

The Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan set out a number of Strategic Village initiatives. The Parish Council has been holding discussions with those organisations and groups within the village to best determine how to take these initiatives forward.

Meetings have been held with the Village Hall Committee, St. Marys, the Methodist Church, the Lighthouse Church, the Scouts and the Sports Club to sound out their requirements and vision for the future. There are plans to involve the library and the schools.

The village centre is built around the stretch from the Rose and Crown to the shops, the library, the Recreation Ground, the doctor's surgery and pavilions to the Village Hall. The development of this stretch of the village will provide many of the facilities needed for Lytchett Matravers going forward.

The Parish Council is continuing to hold a series of forums with the main stakeholders in this stretch with a view to building a comprehensive plan for its long-term development.

The Recreation Ground is the green heart of the village and has been protected by the Parish Council by registering as a Field In Trust. We need to look at the Recreation Ground as a place for the village residents to spend time on, as families, for village functions, for sporting activities and so on. It is not a classic village green, but it is a large open space in the village centre and it needs to be developed in terms of usage and function.

The Village Hall is in a very prominent position at the top of the Recreation Ground and has the space to offer more services. We will be looking initially at how a potential redevelopment of the Village Hall could provide that. That could be more flexible function rooms, improved facilities for catering, etc.

Equally, the library is in a similar prominent position, being near the shops and surgery. The library has been threatened with closure twice in the last few years and, with the reorganisation of Dorset County Council to Dorset Council next April is under threat again. It is crucial we have a development plan for both the library building and the library services.

Also, within the scope of the Forum are the support and development of the Sports Club, the Scout Hut, the Youth Hall and the development of sports facilities both on the Recreation Ground and around the Primary School.

Inevitably funding will be a key component of the scope of the development plans. The scope and timing of what we can reasonably achieve will be limited by funding. However, the development plan will set out the full picture, which will then allow us to phase in each development knowing the full plan and the full picture.