



PEGSWOOD VILLAGE PLAN

“A better place in which to live”

Pegswood Village Plan has been prepared by a Steering Group of volunteers in close co-operation with Pegswood Parish Council. A copy of the full Plan, together with copies of the questionnaires, the analysis of the questionnaires and a summary of all short, medium and long term actions, may be obtained from Project House, the Welfare and the Parish Council's offices in the Uniun Building.

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DECEMBER 2009

Early in April 2008, Pegswood Parish Council (www.parish-council.com/Pegswood) hosted an initial meeting that proposed an independent group from the village to develop a Village Plan. The group met several times, surveyed all houses and businesses, held a public meeting (attended by a wide range of age groups) and, using that information, set out an Action Plan for the future.

There was remarkable consensus from the villagers on the pleasures of, and benefits to, living in the village; its lovely setting, good transport links and friendly people. There was also strong agreement on the issues that concerned them; litter, dog-fouling and anti-social behaviour.

Some issues are already being addressed by individuals or small groups. Others can be achieved in the future, and some will need the direction and support of other bodies (e.g. Pegswood Parish Council, the private owners of derelict or shuttered buildings).

It is hoped that a new “action group” can be formalised which can use its independent status to undertake projects to benefit the community. The action group will seek to become constituted as this allows bids for funding streams that are not always available to public bodies.

Whilst many actions have been identified, this is a working document and priorities will need to be established and developed over time. Work will be project-based and progress will be reported on an internet-based blog site (<http://pegswoodvp.blogspot.com/>).

Pegswood Parish Council has supported and funded the work of the group through grant aid provided by DEFRA and administered by Community Action Northumberland. Much of the work has been carried out by some very enthusiastic volunteers, and Pegswood Parish Council will support them in their spending plans for the future.

It is recognised that the plan will not meet everyone’s needs or, indeed, expectations as there will be a need to integrate with other plans affecting the area. The action group will work as hard as it can to make Pegswood “A better place in which to live”.

Already, there has been success in gaining funding, through the local Brownie group, for summer planting for beds and tubs to enhance the appearance of the village.

SUMMARY OF VILLAGE PLAN ACTIONS

A summary of all short, medium and long term actions that have been derived from consultations and the Village Plan has been drawn up. The responsibility for addressing these actions lies with the new action group.

Further information and analysis of the questionnaires is also available from the Project House.



Parking

Measures to reduce parking outside the school and parking on pavements and grass verges elsewhere, will be investigated. The extension of walking-bus schemes in the village will be discussed with parents and teachers.

Lighting

Areas of poor lighting in the village will be identified and solutions sought. One such area is between Dukes Cottages and the Welfare Hall.

Neighbourhood Watch

Local groups, in liaison with the Community Police, will be encouraged to strengthen current Neighbourhood Watch schemes and establish new ones where appropriate.

Police Presence

The Police Authority will be lobbied to increase the visibility of community officers within the village.

BUSINESS

The proposed extension of the A197 to the A1 trunk road will be strongly supported for the future of both the village and the wider community of South East Northumberland.



HOUSING

Several people mentioned the lack of a sheltered housing development in the village. An appraisal regarding needs and benefits, for presentation to the appropriate authorities, will be developed.

NEW GROUP

It is proposed that a new group should be established to help implement the ideas and suggestions contained in this Plan. It will need to be properly constituted in order to be able to obtain funding which is not available to the Parish Council. It should be welcoming, open and flexible and be able to establish subgroups reflecting various specific interests. The new group will be created following a public meeting and with the support of as many local residents as possible.



“The road is much quieter since the bypass opened. This is no longer a pit village we are now town and country”

SPORT AND LEISURE

New Fire Station

The construction of a new fire station is underway at the eastern edge of the village and is expected to be completed in the middle of 2010. The Fire and Rescue Service is very interested in becoming involved in the life of the village, particular as far as young people are concerned. Joint use of the Welfare Park is being discussed.

Welfare Park

The construction of a new Pavilion is planned for the first half of 2010, funded by Northumberland County Council. The demolition and clearance of the old, dilapidated pavilion will follow. Discussions concerning the transfer of the Welfare Park, to the Parish Council, are underway. A long term development plan for the Park will be prepared.

Colliers Hill

The building of a new housing estate has commenced in the area below this former mining feature. Better utilisation of this open space will be considered for the longer term.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

Youth Forum

The establishment of a Youth Forum will help the community to look at facilities and activities for young people in Pegswood, and consider their future needs and requirements.

Skateboard Park

A petition has been presented to the Parish Council for the construction of a skateboard park in the village. A feasibility study and the identification of possible sources of funding will be pursued in 2010.



Drop in/"Chill out" Facilities

The views and ideas of local young people about such facilities will be sought early next year.



CRIME AND SAFETY

Traffic calming measures

The extension of the 20 mph limits to all housing estates in Pegswood will be investigated.

CCTV

Consideration of introducing CCTV in parts of the village will be discussed with the police, community representatives and residents.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Village Plan reflects the views and aspirations of the residents of Pegswood. It also identifies their needs and their perceptions of what requires to be done in order to improve the quality of life for all.

The primary objective of the Village Plan is, therefore, simply to provide the **information** relating to the work that needs to be carried out to make Pegswood a **better place in which to live**, the information having been supplied by the residents of Pegswood.



STEERING GROUP AND CONSULTATIONS

The idea of a Village Plan was initially proposed by Pegswood Parish Council in April 2008. At that time, following a meeting, a group of residents agreed to form a Steering Group, with the primary objective of carrying out extensive community consultation exercises with all of the village residents, social and community groups, local businesses and the school. Pegswood Parish Council also developed and presented a suitable constitution for the operation of the Steering Group, in addition to the provision of general support. It is important to emphasise, however, that the Village Plan is entirely independent of Pegswood Parish Council and is based solely on the views of Pegswood residents and other groups as previously mentioned.

Significant efforts have been made by the Steering Group to ensure that every village residence, inclusive of adults and young persons, was given the opportunity to provide views and opinions, together with any suggestions that they considered relevant.

Questionnaires having been compiled, were distributed to every residence in the village. (Analysis of the questionnaire is available as a separate document). At a later date business questionnaires were also distributed to local businesses.

Consultations were also carried out with all community, social and voluntary groups, local businesses and the school.

An **Open Evening** was arranged, with photographic displays, to obtain further input. Presentations were made in respect of the objectives of the Village Plan, together with guidance and advice from agencies involved with fund-raising experience and community planning.



All comments were made by respondents to the questionnaire.

VILLAGE PLAN ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Upon completion of the Plan, the Steering Group, having achieved its primary objective, shall cease to exist in its present format. This, of course, is not the end of the matter, more the beginning. In order to carry on and tackle the actions and aspirations emanating from the plan, it is essential that a new group is formed.

It is considered that the new group will be mainly project-based and will concentrate its efforts on the needs of the village from the conception of a project, through funding acquisition, planning, project completion and where applicable, asset transfer to Pegswood Parish Council.

A new constitution shall define the organisational structure of the group, together with its roles and responsibilities. The new "action group" shall be comprised mainly of Pegswood village residents and will be tasked with addressing the aims and actions derived from the Village Plan.

COMMUNICATIONS

In order to improve and maintain communications between the "action group" and in particular, Pegswood residents, an internet based blog site has been established and can be found at:

<http://pegswoodvp.blogspot.com>

It is considered that this will be an excellent and very effective information-based facility. The site will be managed by the new action group.

SUMMARY OF VILLAGE PLAN ACTIONS

A summary of all short, medium and long term actions that have been derived from consultations and the Village Plan has been drawn up, and is available on request from the Project House. The responsibility for addressing these actions lies with the new "action group".



Further information and analysis of the questionnaires is also available from the Project House.



"It's a community we have grown up in, we've always found the people of Pegswood friendly and there is more often than not a good sense of community spirit"

THE ENVIRONMENT

Parking Provision outside the Co-op

The County Council has completed the widening of the road and the provision of new parking bays. The appropriate parking of vehicles will need to be encouraged.

General untidiness, litter and dog fouling

A Village Tidy-Up Day could be introduced on an annual or even a quarterly basis. Substantial help is available from the County Council for such events.

Planting of flowers/shrubs

Funding was obtained from the Parish Council for the village Brownie Pack to plant flowers and shrubs along the main road through the village earlier in 2009. Maintenance of flower and shrub beds is a shared responsibility between the County Council, the Parish Council and Castle Morpeth Housing Association. More co-ordination between these public bodies and community organisations in the village is needed to ensure that the hard work of groups like the Brownies is not wasted.

Footpaths and Bridleways

There are many footpaths and bridleways in the area most of which are public rights of way. The production of a map, identifying these footpaths and bridleways, throughout the Parish Council area, for distribution through the Parish website, village blog and local venues would be a valuable addition to the information about the area. Ensuring that they are accessible and litter free will be an ongoing task.

Seating

The provision of seating is a basic function of parish councils. Requests for additional seating in the village are considered carefully and have always been funded from the annual precept. New and existing seating should have paved areas in front, whenever possible.

Bus Shelters

The Parish Council has a maintenance contract for the upkeep of the bus shelters. Additional cleaning and repairs are undertaken as necessary and the Council is very keen to receive reports of damage, vandalism and litter.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Village newsletters

The provision of a single village newsletter, which could include information from several community sources, could be more efficient, easier to deliver and cost less than the current variety of newsletters. This idea should be developed by the various community organisations in the village.

Village Directory

A village directory of local businesses, community organisations, facilities and specialist clubs would very valuable to the Parish Council, the Morpeth District Community Forum and other local organisations. It should be updated on a regular basis.



LEISURE AND ADULT EDUCATION YOUTH AND SENIOR

ADULT EDUCATION

Facilities for Adult Education in the village are provided at Pegswood Community Project. The Project has a dedicated **computer suite** with ten computers available.

UK Online uses the suite four days per week. UK online sessions are arranged on a casual, drop-in basis, mainly to provide users without home PC's access to a personal email address as well as access to the internet for information and on-line shopping opportunities. There is at least one qualified volunteer tutor available at all sessions to answer any queries and participation is free of charge.

Learn Direct uses the suite twice per week and operates on an accredited course system with courses having to be paid for. However, there are allowances made for those on certain benefits, tax credits and allowances. There is a paid tutor available at all sessions.

Numbers attending all sessions have grown over the years and the facility is now a much used and valued part of the village life.

OLDER GENERATIONS

In the consultation exercise a large number of residents indicated that the quiet rural location together with friendly neighbours contributed to the strong community spirit that exists in the village. This in turn provides a solid foundation for the quality of life for all. This is further enhanced by the fact that many families have relatives and strong social connections within the village, which provide a mutual degree of security and care. The combination of these factors provides the basis for the creation and maintenance of a good village environment for the well being of the older generations.

30% of the village have no access to a car or van. Many of the older generations make use

of the **excellent bus connections and concessionary fares** to visit adjacent town centres of Morpeth, Ashington and the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne.

A number of residents feel that **sheltered housing** should be built in the village to accommodate those village residents, at the appropriate time in their lives, as an alternative to a remote location.

Pegswood is also fortunate to have a number of facilities that provide a wide range of activities for residents, including and particularly suitable for, the older generations. The **Project House** incorporates many events within its varied programme with the older volunteers being very active in assisting the running of the Project including the Community Café. The **Welfare Hall** has also built up its activities programme over recent months and includes a strong emphasis on participation by the older residents of the village. The **Social Clubs** have memberships in the region of 1500, including a significant number of older villagers. Apart from the normal social activities, they provide varied entertainment programmes.



PEGSWOOD PAST AND PRESENT

PEGSWOOD - A NORTHUMBRIAN RURAL VILLAGE WITH AN INDUSTRIAL PAST

Pegswood is a large village situated some two miles to the east of the market town of Morpeth, in the county of Northumberland. It is situated in a rural location, on the old A197 road and the East Coast Main Rail Line, both of which contribute to **good communication links** and also to the strategic importance of the village with regard to its potential for growth.

The village was by-passed by the new A197 road in 2007 and this has made a welcome improvement to the quality of life for its residents, in terms of huge reductions in through traffic and improvement to the local environment. Being surrounded by rural countryside and within one mile of the wooded valley of the River Wansbeck, it is indeed a **pleasant and, generally, a peaceful location** in which to live.



Plans are in hand to extend the A197 road at the west of the village directly to the main A1 Trunk Road and this would provide a significant potential economic benefit, not only to Pegswood but to the whole of the east Northumberland area. Good access to the A1 is currently hampered by traffic congestion through the town of Morpeth.

A BRIEF HISTORY

There is some evidence of early settlements in the area of Pegswood from the Neolithic period. The first extant document, William Senior's plan of 1632, identifies 'Pegsworth' and also refers to 'Langhirst'. In 1769 Pegsworth was included on Armstrong's Map of the County of Northumberland, which shows five buildings, of which Cookswell House, East Farm and North Farm can be identified. 'Longhurst' is mentioned, as is 'Farding' (Fawdon).

Fryer's Map of the County of Northumberland (1820) includes Pegswood, the first clear identification of Butchers Lane and, possibly, also shows early coal mining works. In 1828 Greenwood's Map of the County of Northumberland again has Pegsworth but shows many buildings in a substantial hamlet. Longhirst and Fawdon are 'correctly' spelt.

The Tithe Map for Bothal Desmesne (1837) outlines 'Pegswood Township' which is exactly the area of the current Parish Council. The very important Plan of the Newcastle & Berwick Railway (1844), shows Pegsworth Township. The Plan of the Northumberland Railway, also 1844, includes Banks Colliery Engine and Pegswood Colliery, although these are located to the west of the current Village.

The final Pegswood Colliery was established in 1872. In 1898, the Second Edition Ordnance Survey 6" sheet LXIV, shows the first Pit Rows, Longhirst Terrace and Bothal Terrace, surrounding Pegswood Colliery and hemming it in against the North Eastern Railway line.

**"Easy access to anywhere
in Northumberland and
beyond"**

This map also includes the School, a Methodist Chapel to the south of East Farm and another Chapel west of the School. The Third Edition Ordnance Survey of 1924, shows the complete Pit Rows from Langwell Terrace in the north to Bothal Terrace in the south.

Pegswood developed into the **close-knit, self-supportive community** that was common to the Coal Mining Industry. In due course a Miners' Welfare Hall, incorporating a cinema and a Miners' Institute with sports facilities were built, together with two Social Clubs. The Welfare Park was established around 1932 which provided tennis courts, bowling green and most importantly football pitches with a Pavilion.

Pegswood, in common with other mining communities in the Northumberland Coalfields, became a hotbed of **football**, playing in the Northumberland Miners Welfare League. There was however still room for **cricket** in the summer months and the **allotments** also provided a welcome respite from the arduous work at the pit.

Life was tough for the families, particularly during the early years, although conditions improved in 1947 when the **mining industry was nationalised** and pithead baths were built, together with improved health and safety at the mine. The mine continued to be the major employer for the young men leaving the local school, but in 1969 the mine closed down and the village went into decline. This was exacerbated further, when the whole mining industry in Northumberland progressively shut down and deep coal mining ceased in its entirety, causing widespread **unemployment** and resulting economic hardship.

A sculpture has been erected entitled "Fire" at the roundabout near the cemetery and community fire station to **celebrate the mining heritage** of the village. It reflects the steeliness and strength of the miner and reminds us of the former local industry.

PEGSWOOD VILLAGE TODAY

The coal mine and a high proportion of the Colliery Rows have long been demolished and the past 35 years have seen a gradual development of private **housing**.

A significant number of the tenants of Local Authority Housing took up their option to purchase these properties in the 1980's and it is estimated that the current ratio, of home ownership to rented, is now in the region of 50:50. The remaining rented Local Authority houses have recently been transferred to Castle Morpeth Housing Association.

The remaining Colliery Rows, which provide high density living accommodation by modern standards, are rented out under the ownership of a private landlord, **Welbeck Estates**, which derived its assets from the Duke of Portland on whose land the village and mine was established back in the late 19th Century.

There are a number of small **business units** located in the village and a larger expanding heavy equipment contractor company which provide local employment. The **main employer** on which this village and indeed the wider area is very dependent, is the public sector which employs some 57% of the available workforce. The village is therefore largely **commuter based**. There are many villagers who shop, work and indeed socialise in the nearby towns of Morpeth and Ashington, as has been the case throughout the history of the village.

Pegswood has **excellent public transport services**, with a regular and frequent bus services to the main towns of Morpeth and Ashington and also to Newcastle and to Alnwick via Longhirst and Amble. The village also has a railway station, but with a very limited service of two trains on six days a week.

EDUCATION



Pegswood has a popular and very good **first school** catering for 160–170 three to nine year olds. In November 2006 Ofsted stated that it offered 'excellent care and support for the children', that 'pupils are well behaved and motivated to learn' and that 'pupils' achievements in life skills (reading, writing and mathematics) are outstanding'. The First School has an active Parents' Association (**Friends of Pegswood First School**) made up of current and past parents and grandparents supporting fund raising and social activities.

Children move from here to Bothal Middle School and then to Ashington High School or to one of the two Morpeth Middle Schools and then to King Edward VI. Vocational training and courses beyond 16 involve travel to Northumberland College in Ashington, Kirkley Hall near Ponteland or to Newcastle.

SURE START

This new centre provides opportunities primarily for 0–5's and their parents or carers. Learning through play sessions are organised for **young children** and some training for parents on issues ranging from health and nutrition to "managing your child".

0-5's

Various activities for this age group are organised by Pegswood Project and Sure Start ranging from story sessions to craft activities. Toddler groups within Pegswood provide opportunities for mixing and socialising and

organise regular trips for children and their parents. A parent run toddler group also meets twice weekly in St Margaret's Hall.



5+

Facilities and activities for this age group are provided by Project House, the Welfare and five-a-side football behind the Social clubs. There are drop-in sessions, homework clubs, sport and fitness clubs, craft sessions and holiday clubs. A play area for under 11's and the Welfare Park provide space for outdoor activity and sport.

There are three uniformed organisations operating in Pegswood - Brownies, Beavers and Cubs. They all meet weekly at Pegswood First School. Beavers & Cubs meet on a Monday from 5:45 to 7pm. Brownies meet every Thursday from 6pm to 7pm.

A selection of activities on offer in Pegswood include:

At the Welfare - Luncheon Club, Friendship Group, Dominoes, Kick Boxing, Snooker, Tea Dance, Line Dancing, and Bingo

At Pegswood Community Project - Keep Fit, Health Lunch, Scrapbooking class, Healthy Walking, Pilates, Quilting, Plot to Pot taster sessions, Homework group, Girls' group, Watercolours, Messy babies, Mixed crafts and all day breakfasts in the Community Café.

POLICING

Routine **police support** to the Village is provided by a Community Police Officer and two Community Support Officers.

The figures for reported crime in the village are very low and to a large extent this is supported by the attitude of the large majority of residents who have indicated that they feel safe in Pegswood.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Village Plan consultation process showed that the level of anti-social behaviour is in marked contrast to the perception of the vast majority of residents who are extremely concerned about it. Only a very small number of residents felt unconcerned, so this is clearly a **very significant problem which** needs to be addressed. Anti-social behaviour can manifest itself in many ways such as vandalism, graffiti, rowdy behaviour and complete disregard for the environment. Youths gathering in groups in certain areas were considered to be anti-social.

LITTER

Despite 19 litter bins, the presence of discarded alcohol and food containers makes a major contribution to the **severe litter problem** which is prevalent in some areas of the village. Residents were very emphatic about the seriousness of the village litter problem which has an adverse impact on their quality of life.

Are you concerned about any of the following in Pegswood?

	Yes	Slightly	No
Litter	91%	7%	2%
Dog fouling	89%	9%	2%
Anti-social behaviour	75%	21%	4%

DOG FOULING

There are 13 dog waste bins in the village. Nevertheless, residents were seriously concerned about dog fouling. Whilst the problems of litter and dog fouling are an environment problem they are also against the law and that is why they are mentioned in this, the Crime and Safety section. It is clear that the residents expect some action on the problems associated with anti-social behaviour, litter and dog fouling.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Another concern raised was the problem of traffic congestion at the School during the busy periods, due to the lack of parking and drop off facilities. Parking is generally perceived to be a problem in certain other areas causing obstruction to paths and vehicles parking on grassed areas.

Residents have raised concerns regarding the regular transit of heavy vehicles and skip wagons through the village and on some occasions fast cars at night.



The **population** of the village is estimated at 3612 residents, living in 1423 dwellings, and continues to grow. The number of rented properties owned by Castle Morpeth Housing Association is 332, and there are also a number of privately rented properties. There is an extremely high demand for socially rented property, especially two- and three-bedroomed houses. A new development nearing completion will add 95 houses to the housing stock.

There remains a **strong community spirit** within the village centred around four main sites:-



- Project House, a charitable community support facility which is run on a professional basis
- the former Miners' Welfare Hall which is undergoing a resurgence and refurbishment as financial resources become available
- and the two Social Clubs which attract strong support from the villagers, many of whom are members.

Football is still played on the Welfare Field and funding has been allocated to replace the pavilion and we look forward to the benefits of this.

The village is included in the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007 which are the Government's official measure of multiple deprivations at small area level. The results for Pegswood indicate that there are

disparities within the village with regard to deprivation on a number of indicators such as employment, income, health, education and housing. Details of the Indices can be obtained from the Office of National Statistics*. It should be noted that not all deprived people live in deprived areas and conversely, not everyone living in a deprived area is deprived.

It is hoped that the new "action group" will seek to address the issues around a small number of neglected areas and so improve the village environment further.



"Village atmosphere and friendly feeling of community spirit"

*<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

VENUES

Pegswood Community Project acts as an umbrella to several voluntary and activity groups. It has been highly successful and flourishes in the village. It provides activities for young people, drop ins, after school groups, healthy walks and many other activities. Project House, a former church and public house, has been renovated and now provides the Pegswood Community Project with a superb home close to the centre of the village.

Pegswood Miners' Welfare, pictured below, offers a wide range of activities. Many of these activities draw in users from nearby towns and villages. They range from Kick Boxing to Tea Dances, New Age Kurling to Tribal Dancing



Sure Start is the Government programme to deliver the best start in life for every child. Sure Start Children's Centres provide services for families including health and family support services, integrated early learning, full-day or session based care for children from 0-5 years, and advice and information for parents and carers on a range of issues from effective parenting to training and employment opportunities.

What facilities do you use?

	Yes	No
Shops	96%	4%
Post Office	86%	14%
Take-away outlets	47%	53%
Social Clubs	41%	59%
Church	26%	74%
Church Hall	25%	75%
Sports facilities	7%	93%
5 a side pitch	5%	95%
Welfare	29%	71%
Park & Play Area	13%	87%
Allotments	8%	92%

The **UNIUN Building**, (see picture above) owned by Northumberland County Council, is leased to Groundwork Northumberland which uses the first floor. The ground floor houses a café, Pegswood Parish Council and the main office of the Federation of Northumberland Development Trusts.

There is a meeting room available for rent, and indeed it was used for public meetings by the Steering Group.

There are two Clubs in the centre of the village the **Ex-Servicemen's Club** and **Pegswood Sports & Social Club**. To the rear of these is a multi-purpose floodlit **sports pitch** which is well used. As well as the 'commercial entertainment' they support a range of teams including Pool, Darts & Soccer.

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND CYCLE PATHS



There are various **public footpaths and bridleways** in the surrounding area. The challenge is now to maintain these to a high standard and advertise them more effectively to the public.

There is a **new foot and cycle path** along the Pegswood by-pass which is very well used by local people. This would benefit from more seating. There is also some graffiti under the new by-pass bridge.



ALLOTMENTS

On the eastern edge of the village is a large area of allotments leased to the Parish Council by Welbeck Estates and rented out to individuals in the community. These have become more popular in recent years and there is now a waiting list. The Council has taken steps to ensure that the allotments are kept tidy and well maintained.

VILLAGE ENTRANCES

It has been suggested that additional stone "Pegswood" signs, with planting, would be an attractive feature at the entrances to the village.



"Pegswood is a safe, clean environment in which to live and rear a family"

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION



flower beds and tubs to add short term colour to these areas. In the long term it is envisaged that carefully planned flowering shrubs and plants could be introduced to reduce maintenance and associated costs.

COLLIERS HILL

An area known as Colliers Hill (a former mining spoil heap) on the Longhirst Road was reclaimed some 25 years ago but has been neglected in more recent times and is now underused. A **new private housing estate** is being built adjacent to the Hill and it is hoped this will raise its profile again. Many old colliery houses were demolished to accommodate this new estate which will include some affordable houses. When complete, this estate will greatly enhance this area of the village.

WELFARE PARK

To the east is a large **sports field** which could be better utilised. A new wall and railings have been built alongside the park which make an attractive addition to the southern entrance of the village.



CONSTRUCTION OF BY-PASS

Pegswood is situated approximately two miles north east of Morpeth town. The village is surrounded by open countryside and has benefitted from the **recent construction of a by-pass** from the top of Whorral Bank to the east side of the village.

This has resulted in a huge reduction in the volume of traffic which previously passed through the village and has created a much **more peaceful environment**. More recently, the main road outside the shops in the village has been widened to improve safety and create a number of car parking spaces for shoppers.

COUNTRY PARK

To the west of the village there is phase one of the **Pegswood Community Park** which was developed some five years ago and is now beginning to mature. This is a popular place for those wishing to walk or just sit and enjoy the surroundings.

FLOWER BEDS

There are open spaces within the village mostly laid to grass with very few shrubs or flowers and with grass cutting being the only maintenance. The questionnaire showed that this was an issue for villagers and recently some funding has been obtained to **plant**

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

SPORT



There are two League Standard **football pitches** at the Welfare Park with a pavilion, which is operated by the new Unitary Authority, and is currently in the process of being replaced. Nearby there is an unused Bowling Green.

The multi-purpose sports pitch behind the Social clubs has a commercial football coaching operation in place for children and can also be hired for private use.

There is one **children's play area** aimed at children under the age of 11. This facility is located behind Patton Way and is owned and maintained by the Parish Council. The location of this facility is problematic and it suffers from vandalism and littering.



CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Pegswood is served by **St. Margaret's Chapel** (see picture below) which has been in the village for just over 100 years and is run jointly by the Methodists and the Church of England. Sunday service times are 10.15am on the first, third and fifth Sundays each month and 11.00am on the second and fourth Sundays. Occasional Family Services and Healing Services are also offered and are advertised. St. Margaret's has a church hall adjacent for community and private use.

Pegswood is also served by the 12th Century Church of **St. Andrew in nearby Bothal Village and also by St. John's at Longhirst**. Sunday worship is shared between these two churches as follows: first and third Sundays in the month 9.30am at Longhirst; second and fourth Sundays 9.30am at Bothal. Bothal Church hosts children's events for members of Pegswood First School three times per year and because of its heritage is popular for educational visits and tourism.

The churches are staffed by one full-time clergy and in the case of Pegswood Chapel jointly with the Methodist Minister from Morpeth.



VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

There are currently three newsletters circulating in the village - a quarterly Parish magazine, a four monthly newsletter giving details about Project events and an annual newsletter from the Churches.

There is considerable willingness to work towards a **'Village' newsletter** and the Parish Council has indicated that it would be willing to fund this, although it could be that local businesses may be approached in the future. 44% of businesses surveyed in the consultation process indicated a preparedness to sponsor village events and might be interested in sponsoring a newsletter.

INFORMATION

Pegswood Parish Council owns two notice boards which it uses for advertising its meetings and to publicise other events in the village. Pegswood Parish Council also has its own website at www.parish-council.com/pegswood.

Both the newsletter and the village directory could be available on the internet via the village blog;

<http://pegswoodvp.blogspot.com> and the Parish Councils web site.

LOCAL COMMUNITY FORUM

Pegswood Parish Council is a member of the Morpeth District Community Forum, established as part of the Local Government reorganisation in 2009. Two members of the Parish Council serve on this forum and are aware of the opportunity's to develop and progress activity in Pegswood through the forum.



ENCOURAGING LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

18 **business questionnaires** were collected (from a total of 31 distributed) which was a 60% response. There were a total of 528 employees of whom 138 (26%) were village residents.

The largest business sector was the retail trade, whilst the remainder provide a wide and diverse range of products and services. 60% of businesses identified their market as partly or wholly 'local' and it may be of considerable benefit to provide a **village directory** for increased promotion.



OFFICE AND WORKSHOP ACCOMMODATION

An industrial estate of small units on the northern edge of the village has 63% occupancy, with a variety of businesses and services. Types of business include food outlets, printers, vehicle workshops among many others.

STATISTICS

- 50% of respondents are looking to expand their businesses.
- The average length of time a business has been established in Pegswood is 31 years
- 72% offered training to young people

- Five businesses reported parking and transport issues, but interestingly the Co-op stated that these were no longer issues for its business.



"The best thing is living so close to the countryside yet having the facilities of towns and city close by."