rather less than half the total population of the village). 68% of the respondents were generally satisfied; 14% were clearly dissatisfied and 18% did not comment, as they were unaffected by the service the County Council offers through its Education Department.

Of the 14% who were dissatisfied with the service provided by the Local Education Authority, their criticism was the lack of opportunities offered for the pursuit of further education in Turvey. This deficiency is further emphasised when analysing the wide ranging interests which the people of Turvey pursue in their leisure time and where interrelation and instructional help has an importance.

Conclusion

As a generalisation, people in Turvey are satisfied with the provision made by Bedfordshire County Council for those of school age, but the interests of adults and their desire for provision of further education is not satisfied. It is appreciated that further education classes are focused on Bedford and major centres such as Sharnbrook, but support of these centres is inhibited by the cost of petrol for private transport and unrelated public transport services.

Recommendations:

1. That the wide range of interests of the adult community of Turvey should be considered in co-operation with Bedfordshire County Council Education Department and North Bedfordshire Borough Recreation Department to find the best ways, within their respective powers and duties for providing the instruction and group activities for which there appears to be a need.
2. Turvey Recreation Association with its concern for social activities and the quality of life should consider undertaking a co-ordinating role in bringing together groups of people with similar interests who wish to meet regularly.

5. HEALTH SERVICES

Of those who replied to the questionnaire, 77% were happy with the statutory health services provided and 20% were not. For one reason or another 3% abstained.

The outstanding concern is the lack of a doctor's surgery in the village and the lack of public transport to the nearest doctors' surgery in Harrold (NB since this survey, the United Counties Bus Company has introduced a morning service which coincides with surgery times).

By way of future improvement, a number have suggested the setting up of a health centre which could house, say, a pharmacy, and be visited by a chiroprapist, dental surgeon, etc.

Conclusion

Generally speaking there are no real problems in obtaining medical and other health services. The problems which exist appear to be amongst those without private transport. A solution for the future may lie in organising voluntary or private transport or the introduction of some mini-bus system.

6. OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES

Almost 450 people commented on their satisfaction or otherwise of the main public services provided in Turvey. Generally speaking the majority (70%—85%) were satisfied with the usual services, the exceptions being the street lighting, street cleaning and services which relate to Turvey's main problem of traffic.

The postal service - earns the praise of the villagers, some 97% being well satisfied.

The telephone service - causes 20% of the users to be concerned with the frequency at which their lines are out of order or of poor quality.

The refuse collection - is generally satisfactory though 10% seek more frequent availability of skips in which to deposit large items of refuse.

The drains - cause little trouble to most people but some, probably those directly affected, are particularly concerned that water courses and other land drainage areas should be kept clear to avoid or reduce the chance of unnecessary flooding.

Street lighting - Without doubt street lighting is one of the major problems in Turvey. 61% of respondents were dissatisfied. Complaints about quantity of lights are few but the poor quality of illumination is of concern, particularly in the High Street and main road areas where it is felt to be inadequate in relation to speeding traffic (often without dipped headlights), and the safety of pedestrians using the narrow poorly maintained pavements. The inadequate main road street lighting is considered by some to be a contrast with the well lit residential roads, which enjoy a more up-to-date provision.

Recommendation:

That the Parish Council consult with the residents in order to assess the problem in more detail and to arrive at the most appropriate solution to improve street lighting particularly in the main road area.

Public Transport - The majority of people were satisfied with the public transport though it must be borne in mind that less than 10% of residents appear to use public transport regularly. Of those 10% many would wish buses would arrive on time; others would like the services to be spread more evenly and a greater frequency between 8.00 a.m. to 9.00 a.m. and noon to 2.00 p.m. The lack of co-ordination between bus arrival and departure times with those of the Bedford main line trains is a source of irritation and the lack of the late evening bus (10.30 p.m. to midnight) curtails the activities of some.

Observation and Conclusion:

Whilst many people in Turvey have private transport, and relatively few rely only on public services, there is evidence that evening activities in Bedford are curtailed because of poor transport opportunities. This particularly relates to social or educational activities which are not shared by the family as a whole.

It would seem there is scope for some form of mini-bus transport system, either on a voluntary or commercial basis.

7. SHOPS

Generally speaking, the people living in Turvey feel they are well supplied with local shops and visiting tradesmen. Only a few suggestions of new shopping facilities were suggested, with the need for a chemist receiving the greatest support.

8. HOUSING

Just under 70% of the respondents do not wish to see any expansion in the size of Turvey nor any increase in housing. If at some stage in the future, more housing became policy, then 178 people would wish this to be in the form of homes for the older age group; 75 people would find private housing acceptable and 44 people would accept local authority housing.

9. INDUSTRY

Although it is recognised that the Bedfordshire County Council Structure Plan does not encourage development of further industry in villages such as Turvey, local people are beginning to take a different view, brought about by the more recent trends towards unemployment and the unwillingness to be so mobile because of the increased costs of both private and public transport. Consequently, some 50% of the respondents would be happy to see further development of employment opportunities through small businesses and provided such developments, from an environmental point of view, would not endanger the character of the village.

Recommendation:

That North Bedfordshire Planning Committee be advised of these views when considering planning applications or future policies related to Turvey.

10. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS ARE OF DEEP CONCERN TO EVERY HOUSEHOLD IN TURVEY. NO ONE SEEMS TO ESCAPE SOME FEAR OR INCONVENIENCE AND DESPAIR IS ASSOCIATED WITH IDEAS FOR SOLUTIONS.

Summarised, the particular problems are:-

The High Street and Main Road

The density of traffic and the speed with which it uses the main road, particularly the narrow part of the High Street with its inadequate pavements, is a cause of alarm to everyone, and especially for the safety of those who are at risk. There are young mothers with children in prams; youngsters running from the play areas of Barncroft to an unprotected High Street; and the older and less well members of the community. To walk along the narrow irregular pavements, trying to keep one's balance against the 'suction' created by speeding traffic is an experience in itself, whilst the fear of traffic mounting the pavements or colliding with buildings is always real. The poor quality of illumination of the street lights increases the concern during the winter months.

Those who live on the main road, and in particular where it is most narrow, have the constant disturbance of the noise of traffic both day and night which detract from the sleep of many.

The spray from salt and rain created by traffic erodes stone walls and buildings, interferes with windows and destroys paint work. There are also hazards for car owners who are often at risk when entering or leaving their homes.

Carlton Road

Turvey is on the route from Bedford to other North Bedfordshire villages, Carlton Road being of particular significance. This narrow attractive street in the conservation area is another traffic and transport hazard causing concern.

The speed of traffic, whilst a problem, is of less concern than in the High Street, but habitual parking during the day and at night is a special hazard. Additional problems are caused by heavy vehicles entering and leaving the depot of Turvey Transport Services, the access to which is in the narrow part of this busy street with the additional hazards of parked cars and inadequate pavements often damaged by lorries. Lorries entering and leaving their depot are a new cause for concern now the school for the young children of the village has been resited on the corner of Carlton Road and May Road.

Observations and Conclusions

Concern about the traffic and transport problems of Turvey is perhaps the most revealing information from the survey. Many are looking for solutions, but apart from the need for a by-pass (which is not in any forward plans) ideas and opinions vary on what best might be done. As there is an undertone of helplessness and despair, it may be helpful to give the villagers an opportunity of real discussion and to make views known to the appropriate authorities which can take action.

Recommendation:

That the Parish Council, itself known to be concerned with this problem of traffic and its effects, consider taking the initiative to enable the villagers to discuss this problem more thoroughly and with the public authorities concerned.

