

The **GOSFORTH** 2012 Parish Plan



Welcome to
GOSFORTH
Please drive carefully



Gosforth Parish Plan

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1. Objectives of a Parish Plan

Parish Plans are part of the 'Vital Villages' Scheme run by the Countryside Agency. It was launched back in November 2000 as a Government White Paper 'Our Countryside'.

The aim is to

-  Help small rural communities take stock of their parish
-  Identify what they need to revitalise it
-  Enable local people to have a voice in their future
-  Provide support to enable each parish to make its own decisions and implement improvements.

What is a Parish Plan?

-  To show how the residents of the parish feel about the area they reside in.
-  To show what changes people would like to see.
-  To highlight those things of which the residents are most proud.

The document outlines how the community sees itself developing and identifies local issues and opportunities. It also sets out a view of the future and outlines how it can be achieved.

The issues within this document are identified from responses that the residents gave to questionnaires which were circulated throughout the parish. This plan includes a Future Action Plan that prioritises the issues raised and sets out how the Parish Council might work with others to tackle them.

What practical value will the Plan have?

The plan will help the community in a number of ways, as it will identify goals to work towards and help establish priorities for the Parish Council. It will also provide a solid basis for influencing those projects identified in the Parish Plan and give strong support to the organisations within the parish that are conducting improvement projects and initiatives.

Although the Parish Council has played a leading role in helping to draw up the Parish Plan, it is quite clear that community action, involvement and effort will enable, in the future, the people of Gosforth to make a difference and achieve what they want for their Parish.

2. Survey Findings

Five surveys were carried out during 2007 and 2008. One by the Cumbrian Rural Housing Trust and two by the Parish Council, one of which was a precursor to a fully comprehensive survey carried out at the end of 2008. Class 4 of Gosforth primary school carried out a survey in 2007 and a similar questionnaire that was used for the precursor survey was given to the school pupils. In addition a visit was made to the school in order to invite views from the children, all these are summarised in this report. The comprehensive survey consisted of a detailed questionnaire designed mainly to allow for multi choice responses. Every household was issued with a questionnaire and 192 were returned, this was approximately a 30% response. This section of the Parish Plan gives summaries of all the findings from the various surveys and with regards to the fully comprehensive survey, summarises the comments taken from each section of its questionnaire and shows the actual number of responses given to each of the multi choice questions; these numbers are highlighted in text boxes.

2.1 Housing

Housing

Eleven of the comments on the returned questionnaires supported the building of affordable housing;

8 stated that there should only be infill development in the village and 5 that there should be more social housing available. Regarding areas which should be protected, practically every area outside the current village developed area was mentioned as requiring protection from new build. The lack of services and the culture of the village were among the reasons given that there should be no new build.



Would you support new build in and around the village?

Yes - 72; No - 79; Don't know - 32

Are there areas in your opinion which should be protected from new build?

Yes - 78; No- 16; Don't know - 47

The Cumbrian Rural Housing Trust's Survey, which was carried out prior to the Parish Council's survey indicated a demand for housing, including affordable housing, for existing parishioners. The Parish Council's survey indicated a degree of support for affordable housing but it is clear that parishioners wish any new housing to be in-fill development and that there should not be new build outside the current footprint of the village.

The Cumbria Rural Housing Trust concluded from the 263 of their survey forms returned (36.14% of those issued) that there was a need in Gosforth for 40 new houses over the next 5 years of which 17 would be required to be affordable housing.

2.2 Environment

Historical Sites

There is a lot of interest for doing more to promote the heritage of the parish.

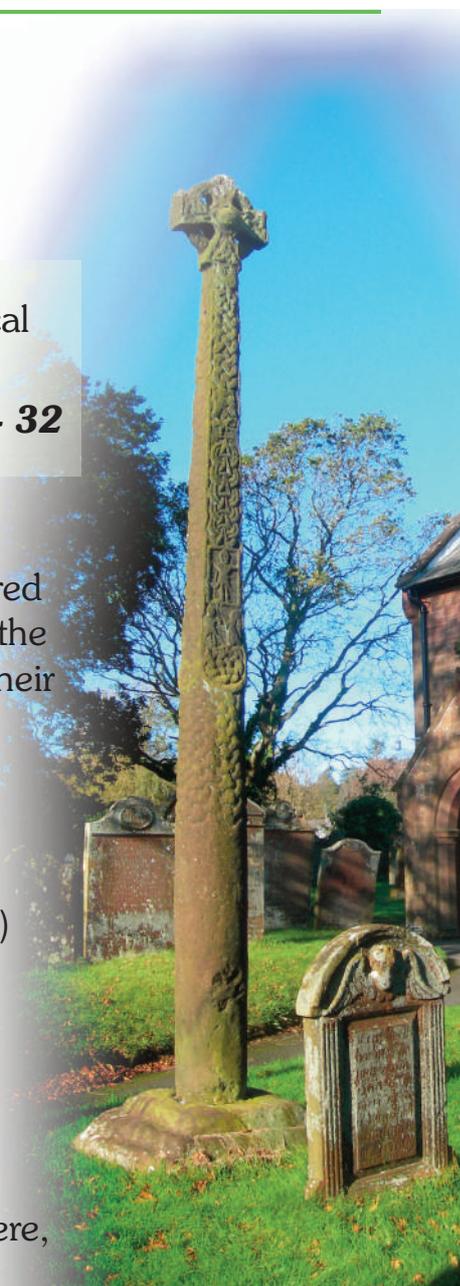
Should more be made of our Viking Cross and other local features to promote tourism in our area?

Yes - 120; No - 35; Don't know - 32

Churchyard

The questionnaire asked parishioners to state their preferred options for increasing the capacity of the graveyard from the following courses of action and to rank them in order of their 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th choices.

- A Carry out the surveys mentioned and extend the churchyard (The surveys referred to were on land between Spout House and the existing churchyard)
- B Reuse the older part of the Churchyard which is permissible
- C Find and purchase a site for a new burial ground somewhere between Seascale and Gosforth
- D When no new grave spaces are available in the Churchyard have future burials carried out elsewhere, which could be some miles from the Parish.



	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
Option A	104	26	9	11
Option B	55	39	26	12
Option C	19	41	53	6
Option D	7	3	19	86

it is noted that the numbers do not total the number of returned surveys as some responders only indicated a first choice.

Some comments were made and these included suggestions regarding cremation being the future option for parishioners and objections to the reuse of the older part of the graveyard.

Landscape

Although there was general satisfaction with the landscape the survey pinpointed two “black spots” which should be addressed. The two being the ex shop “Kat & Kids” and the lay by near Harecroft on the A595. In addition a number of suggestions were made which would improve the area. These included a slate stone notice to indicate the entrance to the National Park, more floral displays and a garden for the elderly. There was concern expressed that the authorities do not always respond to local needs. A sign indicating the Wellington area of the parish was requested and more attention to the maintenance of the roads, drains and gulleys was called for.

Do you feel that the authorities do a good job maintaining the landscape?

Yes - 113; No - 36; Don't know - 32

Do you think there are areas in the parish which can be improved?

Yes - 58; No - 22; Don't know - 55

Wildlife

Most people do not have concerns regarding the wildlife or their habitat however 24 stated that they had concerns regarding the protection of red squirrels.

Have you any concerns regarding wildlife or their habitat?
Yes - 36; No - 141



Access to the Countryside

Many comments which were made in this section included making maps and guides available, and there were complaints of the muddy state of some of the rights of way.

Do you access the countryside?

Yes - 166; No - 12

Do you find the public rights of way and bridleways well signposted?

Yes - 150; No - 15

Do you find the public rights of way and bridleways well maintained?

Yes - 99; No - 30; Don't know - 33

How do you access the public rights of way and bridleways?

**On Foot - 159; Cycle - 41; Horseback - 4; Wheelchair- 1;
Pushchair or Pram - 12**

Do you feel the public rights of way and bridleways are safe for children to explore?

Yes - 91; No - 23; Don't know - 56

Views from the Schoolchildren

Prior to this survey, Class 4 at Gosforth School as part of their local geography studies, did a survey which considered the needs of the village and the surrounding area; 27 questionnaires were completed and returned. 16 questions were asked and they indicated that:

-  The Lakeland Habit and the Bank were the most used businesses by parishioners
-  There was a high demand for the Post Office to be reinstated
-  There were a great many positive aspects about living in Gosforth
-  There was a demand for plastic and cardboard recycling points in the village.
-  The children's play area should be upgraded
-  The public toilets could be improved
-  CCTV cameras are not required to curb vandalism
-  There is a need for more pavements and there is considerable inconsiderate parking
-  There is a demand for a youth or similar club.

Nuclear Waste

Opinions on this subject were somewhat divided, however the comments strongly suggested that there should be tangible benefits coming to the local community should a waste repository be constructed in the parish. The main ones being: 29 called for a reduction in council tax; 19 for road improvements; 16 that the benefits should be localised to the parish and the immediate surrounding area; 16 that there should be a scheme guaranteeing property values.

If the British Geological Society identifies a site in the parish as being suitable for a nuclear waste repository what do you think your reaction would be to such a development?

***Totally opposed – 60; Object – 25; Don't Know – 22;
Acceptance – 49; Fully Support – 26***

Refuse Collection/Recycling/Litter Bins

There was generally satisfaction with the waste services however it was felt that they could be improved by introducing cardboard, plastic and waste oil collections in the parish. It was also felt that the positioning of dog poo bins could be improved.

Are doorstep and recycling services adequate? ***Yes – 133; No – 48***
Do you use the recycling services in the car park? ***Yes – 125; No – 35***
Should there be additional recycling services in the parish? ***Yes – 94; No – 34***
Are you satisfied with the litter bins which are provided? ***Yes – 131; No – 26***



2.3 Roads and Transport

Public Transport

Only a small percentage of parishioners use public transport but certain services may not be publicised sufficiently, such as Rural Wheels, and existing services are not always timed to be most suitable.

Do you use public or socially provided transport? **Yes – 28; No – 151**

Transport used on a regular basis:

Stagecoach/3D/AA Services – 12; Dial a ride taxi – 0;

Muncaster Microbus – 13; Gosforth Outriders – 4;

Social car service – 10; Rural Wheels – 0

Do you require information on the services available? **Yes – 11; No – 91**

Transport to Sellafield (for Sellafield employees)

The majority of the responses on this issue indicated they travel alone in their own car while a fifth indicate they car share and another fifth cycle. A large percentage of all those travelling to Sellafield indicated that they would cycle on a frequent basis if a dedicated cycleway was provided.

Modes of transport used:

Own car alone – 36; Car share – 12; Bicycle – 12

Would you cycle on a frequent basis if there was a dedicated cycleway?

Yes – 38; No – 12

On Street Parking

There were mixed views on the enforcement of yellow lines in the village. No clear conclusion can be drawn from the data as there were conflicting views.

Pavement parking remains an issue for the village. No specific locations were highlighted.

Lack of footpaths through the village is a significant issue.

Do you think the parking regulations should be enforced more stringently?

Yes – 129; No – 52

Should alterations be made to the yellow lines?

Yes – 74; No – 86

Do you have concerns regarding parking in the village?

Yes – 88; No – 48

Village Car Park

Overall, the responses indicated that there is satisfaction in the general upkeep of the car park and there was significant support for continued free parking to be provided. There was also support for taking any opportunity that arises for accepting ownership of the car park.

Do you think the Parish Council keeps the car park in a reasonable state?

Yes - 181; No - 10

Do you think the car park should remain free?

Yes - 153; No - 5

Should the Parish Council take full ownership provided minimal cost was involved?

Yes - 99; No - 15; Don't know - 52

Public Toilets

There appears to be generally satisfaction with the way the Parish Council manages the toilets however there was concern expressed with the cleanliness and opening hours.

Should the Parish Council continue to manage the toilets?

Yes - 168; No - 12

Does the Parish Council manage them adequately?

Yes - 70; No - 12; Don't know - 92

Lighting

The majority of the replies indicated that parishioners considered the lighting satisfactory. One place in need of additional illumination was identified; this was on Wasdale Road at Leskew cottage. There was concern regarding delays in attending to lights which had gone out.

Do you think the lighting in the village should be improved?

Yes - 64; No - 102



Village Speed Limit

A reduced speed limit in the village is strongly supported.

There is a lack of support for enhancing the speed calming measures.

Would you support a 20mph speed limit in the village?

Yes – 142; No – 42; Don't know - 5

Would you support further traffic calming in order to reduce speed?

Yes – 71; No – 101; Don't know - 13

Road Safety

A significant number of black spots for both drivers and pedestrians were identified. Many of these were common for both types of road users.

In particular the survey responses identified Whitecroft and the Shop/Bank/Bakery areas as black spots.



2.4 Community and Social Contacts

Democracy

A large majority of the parishioners knew how to contact the Parish Council however many complained about the lack of feedback from the Parish Council. There was indication that information on the Parish Council should be circulated by e-mail.

Do you know how to contact the Parish Council?	Yes - 146; No - 29
If you have contacted the Parish Council were you satisfied with the outcome?	Yes - 29; No - 22
Would you be interested in receiving Parish Council information by e-mail?	Yes - 38; No - 62

Community Information

It would appear that community information is well publicised in “What’s On” and that the village notice boards are main sources of information.

Do you think social activities are advertised enough in the village?	Yes - 131; No - 21; Don't know - 25
Which of the following do you make use of to obtain community information?	“What’s On” - 120; Village Notice Boards - 124; Gosforth Web Sites - 26; Information in the Library - 52; Whitehaven News - 109; Church Magazine - 83; School Newsletter - 17; Word of Mouth - 106; None 2; Other - 5
Do you think more information should be available?	Yes - 20; No - 89

Village Halls/Community Buildings

These appear well used and there is overall satisfaction regarding their condition. The survey did indicate 10 demands for more exercise type activities.

Do you partake in any village activities which involve using the following?	Village Hall - 113; St Mary’s Room - 64; Methodists Room - 64; Other - 7
Are you satisfied with the facilities the buildings offer?	Yes - 121; No - 12
Is there a social activity you would like to see in the village which isn’t already catered for?	Yes - 28; No - 85
Is there an existing activity which you are unable to partake in and would like to?	Yes - 12; No - 80

Playing Field

There were 21 recurring comments saying that improvements to the children's play area be made. Other requests included 4 for the provision of a tennis court and 3 for additional seating.

Would you like to see and support additional activities on the playing field? **Yes - 62; No - 11; Don't know - 72**



Matters raised by the schoolchildren

In addition to receiving the results of the school survey the Parish Plan team visited the school and heard from each class their views on the parish. Most of the matters the children raised fell into the wish list category and others indicated negative aspects. Some of these are listed here:

Wish List

Bowling facilities	Toy shop
Cricket coaching	Veg & Fruit shop
New field	Dancing lessons
Football coaching	More play areas
Garden centre	BMX track
Baseball coaching	More pavements
Skate park	Tennis club
Swimming pool	Graffiti wall
Crazy golf	Music lessons
Horseriding	Cycleways
Nature area	

Negative Aspects

- Dogs on the field
- No venture equipment
- Graffiti
- Rubbish left on play park
- Teenagers present
- School pond
- Dog poo on school field
- Bad parking
- Dangers for pedestrians

There were many calls for sports coaching from the youngest children in the school. The children believed that we lived in a pleasant countryside area but that the downside was inconsiderate parking, lack of pavements and safe cycling routes.

2.5 Police and Crime

Crime and Safety

Despite many people claiming to be in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, on enquiring with the police these have lapsed into a dormant state, there however is a substantial demand for these to be reintroduced. There was a range of issues regarding anti-social behaviour commented on, these were mostly associated with behaviour in the square at weekends.

Are you part of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme? **Yes - 51; No - 121**
Do you wish to be part of a neighbourhood scheme? **Yes - 58; No - 51**
Do you think the CCTV camera in the village is effective? **Yes - 41; No - 54**

2.6 Health and Social Services

Health and Personal Care

Most parishioners use their own cars to access health services but there were comments regarding the parking difficulties at the Seascale surgery and the West Cumberland hospital.

How do you access your Health Care services?

**By own car - 169; Friend's car - 26; Social Car Service - 12;
Public Transport - 4; Taxi service - 0; Gosforth Outriders - 3;
Rural Wheels - 0; Bicycle - 6; Walking - 3**

Carers

Reference to “Care” and “Tutor” Banks were made against the comments in this section. The Bradbury House Blengdale Day Centre received a positive commendation for the service it provides.

Do you care for a sick or disabled person?

Yes - 18; No- 159



Childcare

The vast majority of parishioners indicated they had no need for additional childcare services.

Do you have a need for childcare services which are not provided locally?

Yes - 4; No - 161

Education and Training

Parishioners identified twenty five subjects they would like to have available locally, some of which are already available.

Are you attending any Adult Education class?

Yes - 11; No - 177

Telephone

There was little evidence that the residents use the public telephone box in the car park but almost all the replies indicated that parishioners consider it an essential public service for the parish. Mobile telephone reception was reported as being satisfactory by most residents although some did not think so. It is assumed this is due to the topographic nature of the parish resulting in the reception being patchy in certain places.

Do you consider yourself a regular user of a Gosforth telephone box?

Yes - 1; No - 102

Do you consider a telephone box an essential public service for the parish?

Yes - 146; No - 23

Do you have a satisfactory mobile telephone reception where you live?

Yes - 128; No - 36; Don't use a mobile - 18

Internet

Evidence suggests that 70% of the households are connected to the internet and although it is mainly being used for sourcing information and e-mailing about 50% of those connected are using it for shopping purposes.

Is your household connected to the Internet?

Yes - 133; No - 48

Range of services used:

Shopping - 88; Sourcing Information - 125; E-Mailing - 118; Other - 19

Library

The library appears to be well used for a wide range of services.

Do you make use of the library?

Yes - 111; No - 77

Range of main library services used:

***Borrowing adult books - 90; Borrowing children's books - 20;
Reference purposes - 49; Internet access - 17;
Borrowing DVDs - 12; Reading Parish Council minutes - 8;
Reading notices - 33; Browsing - 37;***

Social Needs

The comments arising from this section included 3 for more seating for the elderly and 20 for a youth club for the teenagers.

Volunteering

Although there appears to be a considerable number of people helping with activities there is a need to attract more.

Are you involved in an activity which suffers due to a lack of volunteers?

Yes - 23; No - 130



2.7 Businesses and the Economy

Tourism

Interviews were carried out with 3 business owners, a hotelier, a general store & cafe proprietor and a gift shop & outdoor clothing shop owner.

In summary, overnight accommodation during the week is dominated by contractors and others with business at Sellafield. Only about 15% of local hotel business is due to tourism, that being mainly at weekends when occupancy is as low as 35%.

Cumbria Tourist Board surveys have indicated a high percentage of visitors to the Lakes come from the surrounding counties, so marketing has been tried by the hotelier with some success over in the North East region of England. Long weekend breaks are popular and visitors have commented that Gosforth is a convenient centre for fell walking and visiting the two main local attractions; the “Ratty” railway and Muncaster.

Fell walking appears to be the dominant activity for day and overnight visitors. Visitors to the village itself fall into the older age group known as the “silver surfers” as opposed to family groups and younger adults.

All business owners interviewed reported a good incidence of return visitors. The general store & cafe reported that approximately 30% of its business during the summer is due to tourists, of that 75% were overnight visitors and 25% were day visitors. The gift shop reported that 50% of its business was due to tourists, equally split between overnight and day visitors.

The business owners made a number of specific comments, such as:

-  Retail trade due to tourists increases by up to 40% during the summer months.
-  Occasionally campers cannot find a site with spaces in the local area.
-  The three peaks challenge brings in additional business as does Scafell in its own right.
-  The car park is a major asset for the local shops.
-  The “Favourite View” TV competition which Wasdale won brought in extra business to the parish.
-  Visitors are now being driven up into West Cumbria due to overcrowding in the South Lakes area of the Lake District.
-  Working with the Cumbria Tourist Board appears to help increase the numbers of tourists and visitors coming to our area.

Local Businesses

The comments in this section indicated that there are people who may be unaware of some of the services available locally.

If you are an employer with a business in the parish
how many people do you employ who live outside to parish? **14**

If you run a business are there incentives the Parish
Council could do to sustain your business? **Yes - 1; No - 4; Don't Know - 6**

Do you rely on a business within the parish
for your employment? **Yes - 6; No - 20**

Shops

In this section 7 comments called for improved stock in the main village outlet, others for making the shops more wheelchair friendly and that parking abuse in certain places makes access to outlets difficult.

Also were comments regarding the lack of a Post Office (89); Plumber (14); Butcher (13); Electrician (11); Doctor's Surgery (7); Chemist (7); Joiner (4) and Dry Cleaning Service

Do you have difficulty accessing any of the local shops? **Yes - 16; No - 159**

Are there any types of outlets you would like to see in the parish? **Yes - 103; No - 32**

Non-Domicile Property

Questionnaire being completed by:

Those having their principle residence elsewhere **2**

Owners of property being let **For holiday lets - 1; For non holiday lets - 5**

2.8 General Comments

A wide range of topics were give by residents as general comments. They were:

- 🦢 Repository benefits for locals
- 🦢 Later opening times at the bank
- 🦢 Stressing importance of village shop
- 🦢 Road safety paramount - Hardinghill and Eskdale junctions
- 🦢 Music at Wheatsheaf too loud
- 🦢 Questionnaire waste of time as 'nowt will get done'
- 🦢 Surprised at no mention of Bradbury House Blengdale Day Centre in questionnaire
- 🦢 Arts Out West
- 🦢 Low cost housing for locals
- 🦢 Meeting place in library
- 🦢 Drainage at park
- 🦢 Lion and Lamb shelter
- 🦢 Globe shutters
- 🦢 Bingo
- 🦢 Film nights
- 🦢 Encourage more shops
- 🦢 Newbuild for nursery (2)
- 🦢 Parking outside school dangerous
- 🦢 'Shackles off' facility like Seascale (2)
- 🦢 Farming community tidy up - roadsides/ hedges/ gutters
- 🦢 Stop flooding at Ellerslie
- 🦢 More for retired males
- 🦢 Support for Bradbury House and Bradbury House Blengdale Day Centre facility
- 🦢 Roads in disrepair
- 🦢 Footpaths not cleared of leaves and debris - School to Wellington
- 🦢 Cycle paths - Gosforth to Holmrook/ Calderbridge/ Seascale
- 🦢 Approach to Gosforth from Holmrook not well signposted for visitors
- 🦢 Could the parish reside outside the LDNP
- 🦢 Poo bins on playing field
- 🦢 More frequent bus service
- 🦢 Dental surgery attached to doctor's surgery
- 🦢 Questionnaire distributed to gain ideas/benefits regarding nuclear dump
- 🦢 Windscale Club/Tennis courts for use by those not employed at BNFL

2.9 Information from the Initial Surveys

Prior to the full questionnaire being circulated a newsletter informing residents of the survey was circulated which asked for responses to three straightforward questions; see below. During the same period a similar newsletter was circulated to all the pupils at Gosforth School which asked identical questions. These were intended to stimulate interest in the preparation of the parish plan and to assist the working group prepare questions for the final questionnaire. The responses to the first newsletter are shown in black below and the responses to the school's are shown in red.

What do you like about Gosforth?

Location	12	1
People	22	1
Shops	9	8
Free car park	2	
Parish Council	1	
Size of Village	2	
Safe place to live	2	
Quiet	3	1
Clean	1	1
Grassy areas near estate entrances	1	1
Library	2	
Sports facilities and new pavilion	1	3
Church	1	2
Attractive Area		1
Good community spirit		1
Cafe		1
School play area		1
Gosforth Public Hall		2
Organised Sport		1
War Memorial		1
Toilets		1
Bank		1

What don't you like about Gosforth?

Traffic speed/parking	27	7
Noise from pubs	4	
Rubbish	5	2
Lack of Post Office	6	
Poor public transport	5	
Lack of or state of footpaths	4	3
Demise of shops/facilities	2	1
Too many pubs	2	
Decaying buildings	2	2
Increase in houses		
Dog mess		3
Vandalism		1
Lack of sporting options		3
Toilets		1
Lack of Play park		1

What would you like to change?

Behaviour of motorists	2	
Reinstate Post Office	10	
Cycle path to Seascale	3	
Slow the speed of traffic on Hardingill	1	
Improve public transport	2	
Bus service to come through village and turn round at Meadowfield	1	
Increase footpaths	6	2
Increase recycle facilities for cardboard/plastic	2	
Secure bicycle parking in car park	1	
Longer opening hours in library	1	
Affordable/council housing	1	
Greater local police presence	1	
Tidy up old pet shop	5	
Ban tacky Christmas decorations	1	
More shops/facilities/Drs/vets/pharmacy/petrol station	1	
Traffic warden	1	
Remove roundabout	1	

More sports/equipment on playing field	1	2
More young people (under 50) volunteering in community events	1	
Play area for young children	2	4
Disabled parking outside shop	1	
Publish Parish Council accounts on noticeboard	1	
Battery recycle facility	1	
20 mph speed limit	1	2
No to Nirex	1	
No to any new build until local amenities are improved	1	
Youth Club		1
Spray Paint Wall		1
Swimming Pool		2
Reinstate Tennis Court		2
Cycleways		1
Climbing frame		2
Music lessons		1
Cinema		1
Mini Bowling Alley		1
More plays in the public hall		1
Bumps (BMX track)		1



3. Appendices

3.1 Parish information

The parish of Gosforth lies approximately 12 miles south of Whitehaven in West Cumbria, it is within 2 miles of the Irish Sea and the boundary of the Lake District National Park passes through the parish. The village of Gosforth along with much of the parish lies within the National Park and is subject to the planning policies of the National Park. The parish is the natural gateway to two of the well known Lake District valleys, Wasdale with the famous Wastwater Lake and Eskdale with its narrow gauge railway. The parish has 563 households and an adult population of 1025, the vast majority living within the village and the remainder on farmsteads or isolated dwellings. Within the village there are two churches; one St Mary's, Church of England, surrounded by a graveyard and the other a Methodist Church. There is a primary school currently with 90 pupils, a purpose built nursery that can accommodate up to 45 pre school children, an extended care nursing home with 18 rooms and an attached day centre for the elderly, a village hall and library, a HSBC bank and a general store. In addition there are two hotels, several public houses providing accommodation, cafes and retail outlets. Sport and leisure facilities are accommodated for on the playing field which hosts rugby, soccer, cricket, a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) and a well equipped play area. The scouts have their own facilities adjacent to the school. There are many clubs, groups and societies in the parish with some having been in existence for over 70 years; they range from the Women's Institute to an Amateur Dramatics Society.



The origins of Gosforth go back to Viking and Roman times. It is alleged that the present St Mary's Church is the seventh church to be built on that site and many ancient features can be seen in the church and its graveyard such as a Viking cross, hogback tomb stones and a carving of a green man. It is believed that the name Gosforth has been derived from the migrating geese which once frequented the area, however reared geese were also driven through the parish to a market near the village.

Modern day Gosforth has developed due to the proximity of the nuclear site at Sellafield, particularly between the 1960s and 1980s when there was housing development to accommodate an influx of nuclear technical and professional staff. There is a chalet park adjoining the village which was developed in the 1950s and contains approximately 80 homes, many of the residents there have chosen this area as a suitable place to come to live in their retirement. There are a few social houses, most in the past have been transferred to private occupier ownership however there are 10 bungalows, run by a housing association, close to the village centre for elderly residents. There are few second homes in the parish despite being in the National Park however starter homes for young families has been a major problem in the parish for many years.



A recent profile report on the area involving Gosforth Ward issued in 2010 carried out by Action for Communities in Cumbria made a number of comparisons between Gosforth Ward, the whole of Cumbria and the North West of England, these included:

	<i>Gosforth Ward</i>	<i>Whole of Cumbria</i>	<i>The North West of England</i>
Population at a working age	54.7%	59.4%	61.6%
Population at a pensionable age	31.0%	23.3%	19.5%
Population receiving Job Seekers allowance or Incapacity benefit	4.3%	9.6%	12.8%
Households with no car or van	10.6%	24.4%	30.2%
Detached houses	57.0%	27.4%	18.5%

Services available from outside the parish include post office, surgery, pharmacy, Catholic Church and railway station at Seascale which is three miles from the centre of the parish. There are secondary schools at Millom (21 miles) and Egremont (7miles). A District Hospital providing A & E facilities is at Whitehaven (12 miles). A bus service runs through the parish from Whitehaven to Seascale and on to Muncaster. The A595 road runs closely past the village and the M6 can be joined at junction 36 near Kendal (55 miles) or at junction 40 near Penrith (53 miles).

Population and Housing figures are taken from the 2011 register of electors.

Gosforth Ward includes Wasdale parish and part of Ponsonby parish. As these two areas have a combined total adult population of about 160 they have a minor influence on the figures in the table above.

3.2 History of Parish Plans

This is the fifth parish plan produced by Gosforth Parish Council in recent years, the first in 1979 when a “Gosforth Village Study” was published shortly after Denton Park and the second stage of Meadowfield estate were completed. It was the result of a questionnaire which was delivered to all residents of the parish over the age of 12, in all 980 questionnaires were distributed and there was a 80% return. This Study gave an outline of the parish, its population and how it had developed over the years. At that time one in four of the population was retired, unemployment was 2% and 140 children attended Gosforth School. Among the things the study indicated was that it was the wish of the residents that the growth in population of the village should be stabilised to regain a “natural balance in the community”, however a need for bungalows for the elderly was identified.

Pre-School groups were in existence at that time and were being run in the Scout Hut. The study also called for improving the play area adjacent to the playing field and one in three of the returning questionnaires called for the provision of a bowling green. Highest on the list for additional shops in the village were a hairdressers and a bakery. Since then additional houses have been built but at a much slower rate than just prior to the study, bungalows for the elderly have been built, Pre-School facilities have developed to the stage that a purpose built unit has recently been completed. Unfortunately facilities on the play area continued to decline for a number of years however a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) has now been provided and recent improvements to the play area have been completed. Land for a bowling green was identified but as Seascale had developed one the idea of a bowling green in Gosforth was dropped. Two different hairdressing businesses have opened shop in the village since the study but have found it more practical to either operate as a mobile operation or elsewhere. A hobby shop, two cafes and a bakery have opened for business since that study.

The next “Gosforth Plan” was issued in 1988, it was the result of a consultative process and was prepared and modelled on the way the Lake District Special Planning Board present their Settlement Plans. The input to it was almost entirely the views of the parish councillors at that time. This plan goes into some detail regarding the parking and traffic difficulties in the village, it does however mention the then recently installed footpath between the school and Row Lane. Among the recommendations in it are provision for the building of sheltered accommodation for the elderly as well as an Abbeyfield home, mains gas supply and the protection of a number of named “Green” areas. As mentioned before bungalows for the elderly have been built, a purpose Abbeyfield home has been built, mains gas is now available in the village and none of the “Green” areas have been encroached on with regards to new build with the exception of the Abbeyfield home which is on part of the Glebe field and can be considered “in-fill”.



The third Parish Plan was produced in 1998 and again was the result of a questionnaire delivered to each household. 550 questionnaires were issued and 70% were returned. Parishioners should not underestimate the work some parish councillors do in preparing these plans. It was estimated that the 1998 plan had 72 questions; many of which had several sub questions which resulted in 27,720 answers to analyse. The survey produced 35 recommendations for the plan; those which have had positive results either through the efforts of the Parish Council or others are:

- 🐦 A Housing survey - *Now completed.*
- 🐦 Maintain free parking – *This has been retained.*
- 🐦 Introduction of a Post Bus to Wasdale – *Introduced on trial but later withdrawn, however it has been replaced by a dialup taxi service.*
- 🐦 Community support for more social transport – *Abbeyfield bus made available for community use.*
- 🐦 Improvements to bus services – *Bus timetable improved.*
- 🐦 Develop sporting facilities – *Coaching during school holidays now available.*
- 🐦 Internet availability in the library – *Now connected.*

When this plan was reviewed in 2004 the parish council “decided that it was unnecessary to repeat a questionnaire exercise as the amount of effective change was considered insufficient to have a real influence on the situation that prevailed in 1998”. The 2004 review then produced a further parish plan. It clearly indicates improvements which had taken place and those which were in progress.

Outstanding among them are:

- 🐦 Ring fencing funds to resurface the car park – *A project which is now completed.*
- 🐦 Traffic calming measures introduced within the village and outside the school - *These have now been installed at Hardingill, the square and outside the school.*
- 🐦 Progress regarding replacing the pavilion on the playing field – *Now complete.*
- 🐦 Village web site – *Now established.*

Not mentioned in this plan but annotated notes added to it indicated the setting up of a first responders group and the introduction of the air ambulance service - *Both now available to the parish.*

3.3 Recent developments

Since the work started on this parish plan progress has been made achieving improvements for the parish, many of these were identified in the survey and some have come about due to new circumstances arising. These include:

-  Provision of a purpose designed and built Nursery for pre-school children. The facilities provide full day care and education for children from 4 months to 4 years of age. Additional services include Out of School services (breakfast, after school and holiday clubs) for primary school age children. Gosforth Pre-School Music group operate from the premises and there is a monthly Health Visitor drop in session.
-  Complete removal and replacement of play equipment on the playing field for younger children. This play area is now designated as a dog restricted area.
-  A decision has now been taken by the church authorities that when the existing area of the churchyard being use for burials is full, then the policy for further burials, should be to pursue using unmarked areas of the older part of the graveyard, although this does not preclude physically extending the graveyard at sometime in the future.
-  The site identified near the centre of the village which was in need of improvement has now been developed as a private dwelling and regular maintenance of the lay-by near Harecroft is now being carried out.
-  There is now a plastic bottle recycling capability in the car park alongside the other recycling facilities.
-  Although there are spots where there is no longer street lighting the lights along the main street have been upgraded.
-  The county council have now given priority to the provision of a cycleway to Seascale in their forward budget and Sustrans continue to provide work in kind in support of the project.
-  Government guidelines regarding speed limits have now changed so a 20mph speed limit within the village has become more probable.
-  The parish council has initiated the publication of a quarterly Parish Newsletter.
-  The parish council has now taken possession of a plot of land last used by the county council as a highways storage area on the winding up of the gravel pit charity.
-  Projecting the reinstatement of the footbridge over the Bleng river in the Blengdale forest and the establishment of improved access to and within this forest is ongoing.
-  Upgrading of the broadband service to the parish.

4. FUTURE ACTION PLAN

As a result of the survey carried out and prevailing circumstances the Parish Council has adopted this plan as part of its future strategy.

Objective Ref	Parish Councillor's Ranking Score ¹	Public Survey Importance ²	Work Stream Description	Estimated Cost ³	Target Short Term Goals (0-12 months)	Target Medium Term Goals (12-24 months)	Target Long Term Goals (24-36 months)
1	188	High (Roads & Transport)	Cycleway to Seascale	£	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help facilitate the funding application. 2. Work with Seascale Parish Council, Copeland BC, Cumbria CC and Sustrans to identify and agree the final route. 3. 'Ring fence' £500 of funding for the cycleway. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to monitor and encourage progress. 	
2	158	High (Environment)	Promote Tourism inc. Guidebook for Visitors	£	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure 'Guidebook for Visitors' is available in Cumbrian Tourist Information centres and includes ref. to Viking Cross and a local services directory. 		
3	157	High (Roads & Transport)	Enforce parking regulations	£	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map out existing parking regulations in Gosforth. 2. Identify areas where existing road markings and signs need repainted / repaired. 3. Inform Cumbria CC of the areas identified in 2 and agree a completion date for the works. 4. Make contact with the local constabulary and Copeland Borough Council to seek advice on enforcing parking regulations. 5. Produce draft Traffic Management Plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All road markings clearly marked. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scheme in place to enforce parking regulations

Objective Ref	Parish Councillor's Ranking Score ¹	Public Survey Importance ²	Work Stream Description	Estimated Cost ³	Target Short Term Goals (0-12 months)	Target Medium Term Goals (12-24 months)	Target Long Term Goals (24-36 months)
4	156	High (Roads & Transport)	20 mph speed limit	£	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark up a plan of Gosforth showing the boundary of the 20mph speed limit. 2. Discuss and agree the plan with CCC. 3. Agree a completion date for implementation of the 20mph speed limit. 	1. 20mph speed limit in force.	
5	136	High (Roads & Transport)	More pavements and inconsiderate parking	£	1. Identify areas where introduction of pavements would significantly improve safety (take advice from subject matter experts).	1. Identify and secure funding routes.	1. New pavements constructed in identified areas
6	135	Low (Environment)	Floral displays & garden for the elderly	££	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify entry and exit points to the village where floral display 'baskets' could be located. 2. Obtain an estimate for installing, filling and maintaining floral baskets. 	1. Floral baskets in place at entry and exit points to the village.	
7	-	-	Transfer of car park & toilets to Parish Council	££	1. Continue negotiations with Copeland Borough Council for transfer of ownership.	1. Transfer of ownership complete.	
8	-	-	Additional recycling facilities available in the village (cardboard & batteries)	£	1. Assess the feasibility of additional recycling facilities.	1. If feasible, new recycling facilities in place.	
9	-	-	Broadband upgrade	£	1. Provide support to Brian Kennish and also a single point of contact within the Parish Council.		

Objective Ref	Parish Councillor's Ranking Score ¹	Public Survey Importance ²	Work Stream Description	Estimated Cost ³	Target Short Term Goals (0-12 months)	Target Medium Term Goals (12-24 months)	Target Long Term Goals (24-36 months)
10	117	Low (Roads & Transport)	Publicise Public Transport	£	1. Ensure all modes of transport into and out of Gosforth are clearly displayed in the village.	1. Update the information.	
11	115	Low (Police & Crime)	Neighbourhood Watch	£	1. Use the parish magazine to publicise how the scheme works.		
12	113	Low (Roads & Transport)	Improve the toilets	£	1. Produce a long term maintenance plan (activities, estimated costs and execution plan).	1. Implement maintenance plan.	
13	105	High (Community & Social Contacts)	Sport Coaching for Youngsters	£	1. Working with local organisations clearly identify what is available now and to whom. 2. Identify viability of filling any shortfalls.		
14	102	Not specifically covered.	Reinstate the Post Office	£	1. Identify the potential 'blockers' for reinstatement of the post office. 2. Identify viable options for reinstatement.		
15	-	High (Housing)	Protect areas from New Build	£	1. Identify any protected areas in the parish plan. 2. Publicise the protected areas in the parish magazine.		
16	-	High (Environment)	Nuclear Waste	£	1. Begin to identify and clearly describe the pros and cons (ensuring neutrality) of a potential nuclear waste repository being located in the parish. 2. Begin to share the information with the local community.		

Objective Ref	Parish Councillor's Ranking Score ¹	Public Survey Importance ²	Work Stream Description	Estimated Cost ³	Target Short Term Goals (0-12 months)	Target Medium Term Goals (12-24 months)	Target Long Term Goals (24-36 months)
17	-	-	Blengdale Crossings Project	£	1. Secure funding to develop Blengdale. 2. Install bridges across the River Bleng and Scalderskew Beck.	1. Scope of work identified and project plan drafted	1. Work initiated.
18	-	-	Footpath to Boonwood	££	1. Obtain permission from land owners.	1. Footpath in operation	

Notes:

- 1 This describes the perceived importance and achievability of each work stream to Gosforth Parish Councillors. No score indicates this was added by the Parish Council at a later date.
- 2 This describes the relative importance to Gosforth households and is based on a survey carried out in 2008. The survey consisted of a detailed questionnaire designed to allow multi choice responses. 192 questionnaires were returned which represents approx. 30% of those issued. Results of the survey are summarised in the Gosforth Parish Plan section 2.

High = Strong concern / opinions
Low = No major concerns / opinions

Text in brackets identifies the section of the Parish Plan where the High / Low assessment is taken.
- 3 This is the estimated cost to the Parish Council and has been included to assist in assessing the viability of the work streams and provide an indication of funding requirements.

££££ = Greater than £10k
£££ = £5k to £10k
££ = £1k to £5k
£ = Less than £1k

5. Acknowledgements

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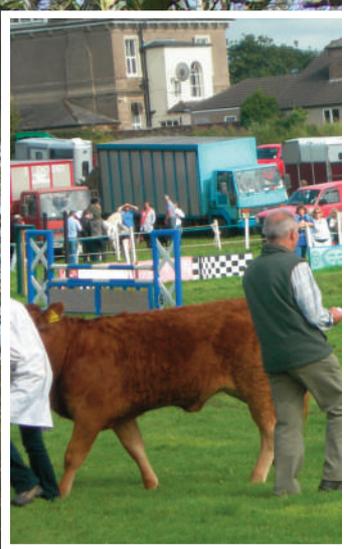
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