Kempsey's Community Vision

Forward

In 2022, Kempsey Parish Council ('KPC') carried out a survey among parishioners to assess the well-being of our community and to understand the wishes of parishioners in regards to their needs and aspirations for future facilities. This survey followed on from the one carried out in 2014 and the public referendum in 2017 on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, Kempsey's own planning policy document.

Some 552 responses were received to the 2022 survey, which was a significant number of replies, but in order to give the opportunity to more of our approximately c.4,500 strong community to give their points of view, the Kempsey Community Vision project was started.

In response to the covid epidemic, central government in 2023 made available funding channelled through principal local authorities, Malvern Hills District Council in our case, to employ local 'Community Builders' for a period of time. KPC was able to secure some of this funding and in January 2024 Cathy Garner started work both to progress the vision project and to look for opportunities to implement the government's objectives in providing the funding. These related principally to reducing social isolation and increasing social cohesiveness.

This report details Cathy's findings and reflections in formulating and establishing a Community Vision for Kempsey. In so doing it builds on the stated vision on the front cover of Kempsey's Neighbourhood Plan: *'To ensure that Kempsey Parish continues to be an identifiable, sustainable rural community with facilities to cater for the needs of residents'.*

With the government's decision to replace the existing principal authorities in Worcestershire, including Malvern Hills District Council and Worcestershire County Council, with one, or possibly two, overarching Unitary Authorities, the need to be able to inform and persuade a new set of influential administrators has never been greater. KPC will use this document to do just that, as well as for four other specific purposes:

(i) as evidence when applying for grants from various sources, particularly by showing how the grant money will be used to support vision objectives identified from feedback received directly from our community;

(ii) as an information document for Kempsey residents, for KPC and for third parties that records residents wishes for improving daily life in Kempsey Parish and how those might be achieved.

(iii) as a point of reference whenever we are looking at new projects, initiatives or changes in the way we do things, and by publishing how the initiative or change meets vision objectives. By adopting this way forward, we can be more confident that our decision-making process is in line with parishioners' aspirations.

(iv) to inform a future revision of the Neighbourhood Plan.

However, whilst KPC has some scope to progress some of the community aspirations referred to in the report, we do need to recognise that we are largely dependent on external opportunities and funding becoming available to do so.

I should like to thank Cathy for the great effort she has put into both the Community Vision project and the other community initiatives that she has steered forwards in her role as Community Builder, many of which are referred to in this report.

I hope that you find the report both interesting and informative. I commend it to you all.

Chris Waller,
Chair, Kempsey Parish Council
03.11.2026