AYLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Priorities Statement

1. Your Details

Information Required	Response
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Details of public consultation and engagement used in the preparation of the PPS	In preparing the Parish Priorities Statement, the following public consultation and engagement activities were undertaken:
	1. **Newsletter Distribution**: A newsletter was circulated to inform and engage the community about the Parish Priorities initiative, providing initial context and inviting participation.
	2. **Community Survey**: A comprehensive survey was conducted, available both online and in paper format, ensuring accessibility and encouraging broad participation from residents.
	3. **Parish Priorities Event**: A dedicated community engagement event titled the "Parish Priorities Event" was organized. The event featured:
	    o A **structured talk by a planning consultant** to provide expert insights and contextualize the discussion around parish priorities.
	    o An **open session** with a drop-in format, allowing residents to engage directly with parish councillors and officers. Attendees were encouraged to share their views and complete the survey during the event.
	These efforts ensured a robust and inclusive approach to gathering community input, forming the foundation for the Parish Priorities Statement.

The vision for the future…

What are the three key changes you would like to see in your Parish over the next 15 years? These changes should relate to the priorities set out below. It will also be helpful to explain when you think these changes should happen over the 15 year period.

1. **Improved Infrastructure**:
- Development of local transport networks.
- Enhanced connectivity within the parish, such as better roads and public transportation.

2. **Development of Community Amenities**:
- A larger supermarket
- Expansion of leisure facilities (e.g., enhanced Welfare Leisure Centre).
- Creation of spaces that foster community interactions, such as parks and multipurpose halls.
- Secondary education facilities
- Improved accessibility and usability of existing facilities.

3. **Balanced Development**:
- Preference for development that integrates with the existing natural environment and preserves the parish's character.
- Controlled housing developments catering to diverse community needs (young families, elderly residents, etc.).
- Sustainable approaches ensuring long-term benefits for the community, such as eco-friendly projects.

Development and management of land

Information required	Response
What type and level of development would you like to see in the parish?	***No More Houses***: *30% of respondents prefer no additional housing developments in the parish* ***Retail Development***: *15% are in favor of retail development.* ***Affordable Properties***: *8.3% support the development of affordable housing.* ***Bungalows***: *5% suggest developing bungalows*
Are there any areas of the Parish you would like to see developed?	*The Parish would like to see the derelict Snowdown Colliery site sensitively developed and brought back into productive use. Any future plans should respect the area's heritage, provide tangible community benefits, and ensure that development is sustainable and in keeping with the character of the Parish—not simply additional housing without appropriate infrastructure or purpose.*
Are there any specific areas you want protected for other uses?	***Protect Woodland***: *18.3% prioritize the protection of woodland areas.* ***Protect Village Green***: *20% wish to protect the village green.* ***Protect Footpaths***: *1.7% emphasize the importance of preserving footpaths*

Homes

Information required	Response
What type of homes would you like to see in your local community?	*The top responses are:* • *No more houses* • *Bungalows* • *3 bed* • *Council properties* • *Fully accessible properties* *Closely followed by:* • *2 bedroom properties* • *Single habitation homes*
What size of home is needed locally?	*The top response was three bedroom homes,* *Followed buy 2 bedroom homes* *Then, Single occupancy homes*
Any other requirements?	• *Preference for development that integrates with the existing natural environment and preserves the parish's character.* • *Controlled housing developments catering to diverse community needs (young families, elderly residents, etc.).* • *Sustainable approaches ensuring long-term benefits for the community, such as eco-friendly projects.*

Design

Information Required	Response
Are there any areas of local character which are particularly important to the local community?	*Below details the percentage of responses with each answer:* • **The Village Heritage**: 12% • **The Memorial Garden**: 10% • **Market Square**: 10% • **Aylesham Community Trust Building**: 4% • **Variety of House Design**: 4% • **Community Services**: 3% • **Sports Field**: 2% • **Aylesham House**: 2% • **Solar Panels**: 2% • **Churches**: 2% • **Woodland**: 2% • **Weekly Farmers Market**: 1% • **EV Charging**: 1% *This breakdown highlights the community's focus on preserving heritage and central public spaces, with a secondary interest in architectural design and modern infrastructure.*

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Particular features of buildings of local character	***Brick Houses (no cladding)*** ***The Village Heritage**:* ***Aylesham Community Trust Building**:*

The natural environment

Information Required	Response
Opportunities to make nature bigger, better and more joined up	*The protection of green space and woodland are the top key priorities the community feel are key.* - The Parish Council has an adopted Biodiversity Policy. The protection of green space, woodland and wildlife are seen as key priorities for the community. - Encouragement and support for suitable planting within new developments to support biodiversity. - Encouragement and support for retaining good quality hedgerows where appropriate. - The use of species native to downland/chalkland areas to the encouraged and used where possible when planting particularly in the open space areas.

Jobs

Information Required	Response
Information about business you would like to protect and business opportunities that should be provided	*Support for local businesses currently in the area* *Greater opportunity for shops 7 retail* *And the introduction of a pub restaurant* - Regarding Aylesham South potentially approx. 800 new dwellings could be constructed with no additional employment locally provided so support, probably managed through the district council, will be required for present local businesses especially retail. - New business opportunities require investigation, especially those away from road transport and plant hire which look to dominate the present industrial estate. Businesses that require a wider range of skills. - A "larger" supermarket is seen as a priority from the consultations undertaken. Such is likely to be the "anchor" to the central hub of the new development. - A pub/restaurant has also been suggested through the consultation process. - Jobs will be created during the development of the site for a number of years however these will not be permanent.

Public spaces

Information Required	Response
Public Open Space, Public realm, Pocket Parks	*Market Square is considered the most important public space to the community. Often this is used for recreational purposes, and for community events.* - The Market Square is considered the most important public open space to the community. The Central Boulevard public open space requires to be regarded with equal importance. New public open space areas within new developments must assist in developing community cohesion through high quality provision in terms of space, quality of planting, design and facilities provided. Funding inclusion to cover for maintenance is essential. - Play areas should be provided with a range of high-quality facilities and equipment. Equipment should be targeted at different age ranges. Play equipment to include "traditional" as well as "adventurous". Seating and litter bins should be provided. Fencing provision where appropriate to ensure dogs cannot easily enter and children cannot easily run out into local roadways. - Signage and interpretation boards to help link areas and provide information, including historical, about the area. - Clear links to national and local PROWs, cycleways, public footpaths and bridleways. - Protection of public open spaces from being used for inappropriate parking. - Ensure excellent accessibility for all. - Public Art, provided through themed seating and fencing design as examples, also style of waymarking, interpreting boards etc. Central hub for the new development may be an appropriate location for any larger style of or piece of public art.

Infrastructure

Information Required	Response
Active travel priorities, roads / parking, community buildings needs, waste / water infrastructure, broadband, **renewable energy**	*Top Needs:* ***Reliable Public Transport** emerges as the most significant shortfall, highlighting it as a major need. (continued below)* **Bus Services** - Sunday service to Canterbury, funding to restore ½ hourly weekday frequency to Canterbury, later Saturday and weekday evening journeys. High quality enclosed bus shelters within the proposed development. Raised kerbing facility at bus stops to enable level boarding. Provision of a "traditional" bus service to Whitfield and Dover town centre (this perhaps considered when funding for the Demand Responsive Stagecoach Connect comes to an end). Public transport improvements featured as the top change the community

Information Required	Response
	would like to see over the next 15 year period. Real Time Information at selected stops eg Baptist Church and central hub in Aylesham South.
	• Improvements to bus services and bus infrastructure need to be introduced near the beginning of the proposed new development and not wait until the development is almost complete. People need the option when they move in not years afterwards when alternative travel options have become established. With the number of new dwellings plus the lack of additional employment facilities envisaged excellent public transport will be all the more important to avoid an overly car based development. Infrastructure first.
	• RAIL STATION/S AND SERVICES - Aylesham station offers poor facilities at present. Particularly important, is creating a station that is accessible to all. The present footbridge is a barrier to use for many people. Waiting facilities are limited on both platforms. More platform seating and litter facilities are required. Hopefully timetable improvements could enable a ½ hourly service on weekdays with some faster journeys to London in the future. Snowdown station also lacks accessibility for all and finding a solution to this is a longer term target.
	• 20mph local road speed limit introduction.
	• Re-surfacing Cooting Road.
	• Other local speeding and highway concerns have been submitted to KCC by way of the Highway Improvement Plan.
	• *Secondary Schools are the second-highest need.*
	• *Supermarkets and Youth Clubs follow closely*
	• *Healthcare and Community Facilities: Additional NHS services to be provided in Aylesham so as to avoid travel to Canterbury/ Dover.*
	• *Pubs, Better Road Surfaces, and other amenities such as Street Lighting and Small Businesses have lower, but notable mentions.*
	• Youth provision.
	• Support for a multi-purpose community facility within the Aylesham South development.
	• Allotment provision
	• Provision of a range of dwelling size with a range of different styles of occupancy from private purchase to social rented and affordable .
	• Housing to include some "lifetime" designed properties.
	Lesser Priorities:
	• *Specific issues like Water Supply/Waste, Speed Limits, Step-Free Access (Train), Swimming Pools, and A2 Road Connection.*
	• *Other items such as Parking, Footpath/Cycle Routes, and a Bigger Chemist also received minimal responses.*

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