



Central Gowy (South)
Neighbourhood
Development Plan

Document 2 - Supporting Evidence

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1 Introduction

This document provides background information for the Central Gowy (South) area Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). It contains:

- Section 2 - A description of **the Area** covered by the NDP, including boundaries, parishes, sustainability and community facilities.
- Section 2 - A statement of the **Evidence** used to develop the NDP, and how that was **analysed** and used.
- Section 4 - The key outcomes of the various **Community Engagement** activities carried out during the NDP preparation to understand the views and needs of our community.
- Section 5 - The Landscape, Local Character and Environment of the NDP Area.
- Section 6 - **Population, Housing, and Health** provides an assessment of the social composition of the community.
- Section 7 - **Employment** - an appreciation of the economic activity within the area.
- Section 7 - A description of the **Infrastructure** of the Area, including Transport, Traffic, Utilities and Leisure facilities.
- Section 8 - A summary of the **Commercial activities** carried out in the Area.
- Section 10 - A summary of Communication facilities.

Appendices provide further information on these aspects, including detailed consultation results, sustainability appraisal, census data analysis and Area maps.

The results of external screening of the Plan and the information from the final formal consultation prior to adoption will be added to the Appendices as these become available.

Important Notes

Throughout the document, the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Development Plan area is referred to as '**the Area**'.

Much of the data used within this document comes from information provided by the 2011 National Census. This has been supplemented by local surveys carried out during the preparation of the NDP.

This document is for guidance only. It should be read alongside the NDP but should not be interpreted as being part of the NDP. Only in the case of any doubt over the interpretation of the NDP - and the policies contained within it - should this document be consulted in order to achieve a better understanding of the intent of the NDP.

2 The Area

The area covered by the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Development Plan ('the Area') is shown in Plan 1.

It has a population of approximately 700 people and consists of the former Civil Parishes of Bruen Stapleford, Burton, Foulk Stapleford, Hatton and Huxley. The area lies between the A41 to the west and the A51 to the north.

The parishes of Foulk Stapleford and Huxley were merged in April 2015 and combined with much of Hatton. At the same time there were boundary changes that removed two areas north of Gatesheath and a small area north of the Shropshire Union Canal around TG Builder's Merchants and Crow's Nest Cottages from Hatton and transferred them to the civil parish of Newton by Tattenhall. An area south of Mill Farm extending to the canal, and an area north of Huxley and south of Hoofield, were brought into the new parish. The new civil parish of Hargrave and Huxley is shown in Plan 2.

The boundary changes made in 2015 also made Bruen Stapleford part of Tarvin and combined Burton with Duddon. However those changes do not affect the designated NDP Area and the boundary remains along the historic parish boundaries. However it is anticipated that any planning application made within those areas to be transferred out of Hargrave and Huxley will be considered subject to the NDP of the parish in which they are now located other than the area identified in Plan 2.

Conversely it is anticipated that the small areas transferred into the new parish of Hargrave and Huxley will be treated as part of the designated NDP Area and that, together with Bruen Stapleford and Burton, adjacent parish council will be mindful of the content of the NDP.

The Area has limited services and most residents use the facilities provided in the city of Chester approximately 8 miles to the north-west.

Other key service centres are the villages of Tarvin to the north, Tattenhall to the south and Tarporley to the east.

Sustainability

The whole NDP Area is officially designated as Open Countryside, and lacks the range of services which make an area *sustainable* in terms of development planning. This is confirmed by a number of recent decisions on planning applications across the Area and the number of planning consents since 1995, see appendix **Error! Reference source not found.**

As part of the NDP preparation, the largest settlements in the area (Huxley and Hargrave) were assessed against CWaC's Sustainability Appraisal methodology, and both achieved a low score (see Appendix **Error! Reference source not found.**) demonstrating they were not sustainable locations for development.

This, together with how important the consultation showed that the rural nature of the Area is for our residents, is an important factor in shaping the NDP and defining the Plan Policies.

Data

Only data for Huxley and Foulk Stapleford parishes is available from the Census, see the numbers in red below. In 2011 Foulk Stapleford had a population of 161 in 70 dwellings, giving 2.3 people/house; and Huxley had 251 in 98 dwellings, 2.56/house.

Figures for Bruen Stapleford, Burton and Hatton were not therefore available in the Census and had to be calculated using the data collected in surveys for the NDP. 411 people in 143 households responded to the initial questionnaire, giving 2.87 people/dwelling.

This was multiplied against the number of houses for Bruen Stapleford, Burton and Hatton to generate the total numbers, see below –

Table 1 Derivation of population numbers from available data

	No. of	Qstnre	Census	Popltn
	Houses	x 2.87	Popltn	Total
Bruen S	30	86		86
Burton	24	69		69
Foulk S	70		161	161
Hatton	47	135		135
Huxley	98		251	251
Total	269			702

2.1 Historic Parishes and Settlements

Bruen Stapleford

The Civil Parish of Bruen Stapleford has no distinct settlement. Its full extent may be seen in Plan 1. The 2015 boundary changes have transferred Bruen Stapleford into Tarvin.

In character Bruen Stapleford is similar to the rest of the area being primarily open agricultural grassland that is actively farmed. A fuller description is in the Landscape section. The majority of residential properties, other than farms, are located along Broomheath Lane and in the area around the Moss.

In total there are 30 residences in Bruen Stapleford and based upon that number the number of residents is estimated as 86.

The main village providing services to residents is Tarvin to the north.

Burton

Burton is a small civil parish surrounding the hamlet of Burton – see Plan 1. With the 2015 boundary changes, Burton has now been joined with Duddon.

The hamlet itself is compact and well defined. It is largely a conservation area and is described in more detail elsewhere in Appendix

Error! Reference source not found.. The number of residential properties in Burton village is 19 and in the whole parish is 24. Based upon the collected data as a whole, the number of residents in Burton is estimated as 66.

Foulk Stapleford

The Civil Parish of Foulk Stapleford is shown in Plan 1.

The main residential area of Foulk Stapleford is the settlement of Hargrave. There the community has grown around the church of St Peter's – the parish church of both Hargrave and Huxley.

To the north end of the area and distinct from Hargrave is the small community of Greenlooms while to the east is Brereton Park. The latter small group of properties form part of Foulk Stapleford but are essentially isolated from the rest of the parish since it is only has vehicular access along Park Lane via Hoofield in the parish of Clotton Hoofield.

From the 2011 Census, the total population of Foulk Stapleford was 161 and there were 70 households.

Hatton

The 2015 boundary changes saw the Civil Parish of Hatton merged with those of Foulk Stapleford and Huxley to form one larger parish – see Plan 2. The majority of the residential part of Hatton is isolated from the main body of the area by the Chester to Crewe railway line. Most of the population live in ribbon development along the east side of the A41.

An exception to this is the small community along the lane leading to Hatton Hall. Other clusters of residential accommodation occur along the road into Tattenhall from the A41 to the south of the parish and at Crow's Nest Cottages near the canal at Tattenhall Works. The majority of these are to be transferred to Tattenhall with the boundary changes. Finally there are the farmhouse and converted barns at Golden Nook Farm.

Hatton does not have a central community that could be described as a village or hamlet. As with Bruen Stapleford and Burton, the population of Hatton was not uniquely identified in the 2011 census. Accordingly there are 47 households and the population of the parish is estimated as 135.

Huxley

From the 2011 Census, the parish of Huxley had the highest population in the Area at 251 and there were 98 households.

The parish is, in keeping with the rest of the Area, largely sparse and rural in character. There are more significant groups of houses around the former Farmer's Arms on Huxley Lane and around the T-junction, Methodist Chapel (now closed) and School at the top of Huxley Lane.

A 40 mph speed limit has been established covering the main part of the settlement area.

The only Public House in the area is located within Huxley, although it has been closed for 4 years, undergoing renovation.

2.2 Community Facilities

The area has limited communal facilities.

Hatton, Bruen Stapleford and Burton have none.

Hatton has a small area of private land set aside for the use of The Chester Astronomical Society to take advantage of the darkness of the southerly outlook and privacy in nature, for night time telescopic observations.

In Hargrave there is St Peter's Church and burial ground with the adjacent Church/Village Hall. There is also a small playing field, bowling green and garden, these and the Village Hall are assets of the charity, the Sir Thomas Moulson Trust, founded by Sir Thomas Moulson who was born in the village, later becoming Lord Mayor of London, and who had St Peter's Church built in 1627. The church has a consecrated burial ground which extends into an adjacent plot of land.

There exists in Hatton a small area of private land set aside for the use of the Chester Astronomical society. This society exists for the benefit of its members for the propagation and enjoyment of knowledge in Astronomy.

In Huxley there is the Primary School (a Church of England school now attached to St Peter's Church), a Village Hall and a Public House (closed since 2011). The graveyard in the grounds of the Methodist Chapel (now closed) remains in use and is consecrated ground. There is telephone box in Huxley near the Public House, and one in Hargrave near the bus stop.

3 Evidence and analysis

A large amount of information was gathered as input to the policies laid out within the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The main objective of gathering this information base was to understand the specifics of the neighbourhood, so refining what is known about the wider local area, and allow us to develop policies that are truly in-compliance with the views and nature of our neighbourhood. It is referred to as 'evidence' as it demonstrates the justifications behind any decisions that the action group needed to make in developing the policies and plan document.

This section gives an overview of the evidence base, and how it was compiled. The results of the various studies can be found later in this document.

3.1 Census Data - Baseline

Selected Huxley and Foulk Stapleford data from the 2011 census was compiled and compared to CWaC and (in some cases) Ward and National data, to establish where our neighbourhood area is consistent or differs from the wider area. This information was also used within the equality and diversity considerations.

The following aspects were considered:

Population

- Total population and density
- Age of residents
- Marital and civil partnerships
- Living arrangements
- Country of birth
- Length of residency in the UK
- Ethnic group
- Religion
- Main language
- Proficiency in English

- Highest level of qualification

Housing

- Accommodation type
- Tenure
- Central heating
- Number of rooms and occupancy rate
- Household composition
- Households with dependent children

Health & Wellbeing

- General health
- Long term health problem or disability
- Carers providing unpaid care
- Residents in Communal establishments

The NDP makes significant use of Census data. Data for the Area as a whole cannot be extracted from the 2011 Census, since only that for the parishes of Huxley and Foulk Stapleford is available. These are the largest settlements in the Area. Their combined numbers and percentages from the Census have therefore been used as the closest approximation that can be achieved to the Area as a whole.

From the response to our first questionnaire, there were 411 people in the 143 households which replied = 2.87 per household. We have multiplied the number of houses by this factor, to estimate the population of the smaller settlements.

The full census data analysis can be found at Appendix **Error! Reference source not found.**

3.2 Community Questionnaire

A questionnaire was circulated to residents with the objective of establishing a good understanding of what is important and conversely not important to the residents, as well as gaining a picture of the demographic. The full questionnaire analysis report can be found at appendix **Error! Reference source not found.**, only an overview is provided here.

A questionnaire was developed and distributed to all residents in the neighbourhood development plan area. The questionnaire was formed of two parts, Part 1 for personal data, and Part 2 for areas of interest.

Part 1 - Personal Data

Residents were asked to identify the number of people within their household against a series of criteria, including gender, age, employment status and mobility issues.

Part 2 - Areas of Interest

Various areas of interest were identified, many sourced at a residents meeting where ideas were put forward.

Specific topics under the headings of:

- Natural Environment,
- Managed Environment,
- Recreational Activities,
- Community and Social Facilities,
- Commercial Needs,
- Utilities,
- Transport Needs, and
- Housing needs,

were included to be rated on a scale of importance. Residents were asked to assess the importance of the various topics and score them on a scale of 1 to 5, where "1" indicated that the topic is unimportant as far as they are concerned, whereas "5" meant that the topic is extremely important or essential to their well-being.

The questionnaires were distributed to all residents within the area, in March 2014. Questionnaires were collected with a 57% response rate. Responses were collated for the neighbourhood area as a whole. Data was sorted and trends used to develop conclusions. The results and conclusions of this analysis can be found in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**, and the full analysis report in appendix **Error! Reference source not found.**

3.3 Growth Strategy consultation

A growth strategy was needed to give a clear philosophy to the plan. In order to develop a suitable growth strategy a separate survey was carried out to understand the residents' views and needs.

A survey was conducted which asked for views on three possibilities of growth. These possibilities were derived through a workshop with the Parish Councils of Foulk Stapleford and Huxley in Spring 2015.

The format of the workshop was as follows

- Discussion of what growth has been seen in previous years, which was established by counting the number of planning permissions granted for the entire neighbourhood area for the period of 1995 to 2015. This provided the base line, which was termed 'organic growth'.
- Consideration of what growth at the historical rate, as well as more and less growth was made, using maps to identify what this might look like.
- Discussing what policies currently exist within the local plan to support or constrain growth.
- Discussing what refinement to the local plan would need to be achieved through the neighbourhood plan policies to achieve these various growth options, and discuss any conflicts with the local or national plan.

The three possibilities that were then circulated for views in the survey were agreed as:

Possibility 1: Historic Growth as we have seen for the area in recent years. This equates to approximately 20 new units over the 15 year lifetime of the plan.

Possibility 2: Less than Historic Growth – fewer than 20 new units over the 15 year lifetime of the plan.

Possibility 3: More than Historic Growth - say 40 units over the 15 year lifetime of the plan.

The results of the survey were collated to establish which possibility was most agreeable to take forward. Other comments were collected and discussed. The results can be found in section **Error! Reference source not found.**

3.4 Landscape, Local Character & Environment

Desktop survey

The Sources of Information and Statistics (CWaC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit) and CWaC interactive mapping were interrogated for the NDP Area (see Plan 1). The results are listed in Section 5 and shown on the Plans quoted.

The purpose of the survey was to record land use and habitats. A sample survey sheet is in Appendix D.

Site survey

The first meeting of the Landscape survey group was in February 2014 in Huxley village hall.



Figure 1 Landscape Survey Group

The purpose of the survey and methods of recording were proposed and discussed. Teams and leaders were agreed for each parish, so that overlap would be avoided. A draft survey sheet, maps, notes, contacts and risk assessment were subsequently circulated.

Surveying took place from public locations, either roads or Public Rights of Way. This was not only to avoid trespass but because these are the locations where everybody can experience the environment, compared to private land, gardens etc.

In March 2014 the group re-convened and fed back on their experiences of surveying a small trial area. The type of photographs required was also discussed. A third meeting was held in April 2014 to monitor progress and hand-in completed surveys. Around 19 people attended these sessions and surveyed part of their parish; these volunteers have walked all the footpaths in the Area.

Subsequently completed surveys were collected by the parish leaders. A group of around 7 then met to collate parts of the written survey onto draft maps which were subsequently produced as digital versions. It was found that the survey did not give detailed enough information for

the more developed parts of the Area, the 'built environment'. An additional survey sheet was therefore developed to record some built environment features house-by-house, which was then aggregated into totals by road.

The parish leaders carried out this survey of the built environment in November 2014. The results of this survey are in Section 5 later in this document.