

## **MEETING WITH FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH – 11 FEB 2004**

A Meeting was held with the Friends of the Church on 11 February 2004. The Meeting was attended by six members of the Community.

The Meeting started with an introduction to the ‘concept’ of a Village Plan and its aims to represent the direction and aspirations of the whole community in its development over a period of between five and ten years. It must:

- Reflect the views of all sections of the community;
- Identify which features and local characteristics people value;
- Identify local problems and opportunities;
- Spell out how residents want the community to develop in the future;
- Prepare a plan of action to achieve the vision.

In an ‘Open Forum’ a number of topics were discussed; these included:

1. It was agreed that the community of Christian Malford is caring and supportive. Village events were extremely well supported by the whole community. However, there was a feeling that some of those living on the outskirts of the Village (Main Rd, Orchard Leaze) felt marginalised. More effort is required to make sure that the Village is more inclusive.
2. The current facilities within the Village should be retained, as the loss of any one of them would have a detrimental effect on the community.
3. The lack of affordable housing made it extremely difficult for young families to settle in the Village. Failure to attract families with young children could jeopardise the long-term viability of the Village School as the current crop of infants’ move on up through the educational system.
4. Any increase in ‘housing stock’ should be affordable – starter homes, accommodation for rent. Concern was expressed that any increase in the number of houses would probably require an upgrade to the infrastructure in the Village.
5. The lack of activities for the young was seen as a problem as it is not easy to get to the facilities offered in Chippenham or Swindon without parental assistance. There was no solution offered.
6. Safety within the Village was touched on with concern expressed over the speed of vehicles travelling through the Village. The lack of pavements was also a cause for concern. There was no support for street lighting.
7. The provision of rural transport was seen as less than adequate to meet the needs of the young and the elderly.
8. More could be done to maintain the local environment.