

Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council

Strategic Plan

November 2024



Introduction

What is the purpose of the Strategic Plan?

This Strategic Plan provides a framework for Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council to continue to work in the best interests of all who live or work in the parish. It sets out the Parish Council's 'action plan' for the next three years and includes actions not yet completed from previous years.

The Strategic Plan will assist in informing the funding of a number of projects and help to align delivery to the aims and aspirations of other organisations within the parish.

Why do we need a Strategic Plan?

The Strategic Plan helps to ensure that the Parish Council can take a planned approach on achieving its development priorities; maintaining its existing facilities and services; setting its budgets, prioritising its resources and achieving value for money.

What is our Vision?

To create a vibrant and strong community which supports the needs of residents, businesses and community focused organisations.

Overview of the Parish Council

Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council is responsible for the following facilities and services in the parish:

- Management & maintenance of children's play equipment to the rear of the Village Hall
- Management of allotments
- Provision and emptying of litter and dog waste bins

The Parish Council also looks after the interests of the parish where empowered to do so, bringing any other needs of the parish to the attention of the relevant authority. It responds to consultation documents and requests from a diverse range of other bodies and authorities which includes commenting to the Local Planning Authority, Lichfield District Council, on each and every planning application in the parish.

Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan is being progressed by the Parish Council. This is being created by a team of parish volunteers and evidenced through a number of technical documents and community engagement. The Neighbourhood Plan will deal with land-use planning issues and will seek to protect areas from development and manage change within the parish to 2040. This plan once finalised will be subject to a local referendum. This Strategic Plan will set out a number of additional complementary projects that sit outside of the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Parish Council's Priorities

The following priorities apply during the timeframe of this Strategic Plan:

- Democracy – to give local people a voice
- To work in partnership with Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire County Council and local organisations to build a strong community and maintain community cohesion.
- To provide a range of services to our community and address potential loss of facilities
- To prioritise the physical and mental wellbeing of residents

- To lessen, where possible, the impact of adverse trends, such as surface water flooding following heavy rainfall and increased traffic
- To foster a greater sense of community pride within the parish

What has informed the Plan?

The Parish Council is here to represent the views of the Parish and to undertake local activities in the best interests of the residents of the Parish. This Strategy should therefore be based on knowledge of the views of residents. Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council is a 'precepting authority' which means that it sets its own level of local taxation for local households which is collected as part of the Council Tax. The budget for which the Parish Council has responsibility is therefore paid by local people and accountable to local people. The way that the Parish Council spends this budget is transparent and available on the website but this Strategy helps to explain how the Parish Council makes decisions about financial and other activities. The Parish Council aims to maintain a general reserve to cover unexpected events or emergencies and earmarked reserves for specific projects within the parish.

The following information has informed the identification of projects contained within this Strategy:

- A parish wide household survey was undertaken in 2021. The analysis of this survey was published in 2022. This identified aspects of the parish that parishioners valued, those that needed improvement and new services and facilities that should be pursued.
- A local housing needs assessment was published in 2023. This provides an overview of existing housing stock within the parish and consideration as to whether this stock will meet the needs of local residents to 2040.
- A parish design code was published in 2023. This provides an overview of the distinct character of our villages and seeks to provide guidance for any future development proposals within the parish.
- A number of Neighbourhood Plan events, including presentations to the local community in March 2022 and a drop in session in November 2022, provided an opportunity for parishioners to identify existing issues and to consider options for protecting valued areas and allowing modest growth to meet local parish needs.
- A number of working groups have been established in 2022 which has brought together a number of residents and representatives from influential organisations within the parish to identify issues and aligned projects
- Issues and suggestions are raised by parishioners through direct dialogue with the Parish Council. Any correspondence is discussed by Councillors at regular Parish Council meetings.

Further information can be access at www.mavesynridwareparishcouncil.gov.uk

The parish council will undertake to communicate, consult and engage as outlined in the Communication Policy. This is done through an active website and social media, notice boards and contributions to the Messenger magazine, to reach all residents.

Change the Parish

The Parish Council oversees the production and implementation of this Strategic Plan and has informed achievable actions with timescale and budget planning. The plan is a live document and will be amended as appropriate, as the needs of the community change during this period.

There are a number of key priority areas that the Council considers to be vitally important to parishioners. They also represent the ambition of the Parish Council. Below is an overview of these key priority areas.

1. Road Safety and Road Maintenance throughout our Parish:

The Parish Council will continue to work with Staffordshire County Council and the local police team to ensure that all of our roads in the villages are safe. The Parish Council will also drive initiatives such as a community speed watch, a review of existing traffic calming measures and identifying issues of highways maintenance across the parish. The Parish Council will identify new methods to reduce the risks that unsafe driving causes in our villages. There is limited public transport available and the residents rely on well-maintained roads, particularly in the winter months. The Parish Council will liaise with Staffordshire County Council to ensure the roads are regularly and adequately maintained and explore opportunities to reintroduce community transport and improved connectivity to pedestrians and cyclists to services and facilities beyond the parish boundary.

2. Planning in Our Parish:

The Parish Council will continue to respond to all planning applications within the parish ensuring that a fair and transparent process is followed for all applications. We will continue to work with Lichfield District Council when it comes to planning enforcement and want to ensure that everyone is working within planning laws. The Parish Council will prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan to give us greater control over change within the parish and to provide local policies that ensure any development delivered is of high quality.

3. Biodiversity in our Parish:

The Parish Council plans to develop an environmental strategy that supports biodiversity in our flora and fauna and maintains the historic setting of our villages and surrounding countryside. We will actively seek ways to encourage parishioners to consider the area in which we live and how they can sustainably support it for future generations. This may include planting events, encouraging residents to develop verges as habitats for wildflowers, and community awareness initiatives.

4. Community Engagement:

The Parish Council aims to be the main player in driving communications throughout the parish. This will be through building on the already fantastic links that have been created and introducing new opportunities for collaborative working. The Parish Council will engage with all residents on all pertinent matters and we have very active Councillors who can always be approached as well as the Parish Clerk. The intention is to build and strengthen links, not replace the already great work undertaken by others within the parish.

5. Community Groups:

The Parish Council will continue to support all of our community groups through the Council's grant award process where local groups can apply for some funding for a project that would enhance the

parish. We will also support the groups that we are trustees of through our earmarked reserves providing them with the vital support that they may need throughout the year.

6. Finance, Democracy, Governance and Development:

The Parish Council is wholly committed to ensuring that we act in an open and transparent manner when it comes to the governing of the Council. The Parish Council will strive to improve to ensure that it meets the needs of the residents whilst acting lawfully and in accordance with our Standing Orders. The benefit to residents of this is that you will have a well-organised Parish Council who are there for you. The Council will continue to review all governance documents as and when they need to. The Parish Council will also support the development of their Parish Clerk as well as the Councillors by allocating funds to a training budget each year.

These key areas are supported by the identified projects outlined below:

Project	Progress 2024/25	Aim 2025/26
Strategic Plan	Initial Strategic Plan published in June 2023 and Updated in March 2024	Review and align Strategic Plan with emerging Neighbourhood Plan and other initiatives to provide a strategy in respect of non-land use planning aspirations
Kissing Gate, Church Lane	Kissing gate handed to landowner to install in 2023	Explore cost of installation if landowner unable to progress
Sewage Issues in Hill Ridware	STW modelling commenced and subsequently cancelled	Pursue options with STW to resume modelling works and to resolve ongoing issues with surface water flooding during heavy rainfall periods
Removal of street clutter	N/A	Liaise with SCC Highways to remove old signs and posts
Tree Planting on Verges	Five trees planted on Uttoxeter Road, Hill Ridware	Liaise with SCC and other land owners to secure replacement of planting in grass verges and new tree planting locations
Secure Bus Service	Daily service to Rugeley, Hednesford, Cannock & Uttoxeter secured. Bus shelter in Blithbury repaired	Liaise with SCC Highways & Chase Rider to explore additional services.
Clear drains/Gulleys	None	Clear drains/gulleys/roads as and when appropriate to prevent surface water flooding
Speed Indicator Devices	Consultation identified that residents do not consider speed is an issue within Hill Ridware	N/A
Parish Council website	New domain and website platform purchased	Populate website with important information
Parish Council Newsletter	N/A	Publish and distribute a half yearly Parish Council newsletter

Flood Prevention	Purchased new flood (gel) bags	Review adequacy of flood prevention measures
Open Spaces Committee		
Burial Ground Extension	Discussion with landowners ongoing Pre-application advice received from LDC	Allocate site within Neighbourhood Plan. Cost proposal and consider delivering as PC project
Allotments	N/A	Review allotment agreement and inspections process
Improved maintenance of footpaths within Hill Ridware	New contractor appointed	Review adequacy of new arrangement established in 2024 which includes greater number of cuts to footpaths and allotments
Improve maintenance of Parish-wide PRow	None	Training for residents to maintain PRow with landowner consent
Rewilding/Wildflower meadow planting	N/A	Identify land opportunities in conjunction with Neighbourhood Plan
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group		
Mavesyn Ridware Neighbourhood Plan	Regulation 14 Consultation completed Draft Neighbourhood Plan submitted to LDC Independent Examiner Appointed	Undertake referendum in conjunction with LDC Implement Neighbourhood Plan and utilise in responding to planning application consultations
Convenience Retail	Draft Neighbourhood Plan policy prepared for consultation	Seek opportunities for delivering small convenience retail store as part of proposed housing allocation
Community Spirit Working Group		
Village Entrances	2,000 bulbs planted at village entrances across the parish	Review existing planting in Spring 2025
Village Welcome Signs	N/A	Explore opportunities with Ridware's WI and/or to upgrade existing non-SCC signage
PRow Map	2 nd Ridware Walkers leaflet published	Prepare further PRow leaflets to highlight walks within Parish including one focused on children
Interpretation Boards	N/A	Explore opportunities to deliver a number of interpretation boards within the parish linked to heritage and/or biodiversity
Community Notice Board	New Parish Council noticeboard installed	N/A
Village Hall Playground	Ping Pong table installed Weed suppressant trench installed	Clean play area surface and replace any broken equipment Maintain security of site and safety of existing play equipment

Scarecrow Trail	2 nd scarecrow trail event completed successfully	Scarecrow festival to be delivered with greater number of entrants and public event to tie in with Community Celebration
Best Kept Village Community	BKVC entered Hill Ridware and received 'highly commended' in small village category and 'commended' in Community Spirit	Review entry for villages in 2025
Isolation of Individuals Project	Christmas contact with over 80s (biscuits) and new Community Spirit card printed	Explore additional opportunities/projects to reduce isolation and engender community
Community Garden	Community garden delivered by community groups at Village Hall	

How will this Strategy be monitored?

Frequency of reviews

This strategy will be reviewed at least every six months and will be updated annually according to priorities and circumstances.

Publication of results

The annual review will be available at the annual Parish Meeting; a copy will be made available on the Parish Council website.

How residents can comment

Residents can comment at any of the public sessions of the Parish Council meetings (held during the first 15 minutes of all meetings) and at any time to the Parish Clerk at clerk@mavesynridwareparishcouncil.gov.uk or in writing to Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council, c/o X