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## **10.4 Public Services**

Not a great deal is documented about trading in the village...there is no reference to a fair within the village; there was one at Caxton. The lead medieval trading token is evidence that trading took place within the village, but many of the villagers probably did their trading either in Caxton or in Cambridge. The church was the main 'public service' of the time and the building was used for a variety of public meetings, religious services, gatherings, the villagers would get together and perform 'miracle plays', in fact whenever there was a need for a gathering of any kind, the church building was used.

In 1851, we have recorded evidence that there were 3 shops, 4 public houses, The Red Lion, in Green End, The Plough, The Tailors Arms and The White Horse, all in West Street. The Three Horseshoes did not open until 1861.

The National School, at the cross roads opened in 1846. It was endowed with the interest of £200, half of this was raised by subscription and the remaining half was bequeathed by Mr Thomas Baker. There was no Doctor in the village and in 1863, the misguided folk of Comberton called on the services of Mrs Stonebridge from Potton to 'deliver' a young girl from witchcraft. Sadly the girl died and at her inquest it appears that she was suffering from epilepsy. The villagers were ticked off for not seeking medical advice and causing extra expense by needing to have an inquest!

Comberton was fairly self sufficient in early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with tailors, drapers, millers, saddlers, beer retailers, boot repairers, grocers, butchers and a post office. In 1916 the post arrived from Cambridge at 7.00am and 1.40pm. The letter boxes were emptied at 2.20 and 7.20pm from the post office in South Street.

Comberton was for many years almost entirely dependent on agriculture. The new found wealth of the coprolite mining employed 14 men in 1861. Comberton has always been a forward thinking village and it moved with the times and by 1908 had a cycle makers, later becoming a garage in the 1930's. In the 1960's there were among other things 4 shops, a garage, haulage contractor, glass house factory and a firm making plastic pants for babies!

### **10.4.1 Existing Infrastructure**

#### **10.4.1.1 Health**

#### **10.4.1.1 Surgery**

There is a purpose-built Surgery / Health Centre within the village, located at 58 Green End. It serves Comberton and some 5 other villages in the area. Around 90% of villagers are registered with a doctor within this practice.



There are currently 5 GPs, a community nurse and a district nurse based at the facility. There are also ante-natal, asthma and diabetes clinics operating within the centre.

1

#### **10.4.1.2 Addenbrooke Hospital**

Addenbrooke's is the regional general hospital, as well as being the University teaching hospital. It has all major facilities available. It is located to the south of Cambridge, some 5 miles by road from Comberton. The hospital website is at <http://www.addenbrookes.org.uk/>

#### **10.4.1.3 Dentist**

There is no dental practice within the village. The closest are at Haslingfield and Bourn, although neither is currently accepting new NHS patients. Most villagers use facilities within Cambridge.

#### **10.4.1.4 Pharmacy**

There is a dispensing pharmacy within the Health Centre for drugs prescribed by the doctors within the practice. There is no other local pharmacy: the nearest being within the City or at out of town supermarkets. The Health Centre is only permitted to operate a dispensary as long as there is no other commercial operation within 3 miles.

#### **10.4.1.5 Chiropodist**

There is currently no chiropodist operating within the village.

#### **10.4.1.2 Policing**

##### **10.4.1.2.1 Community Beat Officer**

Comberton shares a Community Beat Officer with 10 other villages in the neighbourhood. Non-emergency crime incidents are all dealt with through the CBO.

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<sup>1</sup> Surgery in Green End

#### 10.4.1.2.2 Neighbourhood Watch

There are neighbourhood watch schemes operating in various parts of the village, with one centralised focal point and a telephone system for reporting incidents and providing police information.

#### 10.4.1.2.3 Countryside Watch

The Parish Council has subscribed on behalf of the village to Countryside Watch, which provides facilities similar to the neighbourhood watch but specifically targeted to agricultural and rural based facilities. It came into operation in 2001.

#### 10.4.1.3 Schooling

##### 10.4.1.3.1 Comberton Village College

The village college (CVC) has a student population of some 1,100 in grades 7 to 11. It is one of the original colleges that follows the community principles set down by Henry Morris and was opened by him in 1960. In 1974, the school became fully comprehensive and, in April 1993, it became grant-maintained. It is now a Foundation School. It is now also a Beacon School, Training School and Specialist Sports College.



Some 10% of the students live within Comberton itself. The student population is likely to rise by some 200 over the next three years as it absorbs children from the newly created village of Cambourne for which it is the designated secondary school.

The College has a wide range of facilities that are used by the wider community, including meetings, classes, community education, and sports. It is located on the western edge of the village, just outside the official Parish boundary. The school website can be found at <http://www.comberton.cambs.sch.uk/>

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<sup>2</sup>Comberton Village College

### 10.4.1.3.2 Meridian Primary School

<sup>3</sup>



The Meridian Primary School was opened in September 1968 and serves the villages of Comberton, Toft, Great Eversden and Little Eversden. About 300 children attend the school.

The school's facilities can be booked for general functions within the community. It is situated in Harbour Avenue towards the east of the village. The school website can be

found at <http://www.meridian-school.com/>.

### 10.4.1.3.3 Nursery School

<sup>4</sup>



The Nursery School buildings belong to the Church but are now used for a private morning pre-school for children aged 3 to 4. The current number of children attending is 287.

### 10.4.1.3.4 Horlers Pre-Preparatory School

Horlers private school, situated in Green End, was founded in 1983 and caters for children between the ages of 4 and 8. Its current enrolment is around 25. The school website can be found at <http://www.horlers.cambs.sch.uk/>

### 10.4.1.3.5 Private Schools in Cambridge

A number of students from Comberton attend private schools in Cambridge, travelling in either on the bus or via car.

### 10.4.1.3.6 Other Schools

Since there is no sixth form college within Comberton all students who attend one (primarily Hills Road or Long Road sixth form colleges, Cambridge Regional College, or private schools) travel into the city each day. There is a

<sup>3</sup> Meridian School

<sup>4</sup> Nursery School

special bus in the morning and evening that serves Hills Road and Long Road.

#### 10.4.1.4 Shops

##### 10.4.1.4.1 Post Office / Spar

The village Post Office is located within the Spar mini-market in the centre of the village. It offers most standard facilities, although it is not able to deal with car licensing (the closest place for which is Hardwick), passport, and other higher-level services. Its future appears to be stable and it is well utilised. It is hoped that it might provide banking facilities at some time in the future.

<sup>5</sup>



The Spar mini-market has undergone expansion in the last two years and is able to provide many of the day to day requirements for those not wishing to go further afield to a supermarket. Its opening hours have been extended well into the evening and it is open 7 days a week. It has also recently started selling newspapers. It offers a food delivery service to the housebound who need such

a service.

##### 10.4.1.4.2 Newsagents

The United News shop at the village crossroads provides a full newspaper service, including home delivery. It also stocks sweets, alcoholic drinks and other minor items of foodstuffs including milk and fresh bread. This shop has changed hands a number of times over recent years and its future is uncertain.

##### 10.4.1.4.3 Butchers

The butchers is located in South Street and serves a wider community than just Comberton, but is well used from within the village. It has recently changed hands and appears to be a stable business venture.

<sup>6</sup>



<sup>5</sup> Spar shop in Baron Road

<sup>6</sup> Butchers in South Street

#### 10.4.1.4.4 Others

Comberton boasts an antiques shop (open primarily over the weekend); a car repair garage; a plant nursery; and a flower mill.



8



#### 10.4.1.4.5 Transport to Supermarkets

Most villagers do their main shopping at one of the major chains of supermarkets. These are located in Trumpington (Waitrose); Cambridge Ring Road (Sainsburys); Milton (Tesco); Fulbourn (Tesco); Bar Hill (Tesco); Royston (Tesco); Beehive Centre (Asda); Cambridge Newmarket Road (Tesco); Cambourne (Morrisons). Marks and Spencer and Sainsbury's also have food stores located in Cambridge City Centre.

Tescos provide a bus which goes through Comberton to their Bar Hill superstore and operates on a Tuesday.

Tesco, Sainsbury's and Waitrose all offer a home delivery service for those who have ordered groceries via the Internet.

<sup>7</sup> Garage in Green End

<sup>8</sup> Antiques shop in West Street

### 10.4.1.5 Library

#### 10.4.1.5.1 Cambridgeshire Library at CVC

A branch of the Cambridgeshire Library is based within CVC and is open for the following hours:

Monday	2-5; 6.30-8.30
Tuesday	2-5; 6.30-8.30
Wednesday	6.30-8.30
Thursday	6.30-8.30
Friday	2-5; 6.30-8.30



Whilst its holding is relatively small it has access to the full collection at the main City Centre library from which books can be ordered. Likewise any book borrowed from the main City library can be returned to the Comberton branch library. Videos can also be borrowed, and there is Internet access available. Further information can be found at <http://www.camcnty.gov.uk/library/ver1/comb.htm>.

#### 10.4.1.5.2 Mobile Library

A mobile library lorry stops monthly on Mondays from 10.00 to 10.45 near the sheltered housing scheme on Nursery Way.

### 10.4.1.6 Postal Service

#### 10.4.1.6.1 Collections

There are collections from 4 post boxes within the village, including the main post office which also has a collection on a Sunday, as well as the 1 standard collections each day.

#### 10.4.1.6.2 Deliveries

All the village is served with one daily delivery, although times are very variable.

### 10.4.1.7 Public Utilities

#### 10.4.1.7.1 Electricity

Mains electricity is available throughout the village, supplied by a combination of overhead and underground cabling. Few problems are

<sup>9</sup> Comberton Library

experienced, although there are occasional minor outages following especially windy or heavy weather.

#### **10.4.1.7.2 Gas**

There is no gas supply to the village. The closest mains supply is in Barton. Approaches have periodically been made to the suppliers of the gas backbone and they have quoted figures of up to £3,000 per household for bringing a supply to Comberton, although at other times have indicated that supply would not be feasible under any circumstances.

Some individual households use bottled gas for cooking. Most houses use electricity for cooking. Some use electricity and some use oil for heating.

#### **10.4.1.7.3 Water**

Anglia Water supply mains water to all houses and properties within the village.

#### **10.4.1.7.4 Sewerage**

Anglia Water provide mains sewerage to most houses in the village. The infrastructure for this is relatively recent, as until the 2 large housing estates were build there was no mains sewerage available. There have been significant problems with sewerage failing to drain away (or be pumped away) from the lower lying part of the village at the east end of Swaynes Lane. Some recent major works have attempted to address this problem, although it is not certain what effect proposed new housing will have on this.

#### **10.4.1.7.5 Drainage and Flooding**

In October 2001 there was a major problem with flooding in the village following a once in 200 year rainfall event. This occurred particularly along the east end of Barton Road through to Swaynes Lane, with much water draining straight off the arable land onto the roads and more water coming from the blocked drainage ditch on the north side of the road. The older natures of some of the housing and pipework meant that drainage and foul water were intermingling and systems became overloaded, causing significant damage to some properties. This is covered further in other sections of this report. It has not historically been a problem, and is under review, but needs formal addressing.



#### **10.4.1.7.6 Banking**

There is no bank within the village nor any cash dispensing facility. The closest (charging) cash dispenser is located within the petrol station at

Barton. The Post Office has applied to have such a facility installed, although there is no indication of what success might be achieved.

### 10.4.1.8 Churches

#### 10.4.1.8.1 St Mary's Anglican Church

<sup>10</sup>



The Church building dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, although may have been constructed on the site of an earlier one. The Church lies on high ground about half a mile to the south of the crossroads. It falls within the Diocese of Ely and the vicar is based at the vicarage next to the Church itself. Three services are normally held on a Sunday. The Church graveyard supports the village. The Church does

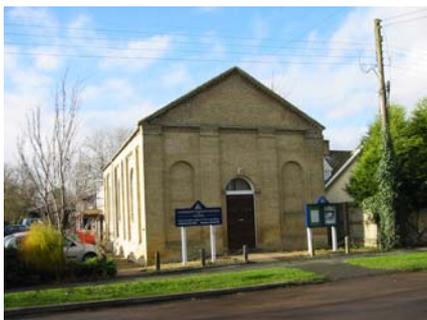
not have a hall or youth worker, but plays an active part in village affairs including the instigation of the Parish magazine.

St Mary's website can be found at <http://www.combertonchurch.org.uk/>

The Diocese of Ely also own the Old Schoolhouse in the centre of the village, behind the Nursery School and this is used by several community groups, as well as Cambridgeshire ACRE.

#### 10.4.1.8.2 Baptist Church

The Baptist Church, located on Green End, has two services each Sunday, one in the main Church and one in the newly constructed Church Centre, behind the Church building itself. This Centre is also used for counselling, conferences and is available for other groups within the village at the discretion of the Church.



The Church website can be found at <http://www.churchtec.org.uk/>.

<sup>11</sup>

#### 10.4.1.8.3 Others

A Roman Catholic Mass is held once a month in St Mary's. Other denominations are served by Churches in nearby villages or within Cambridge.

<sup>10</sup> St Mary's Church

<sup>11</sup> Baptist Church Green End

### 10.4.1.9 Pubs

#### 10.4.1.9.1 Three Horseshoes

<sup>12</sup>



The Three Horseshoes is an old 18<sup>th</sup> (?) century thatched pub owned by Enterprise Inns which has recently had a new landlord. It serves a limited range of food and has a beer garden available in summer months. It is located on South Street opposite the entrance to Swaynes Lane.

#### 10.4.1.9.2 Grapevine

Currently for sale and likely to close as a pub.

### 10.4.1.10 Village Maintenance

#### 10.4.1.10.1 Grass cutting

Grass cutting of verges and common areas is the responsibility of the County Council but is undertaken by the Parish Council who are then paid an appropriate allowance. In turn the Parish Council contracts the work to a company who provide three to four cuts a year of verges, and more of the recreation ground as needed.

#### 10.4.1.10.2 Flowerbeds

Flowerbeds in the middle of the village have been established by the Parish Council and a sensory garden is in the process of being established on the Janes' estate. Further spring bulbs have been planted at the various entrances to the villages by the owners of the campsite, and by the Women's Institute and Parish Council to the east.

#### 10.4.1.10.3 Litter / Cleaning

The Parish Council has the responsibility of employing a litter picker to keep the village tidy. They have also recently put in a significant number of extra 'rural' litter bins throughout the village. There are problems with litter throughout the village, and particularly on the walks to the schools and round the shops in the centre. Some 'fly tipping' also occurs along Branch Road and other exits from the village.

<sup>12</sup> The Three Horseshoes South Street

#### **10.4.1.10.4 Handyman**

The Parish Council has it in mind to employ a village handyman in the longer term and in the interim has other regular workers who are contracted for specific tasks as and when required.

#### **10.4.1.11 Village Help Scheme**

##### **10.4.1.11.1 Mobile Warden Scheme**

The Scheme is part funded by grants, including an annual grant from the Parish Council supplemented by a small weekly charge to members and is managed by the Village Help Scheme Committee. The Saturday morning cover is funded by a grant from Social Services.

The Warden works for 2 hours each weekday to make regular contact with people living in their own homes to give reassurance and help with emergencies. The Deputy Warden is employed for one hour each Saturday to make phone contact with members.

The Warden's duties include making a daily phone call or personal visit to each of the members of the Scheme. She will carry out simple tasks required by members when they are ill such as shopping or collecting pensions, making drinks, collecting prescriptions or arranging medical visits. This help does not replace Social Services support and can only be provided short-term.

The Scheme has now been running successfully for 9 years and can support 8 full members and up to 6 associate members.

##### **10.4.1.11.2 Village Help Scheme**

The Help Scheme has been operating for more than 25 years to co-ordinate volunteers to help villagers in a range of ways;

- Transport. Volunteer drivers give lifts where people are having difficulty travelling, particularly to local GP surgeries and hospitals. Clients contribute to the cost, which is subsidised by the Community Transport Department of Cambridgeshire County Council. ("Medical journeys" to hospitals are no longer subsidised but clients are generally willing to pay an increased fare). Last year the Scheme arranged around 400 lifts.
- General Help. Volunteers can help with tasks such as shopping, washing or housework for a short term at times of illness.
- Gardening. People willing to do basic gardening can be put in touch with individuals needing this help. In this situation, as with babysitting, clients are given guidance on appropriate rates of pay and arrangements are made directly between worker and client.
- Babysitting. The Scheme holds a list of teenagers willing to baby-sit - this is particularly useful for parents new to the Village.

The Help Scheme (a registered charity) is administered by a committee who also manage the Mobile Warden Scheme.

#### **10.4.1.12 Communications**

##### **10.4.1.12.1 Telephone**

There is a BT telephone exchange located in the village, with its entrance on the north of the Barton Road. Service is thus of relatively high quality, with delivery both via overhead and underground cable. Comberton enjoys numbers beginning with '26' under the main Cambridge code.

##### **10.4.1.12.2 Mobile Telephone**

There are three mobile phone masts located within the village, one within a farm on Green End, one near the campsite on Long Road, and a more major one that is part of a larger transmission mast operated by Crown Castle at the north end of Long Road. Despite these three masts coverage in the village on some major networks is still poor or unavailable.

##### **10.4.1.12.3 Internet**

Internet access within homes, schools or offices is available via normal dial-up connectivity; ISDN (for which the Comberton exchange is enabled) or the expensive leased line option. There is no ADSL provision or cable option. There are currently no plans to upgrade the exchange to ADSL, although pressure is being brought to bear.

There is no public Internet access point within the village save for the one terminal within the library.

##### **10.4.1.12.4 Television and Radio**

Terrestrial television signals are relatively weak, but available for the 4 main channels. Channel 5 is not available in the area.

Digital radio is available, as well as the conventional analogue service.

##### **10.4.1.12.5 Cable**

There is no cable TV or other services available locally, nor apparently any intention to bring them to the village.

#### **10.4.1.13 Entertainment**

### 10.4.1.13.1 Local Facilities

Comberton Village College provides a Community Education Programme as part of its commitment to the wider community. Courses are offered each term in the areas of art, computing, crafts, dance, fitness, general interest, languages, and 'working with people'. The College also provides facilities for other local groups to meet within their premises.

The New Village Hall also provides a meeting place for a variety of different clubs and associations.

<sup>13</sup>

Clubs meeting within the village include: Allotments & Gardens Association, Antiquarian Society, Brownies, the Community Choir (part of Cambridgeshire Village Colleges Choral Society), Comberton Ramblers, Crusaders, Cubs, Friendship Club, Guides, Keep-fit, Meridian Theatre Group, Oldtime Dance Club, Scouts, Upholstery Club, Women's Institute, Wine Club, and a Young Farmers Club.



A youth club meets at CVC and is further detailed under Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community.

### 10.4.1.13.2 Facilities in Cambridge

Cambridge offers a wide variety of entertainment and cultural options, including top class theatre, music, and cinema options, as well as a variety of clubs, pubs, and eating places. These are mostly based in or around the centre of the city and thus a 15 minute car ride in the evenings, and with a very limited bus service (see bus timetable in Section 10.1 Transport).

### 10.4.1.14 Local Businesses

<sup>14</sup>

#### 10.4.1.14.1 Accountant

An accountancy practice, with one main partner, operates from the business centre which forms part of the old village hall.

#### 10.4.1.14.2 Solicitor

A legal practice, with one main partner, operates from the business centre which forms part of the old village hall.



<sup>13</sup> Village hall

<sup>14</sup> Commercial Centre

### **10.4.1.14.3 Horizon Park**

Horizon Park is a recently completed modern office complex at the eastern boundary of the village. Comprised of three main buildings and a large car park it houses 3 large businesses and a number of smaller ones in purpose-built premises.

<sup>15</sup>



### **10.4.1.14.4 Campsite**

The camp and caravan site located on Long Road has a good reputation and attracts visitors from a widespread area, including many from abroad.

### **10.4.1.4.5 Others**

There are thought to be many home workers within the village, including those operating their own businesses or tele-working. There is believed to be further demand for provision of office space within the village or nearby locality, and neighbouring villages are also providing such facilities, especially for start-up or small businesses.

### **10.4.1.15 Youth Provision**

A youth club operates at CVC for its wider community, including those young people from Comberton. However, it is believed that the facilities offered do not reach all those who require them, and some young people would not wish to spend further time on school premises. Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community goes into further detail indicating the need for youth consultation followed by the provision of enhanced facilities and a greater participation in the decision making processes within the village.

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<sup>15</sup> Horizon Park Barton Road

### 10.4.1.16 Village Hall

16



The Old and New Village Halls, located in the centre of the village, are built on land owned by the Parish Council and are operated on their behalf by the Village Institute Trustees who hold the lease on the halls. The old hall, which is partly sub-let to businesses to provide income to the Trust, is nearing the end of its useful life as a public facility, although the Parish Council still use it as a meeting place. The New Village

Hall is due to be replaced shortly as it fails to meet the requirements of the 2004 Disabilities Act and no longer meets the expectations of the village which has increased very greatly in size since the hall was built. A steering committee has thus been formed by the Hall Trustees, supported by the Parish Council, which is aiming to provide a new hall within the next two years, funds permitting.

The existing new village hall provides a major focal point for the village and its activities and getting its design and functionality correct is clearly of great importance. Further details of this work can be found under Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community.

### 10.4.1.17 Parish Magazine

The Parish Magazine, 'Contact', is published 10 times a year (monthly save for January and August) and provides a very valuable means of information sharing within the village. It is run by a group of dedicated volunteers who do the editing, advertising, and distribution work and some financial support is provided by the Parish Council. The result is a professional quality of magazine that is much appreciated by those within the village. It is distributed free to all households, normally within the last week of the month preceding its date.

## 10.4.2 Known Plans for the Future

### 10.4.2.1 Health

None.

### 10.4.2.2 Policing

None.

<sup>16</sup> Old Village Hall

**10.4.2.3 Schooling****10.4.2.3.1 Comberton Village College**

See 'village infrastructure' for details of predicted expansion of CVC as it takes on the additional required students from the new Cambourne development, as well as the additional facilities that it will be able to provide with its new Sport College status.

**10.4.2.4 Shops**

None.

**10.4.2.5 Library****10.4.2.5.1 Cambridgeshire Library at CVC**

It is still not clear whether the library will remain operational in its present form and operating to its present opening hours, but it is assumed for the purposes of this report that it will do so.

**10.4.2.6 Postal Service**

None.

**10.4.2.7 Public Utilities****10.4.2.7.1 Flooding**

A flooding committee has been established which is working on making contingency plans for future recurrences of any problems. This is more fully reported on under 'village infrastructure'.

**10.4.2.8 Churches**

None.

**10.4.2.9 Pubs**

None.

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**10.4.2.10 Village Maintenance****10.4.2.10.1 Grass cutting**

More regular and better controlled grass cuts have been requested.

**10.4.2.10.2 Flowerbeds**

Further planting has recently taken place, and the sensory garden in Harbour Avenue is in the process of being established.

**10.4.2.10.3 Litter / Cleaning**

Further rustic litter bins and dog bins are being placed around the village and the process of litter picking is being reviewed by the Parish Council.

**10.4.2.10.4 Handyman**

The Parish Council is in the process of hiring a groundsman for the Recreation Ground area and there is a recommendation that this post may in due course be extended, or supplemented by, someone who can take on wider roles within the village.

**10.4.2.11 Village Help Scheme**

None.

**10.4.2.12 Communications**

None as known, although continued pressure is being applied to BT to introduce Broadband Internet access within the village.

**10.4.2.13 Entertainment**

None.

**10.4.2.14 Local Businesses**

None.

**10.4.2.15 Youth Provision**

As stated above there are recommendations to undertake a youth consultation as soon as funds allow.

#### **10.4.2.16 Village Hall**

The village hall steering committee is guiding through all the necessary work, on behalf of the Trustees, to replace the existing village hall within 2 years. Lottery money is now far less freely available than in the past and so options are more limited, but other sources of funding are being sought and commissioning of the architect is now underway, along with writing of the business plan and further community consultation.

#### **10.4.2.17 Parish Magazine**

None.

#### **10.4.3 Planned Growth and Projection Patterns**

None known, expect those that relate to the work of the Village College. The village itself remains within a green belt area and therefore the population is likely to remain relatively stable, subject to the notes and recommendations within the 'village infrastructure' section.

#### **10.4.4 Information Determined from the Appraisal**

Questions from the Appraisal which are of particular significance to public services were numbers 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 52, 62, and 63. The full results are found in section 7.

In summary:

- 88% of respondents are registered with the surgery in Comberton.
- Of the 250 people who said that they had problems getting to medical facilities outside Comberton of significance were the dentist (58%); hospital (51%); Chemist (32%); and Optician (21%).
- There were very few complaints about the services provided by the Surgery.
- 59% of the high level of respondents who answered the question on the provision of policing in the village thought that the service was poor.
- High levels (60 to 70%) of respondents were worried about house theft; vandalism; and car theft. There was also significant concern over drunkenness and drugs.
- There was a high level of support for various measures to reduce crime in the village. These included a greater police presence (76%); the recruiting of a special constable (65%); more activities for young people (54%).
- 81% of 960 respondents to question 40 would like to see mains gas within the village, and 60% would like cable TV.
- 61% of people have Internet access at home and 35% at work. However, 32% have no access at all.

- 85% of respondents use the Post Office; 80% the integral Spar shop; 83% the newsagent; 53% the butcher; and 35% the library.
- Shopping within the village is largely carried out because it is the best way to get 'last minute' items or because it saves time.
- Over 80% of people would use a cash dispenser if provided within the village.
- Of the 20% of respondents who were unhappy with the postal service the majority felt that deliveries were too late in the day.
- 60% of people go to the cinema in Cambridge on a periodic basis; 40% go to the theatre; 63% to restaurants; 41% to pubs; 17% to nightclubs; and 15% to various other activities.
- 100 people said that they regularly attended the St Mary's Anglican Church; 60 attend the Baptist Church; and 33 the Roman Catholic services within the village.

## **10.4.5 Summary of Problems with Existing Service Arrangements**

### **10.4.5.1 Health**

The appraisal noted no serious concerns with the operation of the surgery within the village (although some long waiting times were reported), but there are significant issues relating to transport to the hospital and to dentists. The 8am bus from the village passes Addenbrookes with a return service at around 4pm (the same facility that takes students to the sixth form colleges) but there is no other direct service, and other options require changing in the City. The village help scheme can provide drivers to take elderly or infirm patients to hospital and this service, costing around £6 is well used. A taxi to the hospital will cost around £12 single from the village.

An optician is available in Barton. Most dentists used are within the City. Getting pharmaceutical items, when not obtained on prescription from the village surgery, is seen to be a problem, although some larger supermarkets may stock these items.

### **10.4.5.2 Policing**

Policing is perceived as a major problem. This particularly relates to the lack of availability of the Community Beat Officer, who has too little time to spend in the village.

The fear of crime is perhaps greater than the actual reality. The number of reported crimes in one recent typical month was:

House theft is a matter of major concern, particularly amongst the more elderly. The misuse of drink and drugs is also perceived to be an issue, especially affecting young people. There is a recognition within the appraisal that providing greater facilities for young people would assist in the whole issue of crime reduction.

Although many households within the village belong to Neighbourhood Watch schemes it is not clear whether they are all effective in passing communication quickly down the 'trees' and there are no electronic ways of doing so at present.

The overall problem can be summarised as lack of anyone to turn to locally.

It is noted that there is no lighting in either of the bus shelters within the village which discourages their use in the evenings and provides a potential hiding place thus preventing people from even walking past. There is also a problem with lighting on the recreation ground and on the approaches to the pavilion.

#### **10.4.5.3 Schooling**

CVC is a very popular school with an ever greater profile and it now has a problem with potential students being unable to get into the school even if they are within the catchment area. Further families move into the area simply to get their children into the College.

The Meridian school has a problem of an ageing population within the village and therefore there being less children of the required age, thus changing their teaching profile and class sizes.

Both schools have significant problems relating to transport, and in the effect of transporting their students to the schools. These are covered under the section of this report on 'transport'.

#### **10.4.5.4 Shops**

The appraisal indicated that residents would appreciate the introduction of eating facilities within the village, presumably in the form of smaller restaurants or take-aways.

The appearance of the 'United News' shop is of considerable concern to many villagers, and the Parish Council has tried for a number of years to raise this with the succession of owners, but so far to no avail. It does have planning permission for extensive rebuilding, although that runs out after its five year period in 2003.

There is no cash dispenser within the village (the nearest being at the Barton filling station).

Transport to supermarkets is limited.

It is not possible to licence a car at the Post Office in Comberton.

#### **10.4.5.5 Library**

The Library is opened for a limited number of hours and its future is uncertain.

#### **10.4.5.6 Postal Service**

The postal service within the village is a cause of concern to many residents as the deliveries (of which there is just one a day) tend to be late and unreliable, and sometimes don't take place until well into the afternoon making them ineffectual for those trying to run small businesses, as well as inconvenient for others. The delivery may be non-existent if a postal worker is off sick or otherwise unavailable.

There is no collection after 5.30pm within the village.

#### **10.4.5.7 Public Utilities**

A high percentage of village households would like there to be gas available to homes, as well as the current electric supply. Many attempts to arrange this in the past have failed.

Despite some recent relaying of pipes there seems to remain a problem with sewerage and drainage within the village, especially at the eastern end where the pumping station resides.

There also remains a potential problem with flooding. Although some clearing was done after the problems in 2001 the full facilities to avoid a recurrence are not yet in place.

#### **10.4.5.8 Churches**

17

There is a feeling that better use could possibly be made of the Old School House in the centre of the village (including possibilities for youth facilities or Internet access etc.).



#### **10.4.5.9 Pubs**

None.

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<sup>17</sup> Old School House Green End

**10.4.5.10 Village Maintenance**

Grass cutting over the last few years, especially of verges and areas other than the recreation ground, has been seen as of lower quality and frequency than desirable.

Litter is of major concern to many and needs to be further reduced.

The general tidiness and appearance of the village could be enhanced. These issues are discussed further within the 'environment' section.

**10.4.5.11 Village Help Scheme**

None.

**10.4.5.12 Communications**

There is no high-speed 'always on' broadband Internet access (ADSL) available within the village and this has a significant detrimental effect on smaller businesses and the ability to attract others to the area. It is also a problem for schools and others who need public access.

There is no cable for TV/ telephone / Internet.

Mobile phone coverage on at least one major network is very weak.

**10.4.5.13 Entertainment**

Public transport to get to entertainment venues within Cambridge, especially in the evenings, is poor. This problem will be exacerbated with the 2 year closure of the major part of the Lion Yard car park which is due in 2004/5.

**10.4.5.14 Local Businesses**

None

#### **10.4.5.15 Youth Provision**

There is insufficient in the way of local facilities within the village, especially for younger people.

There is no 'youth forum' or other input to local democracy from younger people, although initial efforts have been made.

There is no youth worker in the village, outside the work at CVC.

There has been no youth consultation undertaken.

These items are detailed further under Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community and in the recommendations from the Tim Wall report.

#### **10.4.5.16 Village Hall**

The main existing hall is now some 60 years old and too small and inflexible to cope with a community that has grown and changed beyond all recognition within that period. As well as needing to comply with modern disability regulations there is a need to provide better and more flexible space for a wider constituency than that currently served. The current building, whilst still serving some functions satisfactorily, is not really worthy of a modern village such as Comberton. All these issues and more are being addressed by the steering committee that has especially been set up to address them.

#### **10.4.5.17 Parish Magazine**

None.

### **10.4.6 Recommendations for Mid and Long Term Implementation**

The following recommendations are made pertinent to the relevant sections:

#### **10.4.6.1 Health**

- Liaison with Stagecoach to provide additional buses to Addenbrooke's in addition to the one a day in each direction at present.
- Possible use of the suggested community minibus to take people to hospitals and dentists.
- Consider greater formal liaison between the surgery and the Parish Council in order to deal with 'social health' issues.

**10.4.6.2 Policing**

- Appoint a community warden, partially funded by the PC. It is expected that this will be a part-time post and that the person employed will work closely with local schools, the health centre, the groundsman on the rec., shopkeepers and the Council, as well as the police. There is potential seed funding for this from the County Council under the community safety initiative, and the police may be able to provide a sample job description.
- Improve youth facilities as per further specific recommendations below. In the case of policing ensure that they have their own responsibilities and targets for reduction of youth crime, and benefit from the results. This might be achievable through the work of the youth council.

**10.4.6.3 Schooling**

- Continue to work with schools in closer liaison, as suggested below.

**10.4.6.4 Shops**

- Seek pro-active planning permissions which might encourage the establishment of appropriate eating facilities within the village. These could not only enhance the quality of life in the village but also bring in trade and employment.
- Aim to improve access to shops for those without access to a car, as well as to encourage use of other forms of transport. This could be achieved by use of the proposed village minibus, or by encouraging Stagecoach to provide a short-run bus up to the Maddingley Road park and ride scheme.
- Encourage the installation of a cash machine within the village, perhaps within the Post Office.

**10.4.6.5 Library**

None.

**10.4.6.6 Postal Service**

- Seek an alternative service for local businesses, perhaps by establishing a co-operative, and offering both deliveries and collections at fixed times from individual houses or units. Look at the provision of a subsidy if that would assist, and therefore encourage the growth of business.

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**10.4.6.7 Public Utilities**

- A campaign is being mounted by a concerned member of the village to put pressure on the gas infrastructure company to bring mains gas to Comberton. Although the cost is likely to be high and the disruption considerable, there is still significant interest and it is recommended that the Parish Council lend their weight to this campaign, as they have supported such developments in the past.
- Continue to support the standing committee keeping a watching brief on flooding aversion. The Parish Council to take a pro-active role in flood prevention as well as ensuring that the sewerage problem is properly solved by Anglia Water, especially in the light of the new housing development at the east end of the village.

**10.4.6.8 Churches**

None.

**10.4.6.9 Pubs**

None.

**10.4.6.10 Village Maintenance**

- Promote the general attractiveness of the village including numbers of flowerbeds and planting areas. Ensure sustainability by putting in a budget for weeding, maintenance and further planting.
- Continued funding for the village handyman will be required from the Parish Council budget. There may be interaction between the recreation groundsman, the handyman and the community warden, or initially there may be some overlap of responsibility.
- Full grass cutting services should come under the control and budget of the Parish Council with greater flexibility to add extra cuts and change contractors as required.

**10.4.6.11 Village Help Scheme**

- A very valuable aspect of village life where funding needs to be maintained and even increased as required. Further funding may also come from higher levels of government.

**10.4.6.12 Communications**

- Keep in the loop regarding Internet access within the village; improvements to telephone and mobile communication.
- Liaise with NTL about the potential introduction of cable services within the village.
- Liaise with Vodafone to improve coverage within the village.

**10.4.6.13 Entertainment**

- Use the proposed village minibus for access to entertainment facilities within the City, including transport to matinee performances.
- Encourage use by the local community of the new professional theatre facilities that will be available at CVC.
- Promotion by the Parish Council of more public entertainment: galas, concerts, festivals, etc. that will bring the community together. Also encourage / subsidise others who want to do so.
- Provide more entertainment facilities within the new village hall once it exists, e.g. a film club.

**10.4.6.14 Local Businesses**

- Continue to encourage the development of business units, and business opportunities within the village, especially if there is the possibility to benefit from income to the village with the proviso that the Council cannot make a profit. Particular encouragement should be given where local services would be provided that would enhance the facilities available to others within Comberton or where they would provide local employment or investment or increased skilling.

**10.4.6.15 Youth Provision**

As per the recommendations in Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community:

- Providing a dedicated facility, within the new village hall or the enhanced pavilion (or similar), for young people where they can have their own 'space'.
- Encourage the establishment of further summer holiday activities for young people, including summer-camp style projects.

**10.4.6.16 Village Hall**

- It is hoped that the village hall will be self-funding past the immediate short term, once the new hall is in place. Until that time funding is likely to be required, including possible increases to the precept either to fund directly or allow borrowing on the basis of its capital. See further recommendations below.

**10.4.6.17 Parish Magazine**

- Continue to fund as required into the future in order to preserve this important aspect of village life. Also to put the contents of the magazine on the village website.

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## **10.4.7 Recommendations of Proposals for Short Term Implementation**

The following recommendations are made for potential implementation within a period of under a year:

### **10.4.7.1 Health**

- Use of subsidised taxi services, using rural transport grant available from the County Council, to assist those to get to the services that they need to and where cover is not provided by the existing help scheme.
- Follow up with the Surgery on the availability of a chiropodist within the village.

### **10.4.7.2 Policing**

- It is assumed that most crime within the village is either serious organised theft / malicious damage (etc.), or of a more petty nature caused by people within the village.
- In order to lessen the fear of crime mount a campaign to give publicity to the actual level of crime and measures in place or being undertaken to reduce it. Let people know what has really happened and what has been done in response. It is suggested that 'Contact' give greater coverage to this and also that it is more widespread in order to be able to give quicker responses, reducing the significant lead time involved with going to press.
- Whilst the police do publish information on their website it tends also to be very slow in being put up and is probably not well read. It is suggested that information that is currently distributed via Neighbourhood Watch or the Countryside Watch is also distributed electronically as quickly as possible by e-mail and via the web. This could reach up to two thirds of the village community in a very short time (within a day). For those without Internet access a posting on village notice boards would provide information.
- Use the groundsman and village handyman to keep an eye on events within the village and act as liaison with the police as well as speaking to those concerned and updating the Clerk.
- Work more closely with young people through the appraisal and youth council.
- Liaise more closely with the CBO and request reports to go to each Parish Council meeting, with periodic attendance where incidents warrant it.
- Provide further advice and information, especially to the elderly. Consider the installation of granny bolts, at subsidised cost if necessary, and the holding of keys by neighbours (or in outside key boxes as appropriate).
- Provide vandal-proof lighting in the 2 existing bus shelters.

**10.4.7.3 Schooling**

- Agree to closer liaison with the schools, and especially the village college which has such an influence on the village due to its size and range of facilities. Whilst it is appreciated that there is a formal feedback mechanism through the appointing of a governor from amongst the Parish Councillors, it is suggested that there also be a structured ongoing feedback process, perhaps in collaboration with the community liaison office. This would also be done in conjunction with the establishment of a youth council.

**10.4.7.4 Shops**

- Provide an Internet terminal for public access within the village, to allow people without computer facilities to order shopping over the web.
- Continue to press for the improvement to the appearance of United News.

**10.4.7.5 Library**

- Give greater publicity to the facilities available at the Library in order to improve the prospects of its longer term survival.
- Encourage more services at the Library, including the possibilities of a coffee bar, storytime for children, and easier ordering of books.
- Liaise directly with the County Council and Library regarding the future of the Library.

**10.4.7.6 Postal Service**

- Continue to put pressure on the Post Office / Consignia, via the MP and other appropriate means, in order to try and improve the current status of deliveries.

**10.4.7.7 Public Utilities**

- Ensuring that the flood prevention committee gets the required support within the current winter weather, and has an appropriate budget allocated to it.

**10.4.7.8 Churches**

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- Communicate re possible use of the Old School House for a wider range of civilities.

**10.4.7.9 Pubs**

None.

**10.4.7.10 Village Maintenance**

- Provide further rustic litter bins and dog litter bins around the village at the points agreed.
- Instigate a litter campaign within the village, as recommend under the 'environment' section of this report.
- A new area of planting will be required around the area of the proposed village memorial.
- The village handyman and recreation groundsman should be in post within a few months. Some funds will be saved from existing spending but additional monies will be required from the Council.

**10.4.7.11 Village Help Scheme**

None.

**10.4.7.12 Communications**

- Continue to put pressure on BT through our MP, via the East of England Development Agency and through local pressure groups (in conjunction with schools and businesses as well as home users) to introduce ADSL broadband within the Comberton exchange.
- Provide a computer terminal within the village for public access for those wishing to use the facilities for learning (particularly for those who have missed out on the technology o date), or access to shopping, or advice and information services.

**10.4.7.13 Entertainment**

- Promotion by the Parish Council of more public entertainment: galas, concerts, festivals, etc. that will bring the community together. Also encourage / subsidise others who want to do so.
- Establish a 'community life' group that will promote the above on a pro-active basis.

**10.4.7.14 Local Businesses**

- As with medium term.

**10.4.7.15 Youth Provision**

As per the recommendations in the Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community:

- Undertaking a full structure youth consultation as soon as practical.
- Establishment of a youth council as a way of providing a formal way into the democratic process.
- Seek funding from the County Council and others (including the Parish Council) to provide a youth worker for the village, perhaps attached to

the Meridian School for the sake of logistics since they are looking at becoming more of a community-based school.

#### **10.4.7.16 Village Hall**

- Continue to fully support the development of a new village hall facility, as has been the case to date. Provide appropriate permissions and funding to aim for completion as soon as practicable recognising that 2004 may no longer be possible for reasons beyond the control of the Trustees.
- Upgrading the facilities of the existing hall if necessary, in order to comply with legislation, but only if that proves to be essential once case law has been established, given the longer-term aims of providing a new hall.
- Ensuring that other avenues for providing facilities within the village are not closed off, including the possible expansion of the pavilion to encompass a wider range of activities or possible other facilities to be built elsewhere. See the report under Section 10.3 Recreation, Sport and Community.

#### **10.4.7.17 Parish Magazine**

None.