



# Painting Breinton Green

**A SUSTAINABILTY ACTION PLAN FOR THE PARISH OF BREINTON,  
HEREFORDSHIRE**

**APPROVED BY BREINTON PARISH COUNCIL 22<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST 2012**

*Sustainability means working together so that more of our current needs are met in ways that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Source: adapted from 'Steps towards a sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century rural community' SERCC)*

**Many thanks to everyone who has provided input, advice and support**

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**Nichola Geeson**  
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**Anita Sancha**

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And to the (relatively) few Breinton residents who attended our events and contributed their ideas for a more sustainable Breinton.

**The task now is to get more people involved and to put some of the ideas in this plan into action**

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## ABBREVIATIONS, DEFINITIONS AND TERMS USED WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT

ACRE	The charity Action with Communities in Rural England
CLP	Community Led Plan
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions (a Ministry of national government)
HALC	Herefordshire Association of Local Councils – the representative body for all local councils in Herefordshire
Local council	Town, parish or city council i.e. the tier of local government below Herefordshire Council
LPG	Liquid petroleum gas (for heating, cooking and industrial processes)
OCSI	Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion
PBG	Painting Breinton Green – the ‘brand name’ created by local volunteers to unite all the efforts being made to make the local community more sustainable in the years ahead
SAC	Special area of conservation (a nationally, potentially internationally, important environmental site)
SAP	Sustainability Action Plan
SERCC	South East Rural Community Councils organisation
Sustainability	Working together so that more of our current needs are met in ways that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO BREINTON

Breinton is a small, sparsely populated parish immediately to the west of Hereford city. It has been designated by Herefordshire Council as part of the Hereford rural sub-locality i.e. the rural fringe of the historic city. It is roughly rectangular in shape extending 4 miles east to west and two miles north to south; a total of 667 hectares. The 2001 Census indicated that there were 776 residents. More recent figures show 711 electors in 2011 and 396 Council tax paying households in 2012. A study by ACRE in 2011 indicated that 11% of residents receive some form of DWP benefit, 6% are income deprived, 6% of children live in income-deprived households and 13% of residents have a limiting long-term illness - marginally higher than the county average (11%).

Breinton's boundaries are the River Wye to the south, Hereford city to the east and the parish of Stretton Sugwas to the north and west. The River Wye is a natural and historic boundary of regional and national importance. It was voted the best river in England in 2011; is a designated SSSI for its entire length and contains a number of special areas of conservation (SACs). There are no bridges crossing the river from Breinton. The area has many historic orchards containing nationally significant biodiversity and the historic beauty of this local landscape has been captured in the nationally recognised paintings of Brian Hatton. The route of the Wye Valley long distance walk runs through Breinton.

The boundary with Hereford city is a long standing civil boundary. The two adjacent city wards – St Nicholas and Three Elms - are predominantly urban in nature and appearance and have significantly higher population densities than Breinton, which continues to act as a rural 'green lung' for Hereford. There is little air, noise or light pollution. Although no major development is currently proposed, the parish faces the challenge of not becoming suburban as a result of county-wide planning policies. Breinton has a predominantly open and rural landscape with most of the population living on the northern boundary along the King's Acre Road. Elsewhere there is a scatter of small settlements, including Breinton Common, Lower Breinton close to the church, Upper Breinton around Breinton Manor, and Warham. Housing is predominantly detached/semi-detached although permanent caravan sites account for 7.5% of the stock compared to 1.1% in Herefordshire. The proportion of owner occupiers is relatively high.

Community assets are very limited. A number of social events are held in the village hall which is also used by bowling and upholstery clubs. St Michael's church runs a monthly Sunday club for children

and a regular lunch club. There is a thriving fruit farm shop (seasonal only) and well-attended annual fetes and firework displays. There is no school.

According to the 2001 Census Breinton has a lower proportion of people (40.7%) under 45 years of age than Herefordshire as a whole and a significantly higher proportion (51.1%) of those aged 45 to 74. One third of the parish were aged over 60 compared with a quarter countywide. The proportion of residents over 75 was similar to the whole county. There were proportionately more households consisting entirely of pensioners or married couples without children and relatively few with dependent children. ACRE commissioned Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI), to study rural needs and their 2011 report suggests slow population growth which may be insufficient to maintain the few existing facilities or produce a more balanced age profile.

Despite the proximity to city, 6% of residents work in the agriculture sector – close to county figure and relatively high nationally. There are significant areas of nationally scarce Grade 1 agricultural land in the parish, while the rest is Grade 2. The Wyevale nursery is the only major local employer. Compared to Herefordshire as a whole, a relatively low proportion of residents work from home (9.3%) and the distance from significant employment opportunities means relatively few journeys to work on foot (3% compared to 11.7% in Herefordshire). Car travel dominates the journey to work (70% compared to 57.8% county wide) and car sharing is currently limited (4.1% as passengers compared to 5.7% in Herefordshire). There are a relatively high proportion of households with two or more cars. Public transport along Kings Acre Road accounts for its relatively high usage for journeys to work (5.2%) although bus frequencies have been reduced recently and external services do not penetrate the centre of the parish. However, a weekly 'Breinton bus' service does provide a return journey to Hereford on Wednesday mornings.

Communication with and between the residents of Breinton is hampered by there being no shop, pub or school in the parish where information can be exchanged. St Michael's church and the Village Hall are the only place where people meet together regularly. The church does provide a free monthly newsletter to all households, with community news as well as church news, and this is the main way of communicating with parishioners. However parishioners who are not interested in the church or the limited events at the village hall are currently left in relative isolation.

## 2. HOW THIS ACTION PLAN CAME ABOUT

This section sets out in chronological order the various formal meetings and actions that produced this SAP.

DATE	EVENT	COMMENT
<b>2011</b>		
23 June	Community First write to 64 local councils to see if any would be interested in developing a SAP through the Ecohere project	
20 July	Breinton parish council agree to participate in Ecohere	Community First presentation to the council. A working group is set up to develop the SAP
31 August	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and a possible CLP	The SAP was always seen as being part of the CLP
10 October	SAP working group's first meeting	First formal meeting of local volunteers supported by Ecohere – see <b>Note 1</b> below
19 October	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and preparations for a CLP	
4 November	Breinton fireworks display at Lower Hill farm	First consultation event for the SAP - see <b>Note 2</b> below. Advertised in Teamtalk and at a preceding parish meeting
23 November	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and CLP issues	Includes ideas gathered at the firework display
14 December	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and CLP issues	
<b>2012</b>		
18 January	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and CLP issues	
21 January	Public meeting chaired by the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) launches Breinton's CLP in the village hall (40+ attendees)	Includes the second consultation on the SAP ideas – validation of previous ones and new ones added
29 February	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and CLP	
15 March	Painting Breinton Green organises a visit to the Hereford Crematorium to hear about their approach to sustainability(16 (?) attendees including the Bereavement team from Holy Trinity Church, Whitecross)	SAP working group has now created the PBG brand name and logo – see <b>Note 3</b> below. Advertised in Teamtalk
21 March	Parish Council meets and receives a progress report on both the SAP and CLP	
24 March	PBG organises a morning event in the village hall entitled 'Sharing ideas for a sustainable future' (15 attendees)	A number of displays with experts to answer questions on various topics like waste minimisation, energy

DATE	EVENT	COMMENT
		conservation, car and garden sharing. Advertised in Teamtalk, the Hereford Journal, the Hereford Times, Hereford and Worcester local radio, on posters around the parish, and by email to circulation list
30 April	PBG organises an evening talk in the village hall on "Our cider heritage" ( 15 attendees )	Disappointing response from parishioners. Advertised in Teamtalk, the Hereford Journal, the Hereford Times, church pewsheets, on posters around the parish, and to email circulation list
May onwards	Drafting this plan. Linking its findings to Breinton's Community Led Plan which is now being developed by another Parish Council group	

**Note 1** Membership of the group changed slightly from that originally envisaged by the parish council due to the competing time commitments of individuals. Since October 2011 the volunteers have met on at least twelve occasions. [October 10<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>, November 8<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>, December 5<sup>th</sup>; January 10<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> 2012, February 28<sup>th</sup>, March 20<sup>th</sup>, April 17<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>]

**Note 2** Those attending the firework display were invited to answer three questions

- What does sustainability mean to you?
- How sustainable do you think that Breinton is today? and
- What might make Breinton even more sustainable in future?

These were intended to establish a common understanding of what a SAP might include and to challenge the status quo in Breinton. However, most of the feedback obtained addressed the third question i.e. suggesting solutions possibly before agreeing on the problem.

Subsequently the PBG volunteers adopted the following definition of sustainability, 'Working together so that more of our current needs are met in ways that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. This provided a common framework to our work and was never challenged at any subsequent event or meeting.

**Note 3** Past experience, feedback received and the PBG volunteers own perceptions indicated that there was not a widespread understanding of what a sustainable Breinton might involve other than it meant a focus on the environment. Rather than address this 'head on' the PBG volunteers decided to arrange a number of varied events (all with links to the environment) in an attempt to engage a wide section of the local community with whom sustainability could then be discussed. The events were intended to:

- Raise interest in what is happening locally
- Encourage even more community feeling, and
- Increase knowledge about sustainability
- Consult further on ideas already raised, and gather any new ones

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## THE SUSTAINABILTY ACTION PLAN (SAP)

### What is a SAP?

‘A SAP involves bringing people together in a community to identify their unique key priorities and needs in considering both the present and future endurance of that community. This can be done alongside, and in conjunction with the CLP process. Having a SAP may also aid future processes such as Participatory Budgeting or Localism-related issues that may arise for parish councils in future. The SAP will reflect the individual needs, aspirations and priorities of a community and address whatever is important to a community’s sustainability which could include a wide range of issues – for example; reducing energy/fuel bills and usage, more sustainable transport considerations, local food production, renewable energy, capitalise and build on local skills and services, community shops, allotments and bio-diversity. The SAP’s development and implementation will enhance the move towards becoming more sustainable and cohesive as a community.’ ( Source:- Community First – original project invitation to Parish Council’s. June 2011)

All the actions suggested have been grouped into categories. These indicate their major area of contribution to a more sustainable Breinton in the future. The categories used are not fixed in stone and the actions can be re-ordered as required

The column entitled ‘Sustainability effect’ is solely intended to explain in broad terms why or how a particular action would contribute to a more sustainable community in Breinton in case this is not clear. It is not intended to be a comprehensive justification and in particular does not dwell on the negative aspects of some actions. For an action to proceed, the balance between the positive and negative aspects would need to be judged

PC = parish council

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>MAINLY ABOUT TRANSPORT AND ACCESS TO SERVICES</b>				
Organised car sharing (e.g. visiting town centre at the same time as a neighbour)	Less fuel used, pollution and congestion overall. Saves money on running costs / parking etc. Increases access for those unable to use a car	There is a local scheme in Colwall from which we could learn	An organiser and a number of providers & users	
Car pool (to book a car when you need it). Car sharing co-operative – Community car share	Same as above	Might require a local garage to run this	An organiser a provider and users	
Water taxi on River Wye to Belmont or Victoria Bridge	Depends on how the taxi is powered	Needs outside help to progress		
Limit cars to one per household	Less fuel, pollution, congestion and cost. However this could reduce access to services etc	Un-enforceable		
School bus facility	Mass transit should reduce costs, pollution, congestion & fuel usage. Possibly increases safety	Needs outside help to progress		
Community minibus	Group transit should reduce fuel usage, pollution, congestion and cost overall. Could increase access	Needs outside help to progress		

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>MAINLY ABOUT TRANSPORT AND ACCESS TO SERVICES</b>				
More cycle paths	Reduces vehicle usage (costs, pollution etc) and has health & wellbeing benefits	Needs outside help to progress		PC to lead as part of the community lead plan (CLP)
Lower speed limit in Breinton – 20mph zone	Increased fuel efficiency, vehicle wear and tear and road safety	Needs outside help to progress		PC to lead as part of the CLP
Encourage and facilitate safe walking and jogging	Reduces vehicle usage (costs, pollution etc) and has health & wellbeing benefits			
Programme of guided walks / production of route leaflets (PBG)	Benefits to health and wellbeing		An organiser and willing guides	
Greater access to the river along Wye Valley long distance path	Potentially a safer route as well as health & wellbeing benefits by encouraging walking, jogging etc	Needs outside help to progress		PC to lead as part of the CLP
A footbridge from Breinton to Ruckhall	Could encourage more walking on 'circular' walks to and from Breinton	Needs outside help to progress		PC to lead as part of the CLP
More frequent bus service	Mass transit should reduce costs, pollution, congestion & fuel usage	Needs outside help to progress, discussions underway with First bus company		

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>MAINLY ABOUT REDUCING RESOURCE CONSUMPTION, REUSING MATERIALS AND RECYCLING</b>				
Share and recycle books	Reduces paper consumption and delays disposal. Saves money	Yes, being done now at Breinton church		
Local recycling facilities, e.g. foil, batteries, stamps, printers, printer cartridges and mobile telephones	Recycles scarce materials and reduces disposal costs.	Needs outside help to progress	Organiser, receptacle emptier and agreed location	
Clothes swap, clothes remodelling	Reduces consumption of cloth etc, delays disposal and saves money		An organiser and people willing to join in	
General swop shop / exchange / trading scheme (LETS – local exchange trading scheme)	Should match local needs more closely to local surplus. Can save money and reduce travel		An organiser and people willing to join in	
Donating scheme – tools, furniture etc	Recycles surplus materials for reuse, reduces waste		An organiser and people willing to join in	
<b>MAINLY ABOUT REDUCING ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND / OR ACCESS TO SERVICES</b>				
Shared purchase of oil or LPG	Bulk buying should reduce costs / save money and the number of delivery trips saving fuel, reducing pollution and the number of heavy vehicles on the roads	Yes, e.g. Fownhope Group purchasing initiative .A sustainable energy project	An organiser and users	

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>MAINLY ABOUT REDUCING ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND / OR ACCESS TO SERVICES</b>				
Shared skills, e.g. knitting, jam-making, bottling, wine-making, beer, bread, composting, carpentry, DIY, re-upholstery, composting, etc. at e.g. Village Hall or Church	Potentially makes Breinton more self sufficient and reduces the need to travel. Some skills acquired will reduce waste locally.		An organiser, providers and users	
Form a group to make bespoke thermal curtain liners (to improve home insulation), draft excluders, quilts for beds?	Reduce energy consumption (and therefore costs), improved insulation and increased warmth giving health benefits		An organiser, providers and users	
Local Directory for sharing DIY tools	Fewer tools will need to be purchased so less resource consumption		An organiser, providers and users	
Encourage people to claim loft insulation or glazing grants, etc. – work to reduce fuel poverty	Reduce energy consumption (and therefore costs), improved insulation and increased warmth giving health benefits	Needs outside support	A trained local source of advice	
Encourage people to claim benefits they are entitled to	Increases local income to meet the cost of living, improve health etc.	Needs support from Herefordshire Council	A trained local source of advice	
More reliable, faster internet (to encourage working from home, small businesses)	Increases access to services and reduces the need for travel	Needs outside help		

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>MAINLY ABOUT REDUCING ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND / OR ACCESS TO SERVICES</b>				
Local free wi-fi access point & computer club to train / encourage users	Increases access to services and reduces the need for travel		An agreed location and trainers	
Programme of energy use audits in the Parish	Should identify which buildings are least energy efficient and open the way for focussed action by owners / to gain grants etc. Potentially saves money in the long term	Needs outside help	Needs an organiser and trained people to carry these out	
Measure Breinton's carbon foot print	Knowing how much energy we consume locally and by which means would allow us to plan reductions. Publicity value.	Needs outside help		
Any new housing to comply with top energy efficiency standards	Increased initial costs (but helps create a market for suppliers) but reduced resource use in the long run. Saves money	Needs outside help		PC to lead as part of the CLP
Refurbish existing homes where necessary / feasible to maximise fuel efficiency	Reduces fuel consumption and long term costs	Needs outside help		PC to lead as part of the CLP
Identify energy-efficient (and non energy-efficient) appliances, and replace if necessary – bulk buy?	As above	Needs outside help		

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>MAINLY ABOUT REDUCING ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND / OR ACCESS TO SERVICES</b>				
Energy efficiency at Church and Village hall – photovoltaic cells etc	As above	Yes – Fownhope memorial hall, Bredwardine & Brosbury, Hopelands Weobley, Goodrich and Cleonger village halls. The following churches:- St Peters Peterchurch, St Leonards Yarpole and St Michaels Leominster could all provide advice		
<b>WILDLIFE BENEFITS</b>				
Reduction in hedge flailing in favour of hedge-laying, more traditional management, - to retain more winter food for wildlife	May increase bio-diversity and should reduce fuel consumption		Support of local landowners. A trained workforce	
Plant trees for coppicing and food protein (e.g. fruit & nuts)	A local renewable fuel & food source. Increased bio-diversity?		Support of local landowners. A market for the produce	
<b>SUSTAINABILITY GENERALLY</b>				
Encourage Eco-school participation	Raises the knowledge of local young people. Provides a source of knowledge and support. Gives a profile to Sustainability		Volunteers and support of the school governing body	

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>SUSTAINABILITY GENERALLY</b>				
Sharing garden space (match those who want more garden space with those who have too much)	Fresher, local food. Reduces food miles. Physical activity and better diet can improve health. Saves money	Local schemes exist from which we could learn	An organiser, providers and users	
Seed and seedling sharing / swop	Can save money and encourages local production of food. Reduces waste	Held regularly in / around Hereford so we could join these	Prior publicity and people to participate – give and take seeds	
Provision for allotments / community garden / soft fruit orchard	Fresher, local food. Reduces food miles. Physical activity and better diet can improve health. Saves money	Yes – Hayfield Garden in Hay on Wye also Colwall village garden		A commercial provider and / or PC to lead as part of the CLP
Community composting / wormery for kitchen waste	Recycles waste, reduces the need to purchase fertilisers, improves soils long term health and reduces the need to travel by car to dispose of green waste	Needs outside help	Needs an agreed location and participants	
Local produce – buying in bulk and / or joining a vegetable box scheme	Fresher, local food. Reduced food miles, encourages smaller, local producers. Bulk buying should reduce costs	Needs outside help	Needs an organiser and participants	
Bulk buying special offers - toilet paper, printer cartridges, insulation materials	Reduces the need to travel by car and should save money		Needs an organiser and participants	



Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
<b>SUSTAINABILITY GENERALLY</b>				
Facility for selling local produce – community shop	Reduces the need to travel by car & encourages smaller local producers. Brings more services within walking / cycling distance Increased physical activity can improve health. An opportunity for increased social interaction.	Yes - monthly market at Bredwardine & Brobury village hall	Needs an agreed location	A commercial provider and / or PC to lead as part of the CLP
Creation of community heart (shop, café, pub?)	Reduces the need to travel by car and encourages smaller local producers. Increases social interaction. Brings more services within walking / cycling distance which could increase physical activity and health	Yes, Dorstone shop and St Leonard's church at Yarpole from which we can learn		A commercial provider and / or PC to lead as part of the CLP
Local education, e.g. talks about using power and energy sustainably	Increased knowledge, practical examples and inspirational speakers can change behaviours		Needs an organiser, speakers and audiences	
Local directory of opportunities/courses related to sustainability and sources of advice	As above		Needs an organiser	
Affordable housing for young people, couples, young families and older people	Would produce a more balanced age profile locally. Demand would support local	Needs outside help		PC - potentially part of the new CLP

Suggestion	Sustainability effect	Comments on local Feasibility	What is required?	Initial thoughts on who will lead the implementation
	services. People would be able to afford to remain in / return to their local community			
<b>SUSTAINABILITY GENERALLY</b>				
Support rainwater recycling, butt buying scheme also installing water meters, water hippos to save consumption etc	Reduced demand for expensive, water storage, processing & treatment. Saves energy & costs. Can reduce run off / floods	Needs outside help		
Grey water re-cycling scheme	As above	Needs outside help		
Organised litter picks	Reduces pollution which can conserve bio-diversity			
Feed SAP ideas into the process for developing Breinton's CLP (Planning for Real events etc.)		Already happening	Continued links between PBG volunteers and CLP steering group	PBG volunteers
PBG will continue as a source of advice and signpost to events / expertise in sustainability e.g. local seed swaps, H energy events	Reduces loss of existing knowledge etc and broadens knowledge pool	PBG volunteers are willing	PBG volunteers to keep up to date	PBG volunteers

Further work is necessary through the CLP process to;-

- Identify who will take on each or any of these actions,
- the type of outside help / partners required for success,
- the timescales,
- the costs,
- any funding sources and
- the priority
- provide a clear mandate / evidence of community need/or want for those ideas that need further support/funding/resource if they are to be taken forward

*July 2012*

### 3. LINKS WITH THE COMMUNITY LED PLAN (CLP)

At the time of writing it is still not totally how this SAP links into either the process for producing the CLP or the CLP document itself which is still some 12-18 months away. Both Breinton Parish Council and the PBG volunteers have always seen the SAP forming part of the CLP. Nothing else made sense. Initially the SAP was talked about as being the 'environmental chapter' of any future CLP. However; the broad definition of a SAP which PBG volunteers adopted (see page 9) and the list of ideas subsequently generated by the PBG process (and then the CLP launch event in January 2012), demonstrate that the SAP and CLP share significant amounts of common ground both theoretically and in practical terms.

So, it is no longer right to talk about the SAP as simply a chapter of the eventual CLP. The concept of sustainability needs to be recognised as covering the whole future of the community that is Breinton, and not just its' physical environment. So the PBG ideas cannot be contained within a single CLP chapter devoted to the environment unless this is what eventual editor of the CLP decides for practical reasons.

This documentation of similar ideas by both processes was predictable and happened naturally in Breinton. It is in line with Ecohere's vision to gradually highlight the connection between all issues of a CLP and the general sustainability of the community. The steering group leading the production of the CLP will simply have to address this shared heritage if it raises practical problems.

One potential problem is that the more extensive and technically sophisticated consultation processes that have to be followed to produce a CLP are likely to continue producing similar ideas to those already gathered by the PBG process. Thus the CLP may appear to duplicate what has gone before and create 'consultation fatigue'. Some Breinton residents have already said words to the effect of 'I've already told you this' or 'what have you done about the ideas I gave you last time?'

However; the CLP process should produce additional ideas and involve more people. It could make people feel that their original ideas are still being considered and taken forward by the local community, rather than being forgotten or thrown aside. The CLP will also continue to raise awareness of each issue for the many people in Breinton who have not considered them yet

A second potential problem is that the CLP process quite rightly places great emphasis on local people validating what goes, and what does not, into the final plan to be implemented. Proceeding with PBG ideas now, before the CLP is produced, might appear to conflict with the CLP process, which requires a strict sequence of consultation, analysis, evaluation and implementation steps.

However the majority of PBG ideas have already come from local people and many do not require wider community validation to proceed. For instance, if people wish to share garden space in most cases they could do that without any involvement of the wider community. So, many PBG ideas could go ahead at the same time as the CLP process proceeds over the next 15 months, if interested people came forward to organise and implement them or if they are agreed to be a 'quick win' by the CLP steering group,

#### 4. OBSERVATIONS ON THE SAP PROCESS

The PBG volunteers have learnt a lot during the last 12 months. Some of this may be of use to others who find themselves in similar positions in future. In no particular order the main points are:

- A small budget is important to develop a SAP. All the volunteers are out of pocket financially to some extent having funded room hire fees, refreshments, printing and artwork etc. However, Community First have reviewed the entire budget for this particular project and have subsequently been able to provide up to £80 towards the costs in each parish involved which is very much appreciated
- Ideas are relatively easy to capture. What has proved impossible so far is to find people to carry them forward to reality. For instance a bulk buying scheme for fuel requires someone to run the scheme and a sufficiently large group of people to be part of the scheme to bring benefits
- It would appear that the word 'Sustainability' simply turns many people off particularly older generations. This is a major barrier when it is vital to get a critical mass of local people to realise that the current way of life in Breinton is NOT sustainable, and changes are necessary. However comfortable it may feel, the population is ageing, the church is spending approximately £2 for every £1 it receives and the village hall will close to new bookings in February 2013 if new committee members do not come forward. There are relatively few younger, enthusiastic residents and those that exist are not coming forward to take an active role in the community
- It is difficult to get a full cross section of the local population involved in initiatives like a SAP even though a variety of publicity and events were tried. In a small community informal, social networking is clearly important in encouraging or reducing participation.
- It is difficult to get significant numbers to take an active interest in anything other than crises that affect them personally, like school or library closures or new road proposals. Potentially entertaining events and / or the opportunity to save money are not in themselves sufficient to produce a critical mass
- Voluntary effort does not necessarily produce results. When effort fails, volunteers lose heart.
- Teamtalk, the village fete and fireworks display are crucial ways to communicate with local people but do not appear to reach all residents.
- There is a real lack of social data for small areas like Breinton. For instance there is, on average 10% of the population living in fuel poverty. Issues like this are clearly sensitive but how do you identify such people?
- There are many local examples, knowledge and practical experience from which Breinton residents could learn e.g. garden sharing schemes, 'village warden' schemes. Many of the SAP ideas are not rocket science and we can follow the lead of others, learning from their experience and knowledge

- There are examples of good environmental management within our own community e.g. externally insulated buildings and pumps providing heat from underground. These should be continually celebrated, not re-discovered every few years
- Working together as a community to make Breinton more sustainable is crucial. Easy to do initiatives such as re-cycling household waste via the Herefordshire Council scheme is a start not an end
- There is only so much Breinton can do as a local community, it needs to focus on what it can do itself or by joining with others rather than be too idealistic
- Attendance at events can be influenced by unforeseen factors e.g. rain on fireworks night and the first sunny day of spring for a village hall event
- Some people, particularly older residents, are turned off by the term “sustainability” and tend to think there is nothing wrong with living their lives as they have always lived them. However, if sustainability ideas are introduced in terms of “saving money” and made easy, people are much more interested
- Bodies working on behalf of local people such as water companies, waste disposal / recycling contractors are surprisingly resistant to organising visits so that the public can see what they do

## 5. CONTACTS

Ecohere is an innovative and forward looking project delivered by Community First and the Bulmer Foundation and supported through European funding (The Leader programme). In the two years from March 2011 the project aims to help 25 rural communities address their sustainability and reduce their carbon footprint by supporting them in the development and implementation of their own SAP.

Contact: Community First: 41a Bridge Street, Hereford. HR4 9DG

Breinton Parish Council c/o The Parish Clerk, 2 Munstone Garden Cottages. Munstone. Hereford HR1 3AH

[www.breintonparish.co.uk](http://www.breintonparish.co.uk)

Contact details of the Painting Breinton Green volunteers are provided overleaf



# Painting Breinton Green



R. Semple

On behalf of **Breinton Parish Council** we have been investigating new ideas for sustainability since September 2011. At the Fireworks event in November 2011 we began to collect your suggestions for improving life in Breinton, - not just to reduce our carbon footprint and conserve natural resources for the future, but also to encourage community spirit and future benefits for all. See the list of ideas, including improving transport, saving fuel energy, composting, and many more, on the website: [www.breintonparish.co.uk](http://www.breintonparish.co.uk)  
**These ideas could save you money!**

To involve more members of the community we have held a variety of events! In March we visited the Crematorium, to learn how it operates from a sustainability point of view. Then we invited some local experts to the Village Hall to tell you about the latest schemes and technologies for a more sustainable future. In April Gabe Cook from Bulmers (Heineken) came to give a very interesting talk about the local cider heritage.

Painting Breinton Green are taking note of your ideas and continuing to explore the different options. But we can't do this without volunteers to help put the ideas into action. One of our current aims is to improve the range of transport options and reduce dependence on cars.

Can you help? Please contact Tony and Nicky Geeson (01432 279713 [tnchgeeson@btinternet.com](mailto:tnchgeeson@btinternet.com)), Anita Sancha (01432 272169 [anita@anitasancha.co.uk](mailto:anita@anitasancha.co.uk)) or Brian Lunt ([brian.lunt@phonecoop.coop](mailto:brian.lunt@phonecoop.coop)) for further information.



R. Semple

Painting Breinton Green also supports the Community Led Plan for Breinton's Future



N. Geeson , May 2012

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### (BASED ON SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN CONSULTATIONS IN BREINTON)

#### Introduction

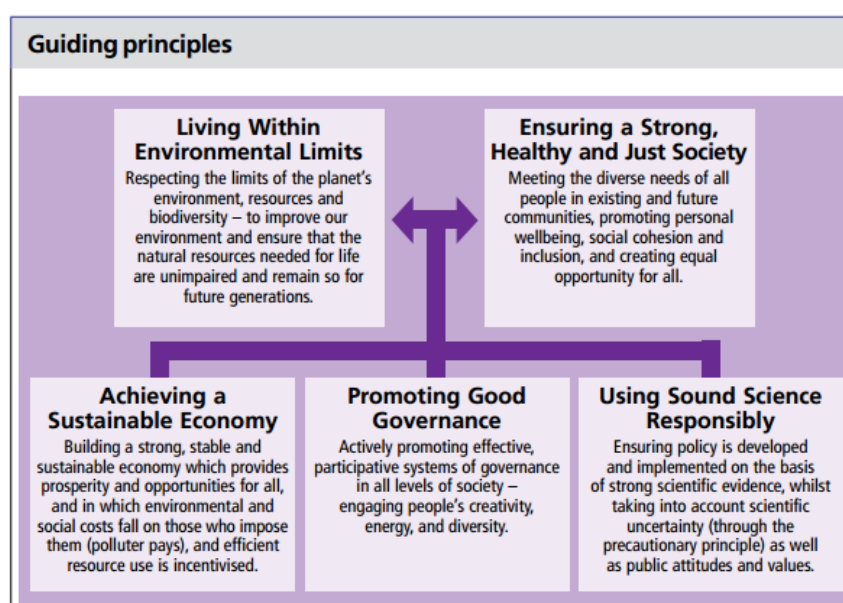
The unique features of Breinton such as being the green lung for Hereford city, are praised by many residents and should be conserved and sustained wherever possible. To achieve this, commitment and action is needed from experts and volunteers. Without agreement on overall plans and implementation for priorities, existing opportunities will be missed, and future development may not be regulated in a sustainable way. In Breinton many ideas have been collected from residents. However it is currently proving relatively difficult to engage with volunteers and funding to take these ideas forward.

The community of Breinton is not currently very sustainable, since a large proportion of the population are older people. For most residents, unless they have access to a car they cannot reach basic amenities. If they become unable to drive or cycle, unless improved provision is made to make amenities more accessible they will not be able to continue living in Breinton. At the same time, the current distribution and relatively high price of housing is likely to deter younger, more active families from choosing Breinton as an ideal place to live.

Policy for Breinton should encourage the conservation of all the highly-praised features while seeking ways to improve livelihoods in sustainable ways.

#### Best Practice

In March 2005 the Government published “Securing the Future”, setting out a sustainable development strategy. The aim was to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations. Five guiding policy principles were identified.



From: **Communities and Local Government: Sustainable Development Action Plan 2007-08**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/631160.pdf>



Since then these principles have been examined in detail and developed for incorporation in a full range of plans and actions. For example, the Herefordshire Sustainable Communities Strategy <http://www.herefordshirepartnership.com/Strategy.aspx> identifies six themes to address: Children and young people; Economic development and enterprise; Environment; Healthier communities and older people; Safer communities and Stronger communities.

In Breinton local people have contributed ideas and suggestions that could improve their own livelihoods and make Breinton more sustainable for future generations. Listed below are a range of opportunities to address general national sustainability policy – if such a national policy actually exists - at the local scale of Breinton using headings chosen to be applicable to Breinton:- Energy, Recycling, Transport, Business/agriculture, Housing, Biodiversity, Heritage, Health and well-being

### **1. ENERGY**

**Policy:** To avoid unnecessary waste of non-renewable energy.To promote the sustainable use of energy.

Opportunities include:

- Promotion of information on money-saving through energy-saving: both domestic and business
- Promotion of schemes to share bulk-buying of domestic fuel oil or LPG
- Promotion of schemes to improve home insulation and domestic energy use

### **2. RECYCLING**

**Policy:** To promote recycling and re-use of existing resources.

Opportunities include:

- Book stall in church
- Promotion of information on recycling possibilities
- Promotion of information on composting and saving rainwater

### **3. TRANSPORT**

**Policy:** To promote convenient and money-saving modes of transport while reducing the use of non-renewable energy.

Opportunities include:

- Promote energy-efficient transport, such as bicycles, by sign-posting bike-friendly routes
- Application for funding to improve or build cycle routes
- Car-sharing, either with neighbours or through Kings Acre Cars

### **4. BUSINESS/AGRICULTURE**

Policy: To conserve local resources and specialism. To use local resources for local users. To promote sustainable local food production

Opportunities include:

- Preserve Grade I and II agricultural land for agriculture and food production
- Retain local knowledge, e.g. in fruit orchards, horticulture
- Conserve local and rare varieties of fruit trees
- Promote local sales of local produce

## **5. HOUSING**

Policy: To ensure any new development is in harmony with existing features, but with provision to take advantage of new technologies for sustainability where appropriate. To ensure that provision of services (water supply, waste disposal, etc.) for any new development does not compromise existing householders. To ensure that new building complies with current national guidelines for sustainability, particularly in terms of source of materials, insulation and energy-use.

Opportunities include:

- Promotion of information on sustainable building and sustainable domestic energy-use

## **6. BIODIVERSITY**

Policy: To conserve biodiversity on agricultural land, in hedges, in gardens and in other local habitats such as woodland, the river and ponds

Opportunities include:

- Promotion of information on the need for biodiversity
- Survey of existing biodiversity, e.g. by CPRE and the Herefordshire Parklands Project

## **7. HERITAGE**

Policy: To conserve evidence of past heritage. To conserve evidence of present-day heritage.

Opportunities include:

- Promotion of information on past and current heritage
- Conservation of identified heritage sites (such as archaeological sites, long-term orchards, views featured in famous paintings)

## **8. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Policy: To promote opportunities for access to local food, and healthy recreation in a safe environment

Opportunities include:

- Promotion of walking and cycling for recreation
- Promotion of access to local foods, from individual gardens as well as fruit farms