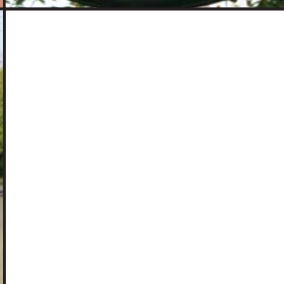
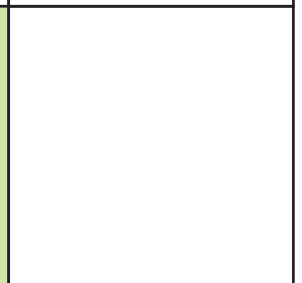
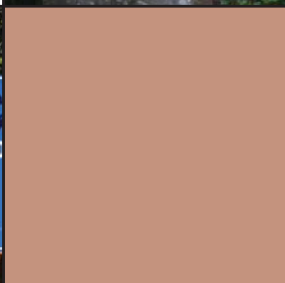
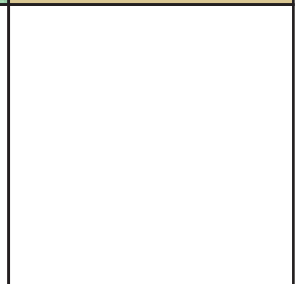
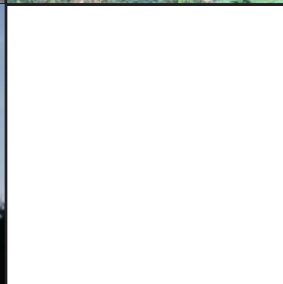
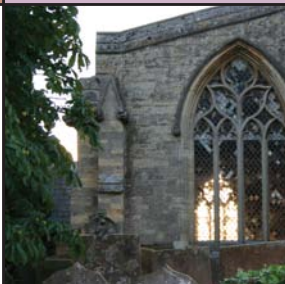
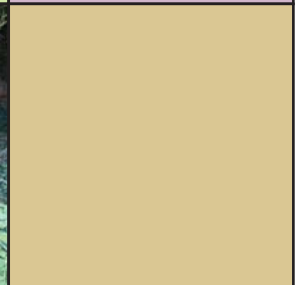
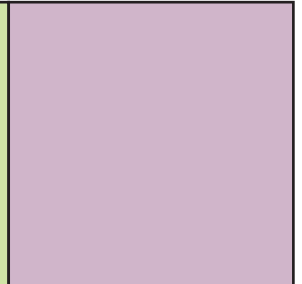
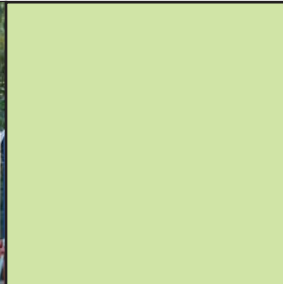


Welbourn Parish Appraisal 2005

Produced and published on behalf of Welbourn Parish Council



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Fig 1 Welbourn: Village and Parish



The Making of Welbourn Parish Plan

Welbourn Parish Action Plan is the result of eighteen months consultation. The Parish Plans initiative formed part of the Vital Villages strategy supported by the Countryside Agency.

The first Open Meeting on February 12th 2004 was run by Welbourn Parish Council with the support of Susan Ross from NKDC and introduced the idea of a Parish Plan to villagers. The meeting was well attended with over 60 members of the public. Everyone was encouraged to write some initial ideas for the future direction of the village of Welbourn on 'post-it' notes and this started the consultation process.

Twenty-four volunteers met in March 2004 and formed four working groups covering broad areas – Housing and Environment, Services and Businesses, Community and Leisure and Transport and Highways. A representative from each group joined a Steering Group to oversee the project and additional members included District and Parish Councillors.

Grants to fund the cost of producing a Parish Plan were applied for and the Welbourn Parish Plans Group was awarded grants as follows:

- Countryside Agency: £2626
- FundNK: £650
- Welbourn Parish Council: £250

An extensive survey of over 50 questions was delivered by hand to all 282 Welbourn households in November 2004. The response rate of 65% was excellent and this information was used to select the areas villagers identified as important. In addition, a separate joint survey with Leadenham Parish Plans Group and the local secondary school was sent to parent's of pupils at Sir William Robertson High School. Local businesses were contacted by letter and an open workshop was held for village children up to 17 years old to ensure that both these interest groups were given the opportunity to express their thoughts on the future of Welbourn.

The Action Plan was formally adopted by Welbourn Parish Council and published in two versions in Autumn 2005.

- Welbourn Parish Appraisal (printed copies available to purchase or download free)
- Welbourn Parish Action Plan (free to all householders and interest groups)

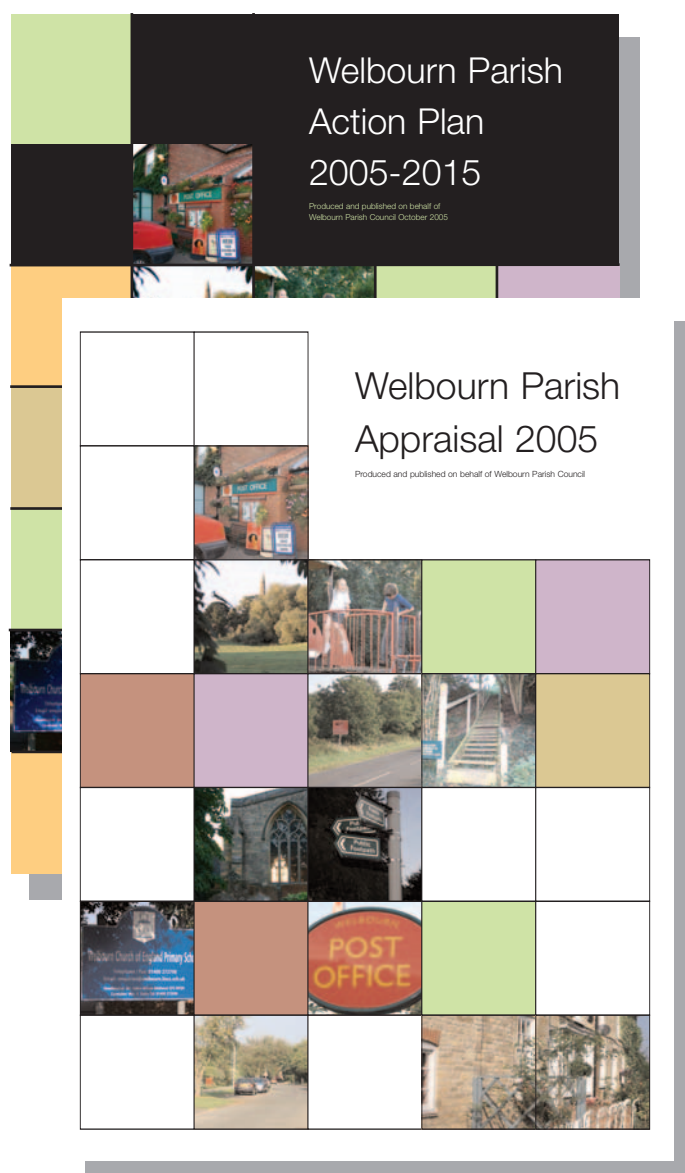
The main aim of Welbourn Parish Plan is to ensure that Welbourn remains a sustainable village by making improvements that enhance the existing way of life.

A chance to say 'thank-you'

Welbourn Parish Council would like to thank all the volunteers on the Welbourn Parish Plans Steering Group and the four Working Groups for their hard work and commitment in producing the Welbourn Parish Action Plan on behalf of the Parish Council. In particular we would like to express our appreciation for the many hours given by Bill Goodhand in producing this Parish Appraisal. Thanks also to the many villagers who answered the extensive questionnaire, attended the public meetings and gave their views.

Valuable assistance and support was also received from North Kesteven District Council, The Community Council of Lincolnshire, the Countryside Agency and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. Special thanks to Susan Ross (NKDC) and Fiona White (CCL).

Rod Storer
Chair Welbourn Parish Council



The Changing Village

“Villages are at risk of becoming spiritless commuter dormitories with decaying services and no sense of community. As shops, schools and post offices disappear and rising house prices squeeze out young families traditional village life will be severely under threat in the 21st century”.

Daily Mail on July 5th 1999

This headline statement written by Matthew Hickley in the Daily Mail on July 5th 1999, comments on the survey of village life published by the National Federation of Women's Institutes. Perhaps an even more disturbing observation within this comprehensive report is the fact that as we enter the 21st century our villages are still crying out for the same things that they were nearly 50 years ago.

These well researched findings - drawn from more than 5,000 villages throughout England - provides a particularly apposite backcloth in appraising how our own village of Welbourn has changed over recent years and on how we live today. Above all it challenges us to suggest ways in which we might play a more active role in shaping our future.

1. Introduction: The Contemporary Village

Welbourn has a population of 646 (2001 census) and 282 dwellings (2004) and is one of a line of rural settlements spaced at regular intervals along the Lincoln Edge and the A607, often referred to as the Cliff Villages. The village is 13 miles (21 kms) from Lincoln and 15 miles (24 kms) from Grantham and well connected to both towns by a regular bus service. A considerable proportion of the village buildings are constructed of the traditional local materials of rubble or ashlar dressed limestone with roofs of red clay pantiles. The bulbous medieval spire of St. Chad's Church still dominates the village street scene while the wooded moat and grassy mounds of Castle Hill bring a sense of the open countryside into the heart of the village. More recent buildings, mostly constructed in brick, have been in the form of small scale infill of privately built dwellings some constructed in stone, together with several groups of Local Authority council houses and O.A.P. bungalows. There are also minor groupings of dwellings along the A607 as well as a number of isolated farms and cottages. (See Fig 1)

The typically elongated parish (3,300 acres/1337 hectares) stretches west to east for over four miles (6.5 kms) across the natural grain of the landscape. From the River Brant (30 ft/10ms O.D.) the land rises gently towards the village (120ft/35m O.D.) across the clay lands of the Lowfields. East of the village is the steep and partially wooded scarp slope of the Lincoln Edge or the Cliff, reaching a maximum height of just over 300ft/90m O.D. Beyond is the limestone dip slope known as the Heath which declines gradually eastwards towards the parish boundary which follows the Roman Ermine Street (230ft/70m O.D.) The Heath has long been an open landscape of large arable fields divided by low hawthorn hedges and with few trees, but elsewhere in the parish recent changes in the former mixed farming regime to one of intensive arable cropping, has radically remodelled the landscape of small hedged fields. Even the River Brant has been

drastically modified and canalised to accommodate improved agricultural land drainage.

Welbourn has been fortunate to date in retaining the main focal points of village life namely: - church, school, shop/post office and pub together with a village hall and playing field. Fortuitously the parish also contains a large comprehensive school, The Sir William Robertson High School (800 pupils on roll) with further potential for employment, leisure and cultural facilities. Nonetheless the attractions of the superior services in local towns and in particular Lincoln, have increasingly come to dominate local patterns of work, shopping and leisure. Following the national trends, employment in agriculture is now a minor occupation within the village.

Since the 1950's local authority planning decisions and land ownership have emerged as the major determinants of the scale of village settlement growth in Lincolnshire and the larger the scale of growth the more diluted the 'traditional' village community has become. In this respect Welbourn falls into a middle group of smaller villages - so called minor settlements in planning terms - with a relatively stable population, in contrast to the smallest villages or hamlets often with a declining population and those settlements closest to a major centre where rapid growth has taken place with the building of large dormitory housing estates.

In 1974 the Parish Council together with the people of Welbourn undertook a similar exercise to our current project which resulted in the publication of the Welbourn Parish Plan of 1976. Consequently with this benchmark in mind it is especially relevant to look back to that period and to reflect on the many changes that have taken place within our community in the intervening 30 years and to draw appropriate conclusions as a guide to the future.

2. History and Heritage: The Welbourn Story

"Those who cannot master the past cannot master the future" anon.

Welbourn like most villages, has been continuously adapted through time to serve the needs of successive generations which has left us with a rich historical heritage of buildings and landscape features. The present nucleated settlement form was probably established in the Anglo-Saxon period as evidenced by the manner in which the later Norman castle (Castle Hill Field) partially distorts the simple ladder-like street pattern (see Fig 2.). Prior to this period the Roman occupation had left us with the broad trackway of the Ermine Street, the archaeological remains of a villa or a major farmstead bordering the pre-historic Pottergate and traces of other settlement features on the western edge of the present village.

Written records referring to the village begin in 1086 with the compiling of the great Domesday Book which records that the Manor of Wellebrune - worth £15 in taxable value - had passed from its Anglo-Saxon owner, Godwine into the hands of a powerful Norman landowner, Robert Malet, a favourite of William I. The entry for Welbourn notes some 55 tenants of the new lord - 35 sokemen, 12 villeins and 8 bordars, as well as a church, priest and a watermill, perhaps a total village population of just under 250, a population figure which was to change little until the end of the 18th century.

By the middle of the 12th century the Lord of the Manor had built a fortified manor house and other buildings, complete with a ring-work of protective moats and earth ramparts which supported a stone curtain wall, an area of the village still known today as Castle Hill. Later, under the Lord of the Manor's patronage, Elias de Rabayn, the village was granted a charter by Henry III in 1272 to hold a weekly market and an annual six day fair following the feast of St. Chad which was celebrated in early March. This lengthy period of medieval prosperity was utterly shattered in 1349 with the arrival of the Black Death in Lincolnshire which appears to have decimated the population of the village and more especially the inhabitants of the nearby hamlet of Sapperton which eventually was completely deserted.

The years of despair and neglect that followed this calamity were graphically recorded in about 1370 with reference to the lands of the Manor estate then owned by Isabella de Vesey. "The site of the Manor (Castle Hill) is waste and entirely without buildings". The lands on "Les Hayes, a sandy and stony place ... are of no value... they have lain untilld for many years" and the watermill was, "of no net value because no river abounds there except in winter". It seems likely that the stone and timbers from the abandoned castle site were used to rebuild St. Chad's Church by John of Welbourne in about 1360, including the dedication of a chantry chapel in his name.

Further dramatic upheavals took place in the 17th century. Firstly, through the enclosure in about 1606 of the four great open arable fields surrounding the village by the then Lord of the Manor, Sir John

Popham, Lord Chief Justice of England, despite the trenchant opposition of the rector, the Revd. Francis Trigge, whose sympathies lay with the displaced tenant farmers and cottagers. The remnants of this enclosure landscape of hedged fields and sheep paddocks, which we can still see today, stretched between the Cliff and the River Brant. It seems likely that the alignment of the Lincoln to Grantham Road was moved eastwards to bypass the village as part of this privately agreed enclosure. The Heathlands were to remain unenclosed until 1781 probably on account of their poor, thin and stony soils.

Welbourn parish is fortunate in possessing a number of interesting historic treasures and archaeological sites.

The Nookin Well

A stone-built beehive form unique to the Kesteven area. Recently renovated by the Parish Council.

Castle Hill

A moated site on a ring work covering 3.4 acres (1.4 hec.) in O.S. 120, formerly occupied by the 11th century castle. This is now protected as a scheduled Ancient Monument. The mounds, dykes and bordering trees form a very important open space within the village. Purchased by the Parish Council on behalf of the village in 1998 with the aid of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

Sapperton

The probable site of this deserted medieval village may be beneath the extensive earthworks in O.S. 193. Other smaller areas of earthworks occur in O.S. 139 and O.S. 75. All would merit expert investigation.

The Ermine Street

The former Roman road – now a greenway – on the eastern flank of the parish with the southern section possessing a fine stretch of "agger" which delineates the actual line of the Roman highway.

The English Civil War of the 1640's may have heightened these raw social divisions in the village following enclosure, between those who owned or could afford to rent land and the many landless labourers and cottagers. Overall Welbourn folk seemed to have sided with the Parliamentary forces in the Commonwealth period, although several Welbourn landowners were subsequently fined by Parliament for supporting the Royalist cause. Then in the October of 1666 an overwhelming natural disaster all but destroyed the entire village when it was struck by a freak storm or tornado "on the thirteenth there was the strongest whirlwind or earthquake or both in Lincolnshire that was ever heard of. In the town of Welbourn near Newark of 80 stone houses only 3 were left standing, the timbers being so disposed that none could tell his own". Providentially there was only one death. With the help of public subscriptions from around the county, the village was rebuilt and no doubt drew together once more. However, this devastating event accounts for the fact that most of our surviving historic buildings date from the 18th or 19th centuries.

The more abundant records of the 19th century provide a detailed portrait of Welbourn as a typical Lincolnshire farming community. With increasing agricultural prosperity the population grew rapidly from 360 in 1801 to a peak of 677 in 1871, (see Fig. 2) with some 19 farms and 138 men and boys employed on the land. Many women and children were also casual land workers in busy periods such as at harvest time, while other families were employed in the various crafts and trades allied to agriculture such as blacksmith and wheelwright. In addition the village supported a considerable range of other services including a baker, butcher, corn miller and a tailor, four boot and shoe makers, five shop keepers, two stone masons, two publicans, two carriers and a brick and tile maker. Perhaps 70 new houses were built in the parish between 1801 and 1871 - the row of semi-detached cottages adjacent to Welbourn Hall are typical of this period of growth. Extra accommodation for agricultural labourers was also created by sub-dividing larger farmhouses, for example in the Nookin.

As the 19th century drew to a close, sweeping changes within the village led to the gradual breakdown of the old social order. It was said of rural England in the mid 19th century that the "average villager was illiterate, disenfranchised, worked twelve hours a day with a life expectancy of 32 years". The relative isolation of the village ended with the arrival of the Lincoln to Honington Junction Railway in 1867 - much of the disused railway embankment remains to the west of the village. The Methodist Chapel opened in the High Street in 1839, whose Sunday School classes taught many villagers to read for the first time. A process further advanced when a new village school was built nearby in 1865. Then in 1871 the 2000-acre estate in the parish, owned by the Marquis of Ripon, was sold off piece-meal so bringing yet more social and economic change to the old order. This is perhaps best typified by the arrival in 1877 of a Co-operative Stores, the first in rural Lincolnshire. Later the Society purchased and ran a dairy farm in the village. Finally in 1894 the farm workers of the village were able to vote in the first Parish Council

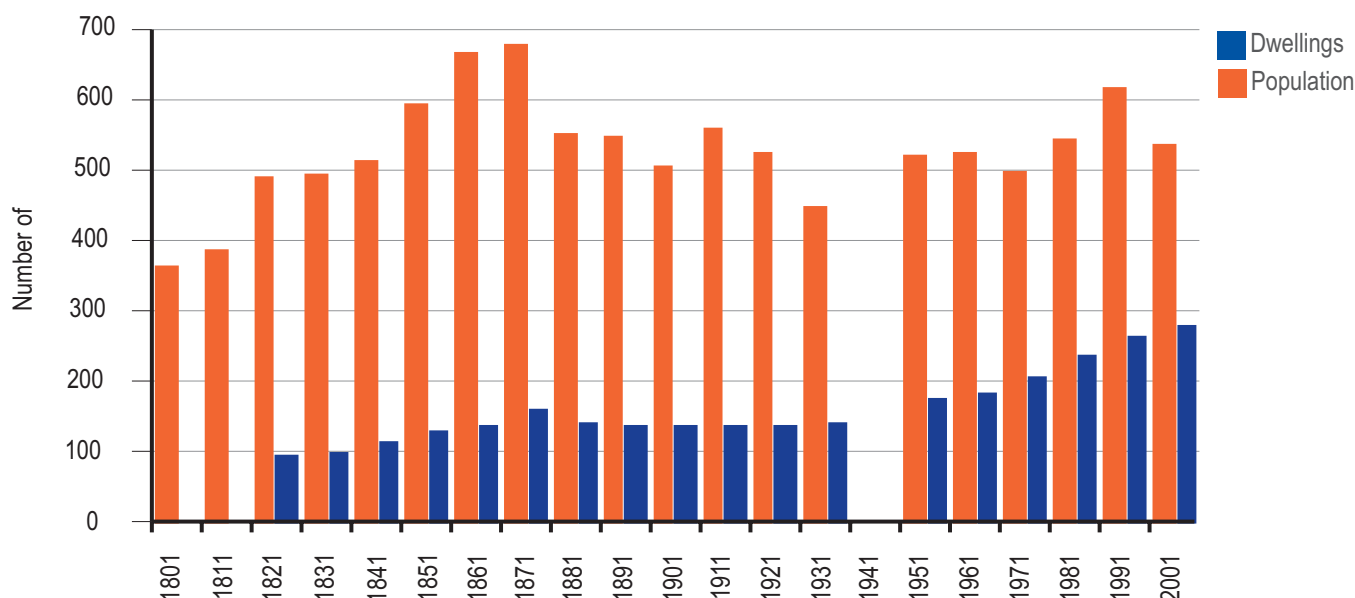
elections so that they could now, for the first time, modestly influence village affairs. Unsurprisingly their first demands were for the creation of village allotments of up to an acre for each individual tenant and so they were better able to feed their own families.

The career of Field Marshal Sir William Robertson exemplifies these generally beneficial changes and new opportunities for village children. The son of the village post-master and tailor - one of nine children - he left school in 1872 aged 12 eventually enlisting as a trooper in the 16th Lancers in 1877. By dint of his innate ability, great determination and application, he rose steadily through the ranks to become Chief of the Imperial General Staff in 1915 and a member of the War Cabinet during World War I.

For most of the 70 years between 1870 and 1939, modest social improvements were paralleled by agricultural depression, a falling population and little house building in the village. The village was partially seweraged in 1900 and piped water and electricity supplies reached the village between the wars. Many young adults left for work in the expanding manufacturing and service industries in the neighbouring towns. The outbreak of World War II brought a dramatic revival in farming fortunes and together with the building of several military bases within the locality, including Wellingore Airfield which was part in Welbourn parish, these changes provided a fresh stimulus for the local economy and community.

During most of the post-war period farming has continued to prosper, although with a rapidly shrinking workforce and with the loss of all the supporting trades which once flourished in the village. There has been a steady growth of population and housing together with new employment opportunities at the local secondary school and in the Manor and the Hall residential homes for the elderly as well as through farm diversification and more home working. Welbourn therefore is fortunate in having a strong economic and social base for sustaining its future well-being.

Fig 2 Welbourn: Changes in Population and Number of Dwellings 1801 - 2001 (Source: Census Data)



3. The Form and Character of the Village

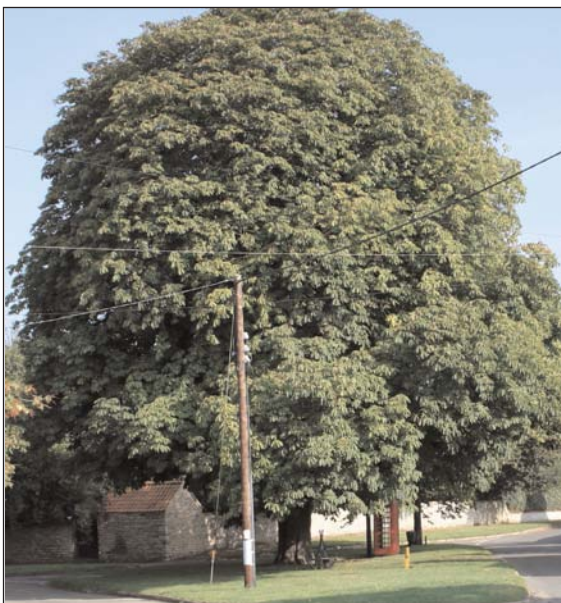
Fig 3 Welbourn: Settlement Form 2004



3.1 Village Site and Form: Past Influences.

The village occupies a near level site with the impressive backcloth of the Cliff immediately to the east, while the considerable embankment of the disused railway provides a sharp visual boundary to the west. The simple rectilinear village street pattern of two long parallel roads with short connecting lanes is elaborated in both the north and south by a straggle of buildings. Within the main village core earlier buildings cluster tightly but informally along the gently curving road frontages or around small greens to form an interesting enclosed streetscape, as for example in the Little Lane area and the Green. In contrast the extremities of the village, the Nookin and Dycote Lane, with their variety of buildings surrounded by hedges and mature screening trees, form particularly attractive approaches. There are also still a number of active farms and smallholdings within the village.

The Jubilee Tree, The Green



The present character of the village is still largely shaped by past development in terms of the street pattern, building styles and materials. Outstanding are the farmsteads, cottages and other buildings constructed by local masons in coursed rubble limestone and roofed with reddish/orange clay pantiles. Both these materials would have originally been produced within the parish. Of the earlier buildings, St. Chad's Church and the Manor, although much restored, are fine examples of medieval architecture. Notable amongst the smaller domestic buildings are a number of one or two storey cottages built in a vernacular style. These are long and narrow in form, of coursed rubble limestone with steeply pitched pantile roofs which would have once been thatched and with small dormer windows. They usually predate 1700 and probably represent the typical dwelling of the peasant farmer or husbandman of the Stuart period. Greystones on the Green, Jasmine Cottage in North End and Long Cottage off the Green are good examples of this building style. Green Gates in the High Street and Old House on the Green are fine examples of substantial farmhouses built in the Georgian style. The 19th century is distinguished by a wide variety of buildings constructed in polite architectural styles; substantial Victorian villas as represented by The Hall, Welbourn Place and Welland House, four pairs of estate workers' cottages in mock Tudor style near the Green together with the Chapel, the Joiners Arms, the former White Horse public house, the Co-operative Stores and a terrace row on The Green; mostly built in imported brick and slate. The street frontages of many of these earlier properties are sharply defined by low stone walls capped by pantiles.

3.2 Modern Development: Post 1950.

Even as late as the 1950's the village could still be described as having; "quiet winding lanes laced with stone cottages with pantile roofs or occasionally a brick cottage making a brilliant but harmonious contrast"

(M.W. Barley 'Lincolnshire And The Fens' 1952).

In the late 20th century council and speculative house building has somewhat modified this rather romantic view of the built environment. First to be built were several groups of local authority houses and bungalows constructed in brick and slate or concrete tiles. This building phase mainly took place in the early post-war years to meet essential local housing needs, but since the mid 1970's house building has been dominated by private speculative building on infill or windfall sites. In the earlier years these dwellings tended to reflect the standard 'off the peg' suburban designs of their period often in the form of bungalows or chalet style houses set well back from the street frontage. It is during this period also that with the improvements to the provision of the utility services to the village, the overall street scene acquired an unsightly clutter of poles and overhead wires. Of late more sympathetic house designs have appeared in the village with cottage style frontages and small dormer windows. Brick and artificial tiles have been replaced by stone cladding and red clay pantile roofs more in sympathy with the historic village pattern. This latest phase of housing development has usually

been larger in scale than in the past and is now dominated by four or five bedroomed detached houses. Similarly stone built extensions have been added to some of the older cottage properties and a number of non-domestic buildings such as the former Methodist Chapel and the stables attached to the Hall have been converted into flats or family homes. Overall more than 60% of dwellings within the village date from this post-war period.

3.3 Areas Within the Village of Special Historical and Architectural Interest.

The northern part of the village includes The Nookin and North End and here there is an attractive and informal grouping of stone buildings surrounded by mature trees and dominated by St. Chad's Church and churchyard. The Church in part dates from the 12th century but is mostly built in the decorated style after about 1360. This area also contains several other buildings of real merit for example The Nookin cottages, The Old Rectory and North End House. The conical stone capped well at the end of The Nookin is similar in style to those found in western France, so its origins may date back to the period of the Norman Conquest.

The central section of the village is the main commercial and communal focus with the shop/post office, public house, primary school, village hall and playing field grouped near the junctions of High Street, Little Lane and Beck Street. A number of the buildings here are built in traditional materials forming a pleasing enclosed village-scape. Castle Hill Field with the Bell Tree Green and The Beck (the village pond) provide an attractive and sharply contrasting natural landscape element within this essentially built environment.



Castle Hill



Former Blacksmith's Forge

To the south The Green, with its commemorative chestnut tree, forms a fine focal point around which there is an attractive informal grouping of stone and pantile or slate roofed buildings. There are several houses of real historical and architectural interest, for instance the Manor, Welbourn Hall, The Old House, Hunt House and Greystones. Of special local historic interest is the former tailor's shop and birthplace of Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, the Welbourn Co-operative Stores, the first rural co-operative established in Lincolnshire and also the former blacksmith's forge, a Victorian time-warp. Even the red telephone box is a listed building in this location.

Buildings of Special Historical and Architectural Merit

The Nookin Cottages

Probably early 1600s. L shape group of five cottages in rubble limestone with steeply pitched pantile roofs, one unfortunately restored with modern tiles. This building has long associations with the Burtts, a prominent Quaker family, and was once used as a conventicle or meeting place for the Society of Friends.

Greengates, High Street

Built about 1730, a substantial L shaped triple pile farmhouse in ashlar limestone with clay pantiles. Georgian style sash windows. This house also has a long association with the Quakers.

The Manor, High Street

The present house is mainly 17th-century but with earlier features within the interior. Built in limestone, H shaped and much restored and extended in the 20th century, set within walled grounds with many fine mature trees.

Greystones, The Green

A good example of a late 17th-century vernacular style, built in limestone with steeply pitched clay pantiled roof. A typical husbandman's home with house, barn and outbuildings, forming a harmonious whole.

Gartholm Farm, High Street

Late 17th-century, former farmhouse in ashlar stonework and pantiled with garrets and steeply pitched roof. Some original casement windows in upper storey. A unique building in this style within Welbourn and of considerable historic interest.

Co-operative Cottages, The Green

A row of four cottages c. 1720 in rubble limestone with slate roof of a later date. Small Georgian style sash windows. Mainly of historic interest as the birth place of Field Marshal Sir William Robertson in 1860.

Old House, The Green

Former farmhouse built in Georgian style c. 1750 in rubble limestone and clay pantiles. Small paned sash and dormer windows.

Field House, Cliff Road

Former farmhouse, possibly late 1500 or early 1600 in rubble limestone with pantiled roof. Dormers/garrets with sliding sash windows.

4. Population

4.1 Population Trends 1951-2001

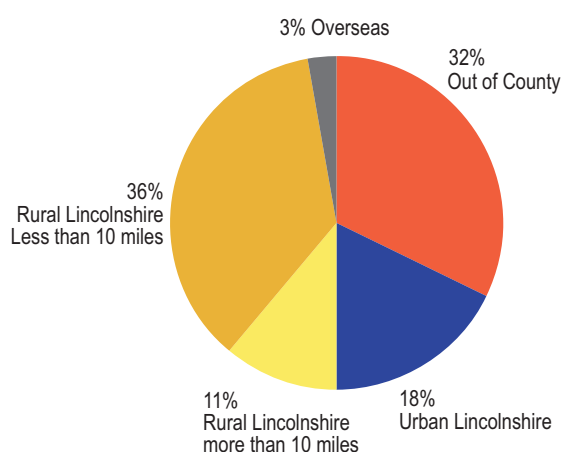
Over the census periods 1951-2001 the parish population has grown slowly from 521 to a little under 650 including the 61 residents of the Hall and Manor residential homes. For those living in private households the trend has been for smaller family units (now 2.3 compared with 3.1 in 1951) which explains the marked growth in the total number of village households from 161 to 257 in 2001 when compared with the small overall population growth. In this same period the sharp fall in the farm work force has been accompanied by a corresponding decline in the number of people living in outlying properties, some of which have been pulled down once they became redundant.

4.2 Population Mobility

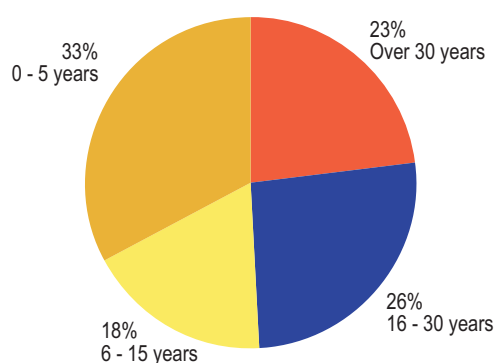
In the parish survey of 2004 a majority of household had been resident in Welbourn for at least 15 years and over 22% had lived in the village for more than 30 years. Conversely 34% of households had arrived in the village within the past 5 years with most of these incomers being short-distance migrants from neighbouring villages or from nearby towns and in particular from the Lincoln area (see Fig 4). For those households arriving from the rest of the UK, or from overseas, the attraction of living in a small Lincolnshire village combine with the needs of work or family commitments. R.A.F. families, previously regular arrivals, are now a very small minority.

Fig 4 (Source: Household Survey 2004)

Previous Place of Residence

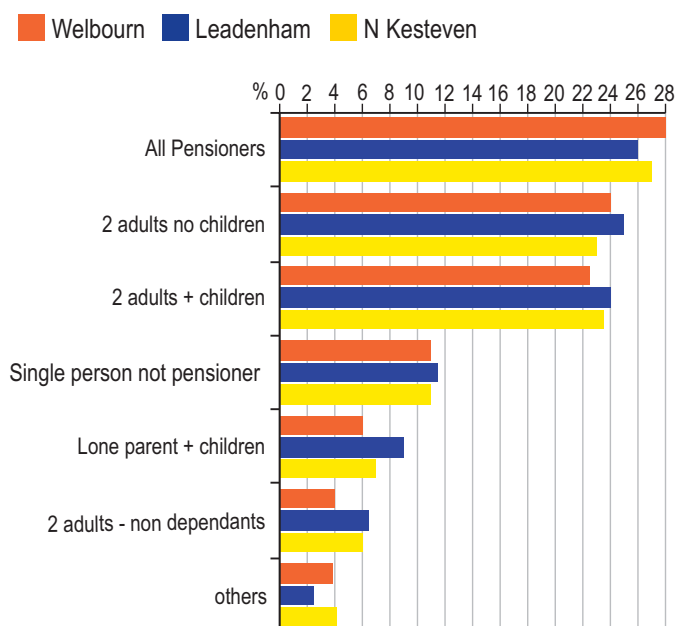


Length of Residence in Welbourn



Population mobility has undoubtedly increased in recent years – perhaps as many as 12% of the village population move each year. On the other hand the relatively large number of retired householders (people of pensionable age account for almost 30% of the population) has maintained a stable population base. In general population growth in Welbourn does not appear to have been sustained by an inward movement of a commuting ex-urban population typical of most dormitory villages, but rather the process has been one of rural based households remaining in their familiar locality but changing work place as the need has arisen.

Fig 5 Types of Household: 2001 (Source: Census Data)



4.3 Household Characteristics

As is the case in many parts of rural Britain the pensioner household is now a major feature of the population structure. In Welbourn 28% of households consist only of pensioners, approximately the same number as households with children. Similarly 30% of households consist of only one person – many of whom are also pensioners – which also reflects a national trend. While in some contexts an ageing population structure would be regarded as a negative feature, it is notable that many village voluntary organisations largely rely on the contributions made by this element of the population. However, with an ageing population and the difference in life expectancy between the sexes, women now markedly outnumber men in Welbourn (53% to 47%) – and this difference is even more striking when inclusive of the residents from our two homes for the elderly. Associated with this population imbalance is the considerable proportion of residents who suffer from poor health or permanent disabilities, with 161 persons in all, or 25% of the village population, falling into this category. With the absence of any low-cost affordable housing being built in the village it seems likely this trend towards a more ageing and dependent population may continue and could potentially have an adverse impact on the village social structure and the provision of essential services.

5. Housing

5.1 Housing Development, 1951-2001

From 1951 until the mid 1970's house building in Welbourn was dominated by dwellings constructed by North Kesteven Rural District Council to meet a chronic post-war housing shortage and to rehouse families displaced when older cottages were condemned by the council as unfit for human habitation. Properties that were poorly maintained, lacking bathrooms and damp courses, with low ceilings and with outside earth privies were demolished wholesale. In all over 30 village homes suffered this fate and even in 1971 15% of households still lacked one of the basic amenities. Ironically, had these attractive stone built cottages survived, their collective value today would amount to several million pounds and our streets would have rivalled those of Brant Broughton in appearance and historic character.



Manor Close, Sheltered Housing.

The main local authority housing development of 22 semi-detached and terraced family homes was sited typically on the periphery of the village along Dycote Lane, and also on Hall Orchard Lane (6) while the 29 O.A.P. bungalows with a warden's house were located on a central site in the manor orchard known as Manor Close. Smaller developments of sheltered housing for the elderly were later constructed off Beck Street and in the High Street. Since the 1970s house building in Welbourn has been almost entirely in the hands of the private developer with a mixture of small groups of infill development: along Dycote Lane 1980 (20), Crosby Lane 1981 (11), Old Mulberry Court 1995 (4), Poplar Court 1999 (5), together with a



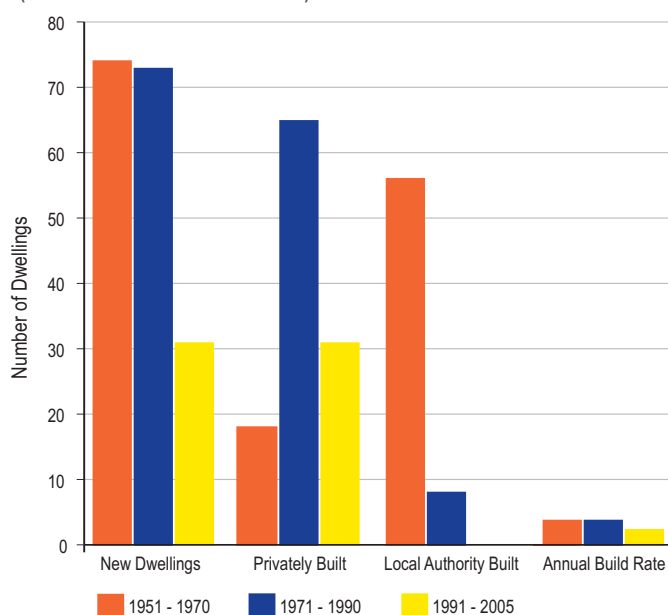
Private Development, Dycote Lane.

number of single dwellings on windfall sites (see Fig. 6). House type preferences have also changed during this later development phase, with the semi-detached house or bungalow now largely replaced by much larger 4 or 5 bedrooomed detached houses with extra bathrooms, conservatories and double garages. As a result some 19% of properties in Welbourn are now rated in the top four bands for the Council Tax (E-H), more than twice the figure for the North Kesteven District.

While the Local Authorities no longer has a direct role in house building they continue to influence housing standards by means of home improvement grants and by planning inputs with respect to design and choice of materials as befits the village Conservation Area. Incomers have also 'gentrified' much of the older housing stock to the extent that no households now lack any of the basic amenities apart from a few homes without full central heating. Immediately after World War II, Welbourn, like most parts of rural Britain, lagged well behind urban housing standards. Today these differences of life style have long gone and 63% of Welbourn families live in housing stock built in the post-war period and in a house somewhat larger than the national average.

Fig 6 Housing Development 1951-2005

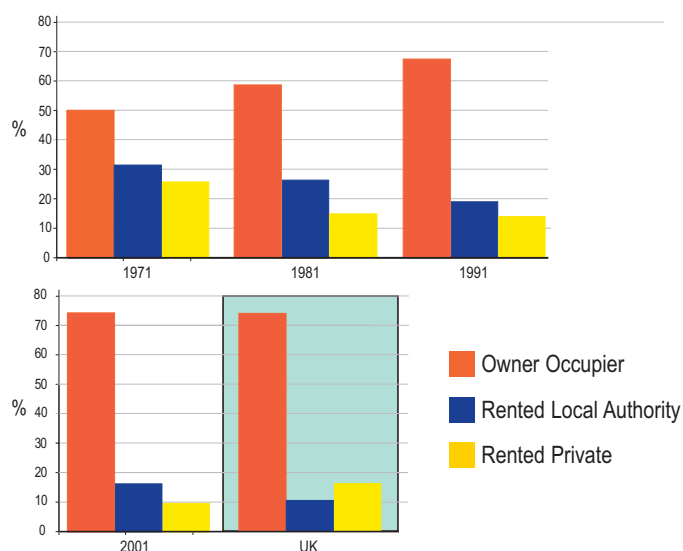
(Source: Welbourn Parish Council)



5.2 Housing Tenure

Over the post-war years owner-occupation has steadily increased reaching the current 74% of all homes similar to the national average (see Fig.7). The continuing sale of village council houses through the 'right to buy' scheme and with fewer tied houses or houses to rent privately available, the pool of family houses to let has shrunk markedly so reducing the opportunities for those about to set up homes or to step onto the first rung of the housing ladder. A new and as yet minor element in the pattern of housing tenure in the village is the conversion of property for use as a second home or to let as a holiday home, even though Welbourn is not an obvious tourist 'hotspot'.

Fig 7 Changes in Housing Tenure (Source: Census Data)



5.3 Future Housing Needs

“Too many rural people are being denied the chance of affordable housing....every single village in my view should have 5%-10% affordable housing.”

Sir Ewen Cameron former Chairman, Countryside Agency.

With outstanding planning permissions for 40 new dwellings in Welbourn as well as the 15 vacant properties recorded in the 2001 census, it seems there is ample scope for the potential owner-occupier to acquire a new home within the village. However, for those on lower incomes the opportunities to rent a house from the Local Authority or a private landlord are shrinking. As matters stand, the provision of low-cost housing or affordable housing to meet local needs is a distant prospect in Welbourn. With average house prices in the East Midlands Region now at a figure of £160,000 – up from £95,000 in 2002 – and the rare vacant building plot in the village worth as much as £100,000 even those on above average national incomes are faced with mortgage repayments in excess of 6x their annual salaries.

The village household survey of 2004 clearly identified the significance of this worrying dilemma and respondents overwhelmingly opted for the preference of building small family homes and rented housing as an urgent priority and for continuing the process of building on a small scale on infill sites within the village curtilage. Over 96% of respondents were opposed to the alternative of private estate scale of housing development in Welbourn, even to meet local housing needs. All eyes will now be on the newly established Affordable Rural Housing Commission in the hope that it will be able to identify practical ways of improving this situation. In North Kesteven the need for affordable housing is defined in terms of a household being unable to afford private sector housing when the cost of either renting or buying a house exceeds 25% of the net household income. On this basis the District will need to build an estimated 462 units of affordable housing per annum up to 2009 and 333 a year thereafter.

6. Work and Employment

6.1 The Changing Pattern of Work and Employment

“The market economy is diversifying away from the one industry that many still assume holds sway in our countryside, farming”.

Countryside Agency Survey, State of the Countryside 2005.

The occupational structure of the parish has radically changed since the 1950s when more than 50 people were employed on the land and the familiar rural crafts and trades such as the blacksmith, wheelwright, butcher and baker still survived in the village. Today less than 20 work on local farms and with the aid of large scale agricultural machinery and a competent agri-chemicals advisor one man can farm hundreds of acres or even hectares. All the associate agricultural trades and crafts are long gone. At the time of the Welbourn Parish Survey in 1974, 44% of those in work were employed within the parish; in agriculture, the retail trades, education, light industry and in caring for the elderly at the Manor residential home. There were also two firms in the village involved with airfield maintenance. A further 16% of villagers were employed in the immediate locality in such occupations as garage mechanics, quarrying, building and road haulage. The local R.A.F. bases at Cranwell, Digby and Waddington provided employment for some 12% of those in work while urban based employment was mostly in Lincoln as the largest local centre where 25%, mainly heads of households, had jobs. Married women were distinctly less mobile in terms of employment than their husbands, especially so in one car families and they tended to work locally, often on a part-time basis.

Much has changed in the intervening years with a marked increase in the range and size of the employment base within the parish to an estimated total of over 300 full or part-time jobs. While this figure actually exceeds the total number employed from within Welbourn, the percentage of Welbourn people working in the parish has dropped from 44% in 1974 to under 20% today. This situation appears to indicate a large element of ‘reverse commuting’ into Welbourn from neighbouring villages and towns. For those who commute out of Welbourn to work, 23% only travel a short distance within the immediate rural area and in particular to Navenby and Leadenham, while 41% go to work in the neighbouring towns of Lincoln (18%), Grantham (11.6%) as well as to Sleaford and Newark. The remaining 17% of Welbourn residents in employment are long distance commuters travelling outside of Lincolnshire as far afield as London, Nottingham, Sheffield and Birmingham.

6.2 Current Opportunities for Work Within the Parish

Based on the evidence of the 2001 census and the 2004 household survey, it appears the village has been able to adjust successfully to the losses of employment in the traditional rural industries of agriculture and allied services. A mixture of public and private investment has generated a remarkably broad employment base embracing manufacturing, construction, education, health and the

social services and public administration. Notable employment developments in the parish have included the expansion of the Sir William Robertson High School to over 800 pupils on roll and employing 120 people, the conversion of Welbourn Hall into a residential and nursing home and two firms - Welbourn Engineering and Housham Sprayers - manufacturing agricultural machinery. Farm diversification has added new enterprises in contract farming, property management, commercial storage and even flower sales. Equally significant has been the growth of small scale businesses and of the numbers who are self-employed, ranging widely across the employment spectrum from planning consultants, physiotherapist, landscape gardeners, earthworks and site preparation, graphics and printing, to computer specialists and publishing. Home I.T. facilities and the arrival of broadband will further encourage these trends and supports the move to more home-based employment and this also enhances the opportunities for those who wish to work part-time.



Sir William Robertson High School, a major local employer, while employment in agriculture has declined.

6.3 Opportunities for Work Outside the Parish

The present patterns of work and employment for most Welbourn residents closely matches those of the whole North Kesteven district with a general dominance by the service sector (See fig. 8). Personal services in the retail and wholesale trades rank first (17%) followed by health and social work (13.7%) and estate and business administration (12.6%), construction (10.7%), education (10.7%), manufacturing (9.6%), public service and defence (8.65%) and agriculture (6.6%). The occupational categories of the village workforce also reflects this bias towards the service sector with a strong emphasis on management, professional, technical and administrative roles with some 23% of those employed possessing higher education or professional qualifications.

6.4 Employment and Economic Activity.

Based on the evidence of the 2001 census, of the 431 adults in the parish aged 16-74 years, 62% (270 persons) were in employment (men 69% women 55%) and this included 55 people (13%) who were classified as self-employed. A further 78 (18%) were retired while the unemployed were a mere 2% of the total. There were, however, some marked differences in the pattern of employment between men and women. More women worked on a part-time basis – 38% compared to 5.5% of men and women were less likely to be self-employed - 13% as opposed to 27% of the men. In addition 26 women (6%) recorded their employment status as a housewife, no men made a similar claim.

Fig 8 Employment Types: Welbourn, Leadenham & North Kesteven (Source: 2001 Census Data)

	Wholesale, Retail, Vehicle	Health & Social Work	Real Estate & Business	Construction	Education	Manufacturing	Public Service & Defence	Agriculture	Transport & Storage	Hotels & Catering	Others	Total Employment	Males	Females
Welbourn	46	37	34	29	29	26	22	18	8	6	15	270	140	123
Welbourn %	17.3	13.7	12.6	10.7	10.7	9.6	8.2	6.6	3	2.2	5.4			
Leadenham	29	16	20	11	21	26	13	23	7	16	15	195	104	91
Leadenham %	14.9	8.2	10.3	5.6	10.8	13.3	6.6	11.9	3.6	8.2	7.6			
North Kesteven %	16.9	11.3	8.9	7.5	6.9	13.9	14.2	4.1	5.2	4.2	6.9			

7. Transport and Highways

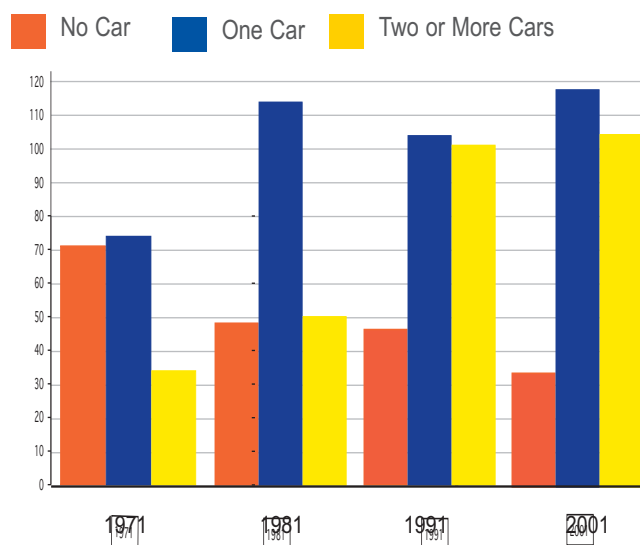
7.1 Private Mobility

“Over 80% of adults in rural areas have full driving licences compared to 61% in metropolitan areas. Almost 40% of rural households own two cars compared with 24% in urban areas.”

Countryside Agency Survey, State of the Countryside 2005.

Typically private car ownerships in Welbourn has risen rapidly in recent years reaching a threshold of over 86% of households owning at least one car and more than 40% with two or more vehicles. Overall the total number of cars and vans in the parish has doubled since 1971 reaching a total of 350 vehicles in 2001 (See Fig. 9) with most families regarding their car as an essential means of transport to access work, shopping, leisure and medical services and even for journeys within the village. The private car is now overwhelmingly the main means of transport to work replacing even short distance journeys once made by bus, cycle or walking. Only the encouraging rise in the number of people working from home will modify this trend. Commuting distances to work also seem to have risen since the 1970's to a daily average of over 20 miles in 2001 which is three times the figure for England and Wales.

Fig 9 Car Ownership per Household (Source: Census Data)



7.2 Public Transport

During the 19th century the carrier's cart was the chief means of transport for goods and people linking the village and the nearest market towns. After 1867 the G.N.R. railway line provided an improved service to Lincoln and Grantham although at a much higher cost. Regular bus services through the village began in 1920 eventually forming part of the Lincolnshire Road Car network operating throughout the county. The main Welbourn bus service followed the A607 linking the 18 villages between Lincoln and Grantham with only a limited service to Sleaford or Newark. Railway connections ended in 1965 but the parallel bus service continued at hourly intervals meeting the essential needs of work, shopping and access to educational facilities in the main towns. With rising levels

of car ownership bus service viability had been seriously eroded and gradually Sunday and evening services were withdrawn. Most regular bus users were usually the retired, young adolescents or school children. However, in November 2002 the subsidised partnership between Lincolnshire County Council and the Road Car has resulted in the introduction of the Interconnect Project with half-hourly bus services between Lincoln and Grantham (The Number One) doubling the previous service frequency and providing improved bus access for the disabled.

Whether the much improved public transport service link will make real inroads into the use of the private car remains to be seen. The 2004 household survey recorded 14 households using the bus for weekly shopping journeys but only 6 households use the bus for journeys to work. Otherwise the bus appears to be used for occasional journeys with some perhaps deterred by either the relatively high cost of fares or a preference for the greater comfort and convenience of the private car. Nevertheless the household survey did record a strong wish to re-establish a bus service between Welbourn and Sleaford and Newark as well as to provide a bus shelter within the village. Another recent and successful innovation to reduce car use within the village has been the introduction of the walking bus project for children attending the village primary school.

7.3 Highways and Traffic

Welbourn is especially fortunate in that the main A607 road has long by-passed the village so diverting most through traffic as well as providing a valuable buffer of open countryside between this busy road and the village. However, the high levels of car ownership within the village do generate serious traffic and parking problems associated with travel to work, in accessing our schools and the village shop and post office and in visiting the two residential homes. The largest heavy goods vehicles are regularly used to service local businesses and the movement of large scale farm machinery can pose additional problems within the village's narrow streets and lanes.



Limited off-road parking for many residents.

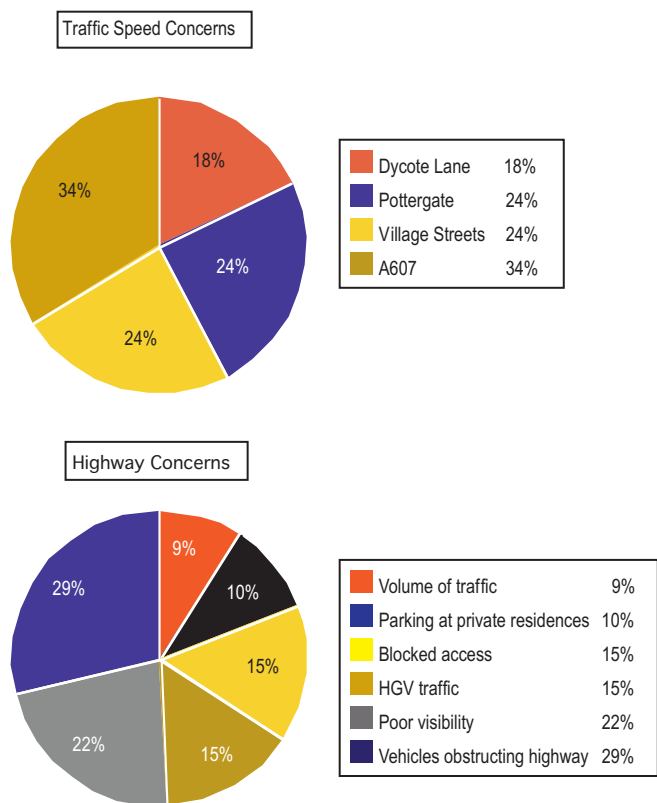
The problems associated with traffic and highway issues had a high profile in the village household survey. Many parishioners were concerned about parked vehicles obstructing the highway or blocking private entrances. The historic layout of the village, designed rather for the era of the horse and cart, means that highway visibility is often

very limited for the motorist. Within the parish as a whole many expressed serious disquiet with respect to speeding traffic and on issues of road safety, more especially along the A607 and the Pottergate Road (C307). Traffic flows are dominated by north-south movements with average daily flows along the A607 amounting to 3,960 vehicles, including 260 commercial vehicles in 2005. 2450 vehicles use Pottergate Road daily, a high figure for a C class road with a lesser standard of highway maintenance and policing.

The unrestricted section of the A607 within the parish is particularly accident prone with a number of fatal accidents in recent years. The narrow approach road into Welbourn from Brant Broughton along Dycote Lane was also highlighted as a problem area in terms of road safety issues. Facilities for the walker and cyclist in general were thought to be adequate in both the village and along the A607. However, in the case of the pushchair and wheelchair user most felt they were less well served.

Highway maintenance standards are generally regarded as acceptable although the irregular operation of the seasonal cycle of cutting of essential visibility splays at road junctions leaves a lot to be desired. Footway lighting within the village is also in need of some improvements. Poorly lit areas were identified as the main source of feeling unsafe when out in Welbourn.

Fig 10 Highway and Traffic Problems (Source: Household Survey 2004)



8. Village Facilities and Services

“Overall rural people think that local facilities are worse, particularly for families with children and teenagers”

Countryside Agency Survey, The State of the Countryside, 2005 .

8.1 The Changing Pattern of Facilities and Services.

In 1950 Welbourn had a church, chapel, two public houses, a village hall housed in an ex World War I army hut, a school providing for children from five to fourteen years which also served as a public meeting place, a post office and four shops including a large co-operative stores and bake house with van deliveries serving surrounding villages with groceries, bread and coal. The village also supported a resident rector, doctor and policeman. The nearest railway station in Leadenham parish was in walking distance and an hourly bus service passed through the village. Over the intervening years this relatively comprehensive service base has substantially diminished and today the village contains, one public house and the remaining shop and post office combined on the one site in 1987 so Welbourn now has only the most basic shopping facilities. Mobile shopping services have also declined from seven providers in 1985 to just two today and the weekly banking van was withdrawn in 2004. The last resident rector died in 1965 since when Welbourn has joined forces with Leadenham and later with Brant Broughton and Beckingham in sharing a priest. Leadenham station finally closed in 1965 and the Welbourn Methodist Chapel was sold after its closure in 1973. The nearest G.P. surgeries are now at Navenby (4 miles/7kms) or at Caythorpe (4 miles/7kms) as is the nearest resident policeman.



Welbourn's only public house.

8.2 New Public Service Provision

To balance this somewhat depressing litany of service closures there has been considerable public investment in service provision within the village spread over much of the post war period. This has extended access for all to the main utilities including electricity, water, sewage and the telephone, including broadband internet connection as well as mobile phone services. The local authorities now provide a weekly refuse collection (1945), footway lighting

(1949), parish allotments (1948) and sheltered housing for the elderly (1959). With the help of grant aid, a new village hall and playing field was provided in 1972 with later additions of changing rooms, a committee and I.T. room, basketball and tennis court and children's play equipment. Welbourn Parish Council has been active in promoting a number of these facilities assisted by other village organisations, including the Village Hall and Playing Field committee.



Welbourn C of E (Controlled) Primary School

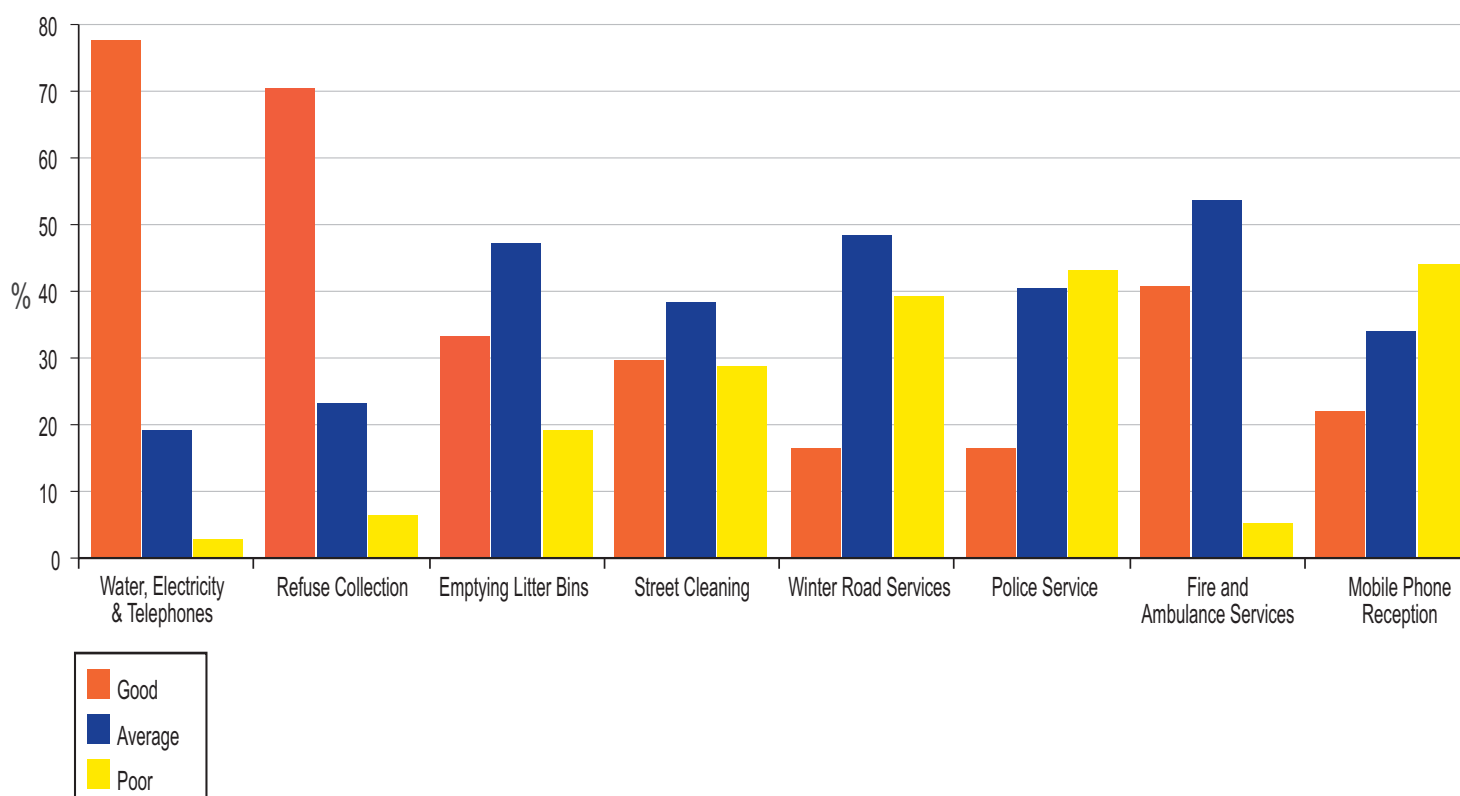
The education provision within the parish has benefited from much new investment not only from the construction of a secondary school which opened in 1960, but also the almost complete rebuilding of the village primary school in 1968. This included a new hall and classrooms, play area and playing field with new offices and staff room added later together with children's play equipment. A further mobile classroom was put in place early in 2005 to meet the rise in the school roll from under 50 pupils to over 65.

The 2004 household survey provided a detailed overview of the quality of service provision in Welbourn which revealed a relatively high degree of satisfaction with the service provided by the utility companies and the local authorities. Police coverage and mobile phone reception were however, identified as the exception as was the lack of youth facilities and activities in the village. Most respondents would like to see the mains gas service extended to the village from its nearest point at Navenby.

8.3 Shopping Patterns.

Even though the village only supports one retail outlet combining shop, post office and hairdressing service, it does manage to cover a wide range of local needs including groceries, bread and confectionery, as well as sales of beer, wines, newspapers, tobacco and sweets. The shop also acts as a lottery outlet and an agency for dry cleaning, video/DVD rental and the processing of photographs. Welbourn shop and post office with its dedicated staff, well justified the award of Lincolnshire Village Shop of the Year in 1997 and the service provided has continued to improve. Unsurprisingly most households do their daily shopping in Welbourn with supporting visits to Navenby or Leadenham. Other shopping needs such as weekly groceries, clothing, banking and household items are principally purchased in Lincoln with Newark, Grantham and Sleaford occupying subsidiary roles.

Fig 11. Quality of Public Services (Source: Household Survey 2004)



9. Social Organisations and Leisure Activities

"People in rural areas tend to be more civically engaged, and more inclined to join local organisations and have better neighbourhood networks".

Countryside Agency Survey. The State of the Countryside, 2005.

9.1 Village Social Organisations

Welbourn actively continues to support the key statutory village organisations of a Parish Council, a Parochial Church Council, Primary School Governors and there is also involvement with Sir William Robertson High School. Representatives from the various voluntary social organisations in the village come together to sustain the Village Hall and Playing field Committee which is a charitable trust. Currently the village contains a good range of social organisations including a Gardeners' Club, Reading Group, Manor Close Residents Group, a Group Choir meeting in St. Chad's Church, the Women's Institute, a children's dance and drama group, West Kesteven Wildlife Watch, Welbourn Golf Society and the Cliffside Flyerz, a very successful competitive motor cycle group based at the Joiners Arms. The Friends of both schools within the Parish and the Friends of Welbourn Forge are groups dedicated to assisting a specific cause while the Joiners Arms sponsors a variety of pub sports. A successful Pre-School Group serving a number of local villages also operates in the village hall. There are two ad-hoc walking groups who meet in the village and St. Chad's Church provides a regular meeting place for a group of Mothers & Toddlers.



St. Chad's Church

The Village Hall and Playing Field Committee, the Parochial Church Council and the schools are perhaps the key players in generating many of the community social networks since they need to raise considerable amounts of funding to maintain St. Chad's Church and the village hall and playing field facilities. The village social calendar owes much to the energy and commitment of these key organisations as they annually promote concerts, garden fetes, coffee mornings, bingo, children's sports, harvest suppers, jumble sales, open gardens, car boot sales, dinners and dances, wine tasting evenings and quiz nights. Some considerable effort also goes into fund raising for charitable causes outside of the village. The parish magazine, 'The Two Villages', circulates in both Leadenham and Welbourn and offers the opportunity to all those interested to keep a finger on the pulse of social happenings and it also encourages the two communities to support one another for major fund raising events.

While Welbourn has been able to maintain a good mix of village social activities there are no grounds for complacency. Some village organisations have fallen by the wayside in past years including the local branch of the Royal British Legion, the Football Club, the Youth Club, the Toddlers Group and the Friendship Club which catered for the retired. Membership levels in some organisations are only just sufficient to remain viable and volunteers for the key posts are sometimes difficult to recruit. The village currently has no sports clubs or youth activities and in general club and group memberships and interests appeal more to the older adults in the village. Very high levels of car ownership have encouraged an ever-widening geographical range of individual or family based leisure activities such as golfing, caravanning, educational classes and visits to sports centres. As individual village based groups have closed, there is a tendency for the remaining membership to join a similar organisation in a neighbouring village as for instance has been the case with the Royal British Legion, Toddlers and our Friendship Club, while Welbourn W.I., Pre-School and West Kesteven Wildlife Watch now includes members from Leadenham, Brant Broughton and other neighbouring villages.

The rapidly developing field of home based entertainment available through television (often with numerous satellite channels), CDs, DVD's and home computers (most with internet connection) similarly influence participation in village social activities, as does the increasing number of holidays taken and rising levels of car ownership. Less visible, but still extremely significant in the village social scene, is the informal network of visiting, shopping and generally caring for the needs of the sick, elderly and disabled. A personal crisis is rarely overlooked and volunteers will generally come forward to fill the gaps left by the public services.

9.2 The Village Hall and Playing Field.



Welbourn Village Hall and Playing Field

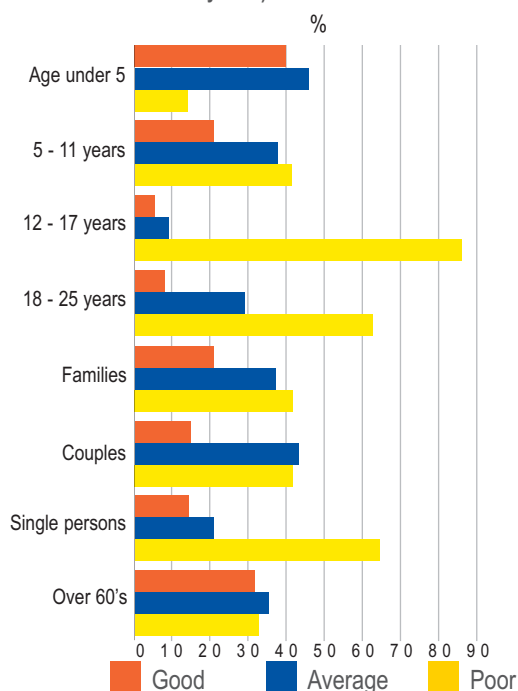
Central to the future success of most of village social gatherings is the village hall and the playing field. Regular use of these key facilities remains within a core group and in the case of the hall the principal users are the Pre-School Group who meet three times a week, the Primary School and Drama Club. There are monthly meetings held by the various village clubs and groups including the Parish Council. The hall is also used for private functions. There is

scope to increase usage of the Hall within the village and the wider community. The lack of any sports clubs means that the playing field is a seriously under-used asset, although maintenance costs do not fall proportionately. Despite recent improvements to the village hall to provide a disabled toilet, an IT/parish room and a refurbished kitchen, much remains to be done to raise the quality of the hall's facilities to the level of those now available in neighbouring villages, for example at Leadenham. In particular, respondents to the household survey identified the need to redesign the exterior of the hall and to provide extra storage space, function rooms, improved heating, a new bar area and additional facilities for the Pre-School.

9.3 Future Opportunities for Leisure Activities.

The village household survey showed clear differences in levels of satisfaction between the various age groups with respect to local opportunities available for organised leisure. There was a notably high level of dissatisfaction among teenagers, young adults and from other single people, who generally rated the social provision in the village as poor. Only the facilities available to the over 60's and for the very young were rated to be at least adequate. It is also clear that there is a mis-match in the provision of facilities for children's play with most of the child population living in the southern part of the village, on The Green or in Dycote Lane, while the play equipment on the playing field lies at the northern end of the village. Apart from the informal outdoor pursuits of walking (often in the company of the family dog) and cycling, most residents now look to the urban centres for the majority of their leisure pursuits, a trend that is unlikely to change without further investment in our village hall and in sports facilities on our playing field as is evidenced by the success of some of our neighbours among the Cliff villages. Newcomers to the village are likely to be unaware of the opportunities provided by local organisations, it is recognised that there is a need to improve communication within the village.

Fig 12 Satisfaction with Village Facilities
(Source: Household Survey 2004)



10. The Rural Economy and the Countryside

"I thought it would last my time. The sense that beyond the town there would always be fields and farms".

Philip Larkin, Going, Going.

10.1 The Rural Economy

For much of the post-war period the Government has encouraged farmers to maximise home food production. In seeking to keep down costs the emphasis has been on achieving 'economies of scale' in agriculture through increased mechanisation, farm amalgamations and field enlargement. Farming has become highly capitalised and with a large tractor currently costing over £50,000 and a combine harvester £190,000 there has inevitably been corresponding intensification of production methods to maximise outputs. For example, average yields for cereals have trebled or even quadrupled in the post-war period to average over 7 tons per hectare for barley and 8.5 tons per hectare for wheat.

Within Welbourn parish only 8 holdings survive of the 22 farms present in 1950 and a considerable proportion of the land is managed by farming companies or by 'absentee' owners. The smallholder - there were 11 holdings of under 50 acres (20 hectares) in 1950 who mainly relied on small scale livestock enterprises - has all but disappeared. Today most of the parish is farmed by several large and highly mechanised arable units, specialising in producing cereals, potatoes, sugar beet and oil seed rape. A company owned specialist poultry rearing unit and a small family farm raising beef cattle are exceptions to the general picture.

The problems arising from over production and rising costs have slowed the pace of intensification in recent years. In responding to the 'set-aside' rules and the gradual removal of production subsidies within the Single Farm Payment regime some farm enterprises have sought to diversify into agricultural contracting as well as 'off-farm' activities. Nonetheless the numbers employed full time in agriculture in Welbourn continue to fall and today the industry is only a minor employer although over 90% of the parish has remained as agricultural land.

10.2 The Changing Countryside

The sweeping changes in agriculture in the second half of the 20th century have radically reshaped the rural landscape around Welbourn. The general switch from a mixed farm economy to a specialist arable regime and the need to accommodate modern farm machinery has led to the area under permanent pasture to shrink from 38% to under 5% of the agricultural land within the parish. Widespread field enlargement, more especially on the clay land of the Lowfields and the Cliff areas, has resulted in the wholesale removal of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small ponds. Improved field drainage and the straightening of the system of dykes and water courses - including the River Brant - has further emphasised the process of 'industrialising' the rural landscape, a process

Fig 13. Changes in the Agricultural Landscape 1904-2004 (Source: OS Maps and Field Surveys)

Location and Number of Fields

	1904	1956	2004
Heath	65	59	44
Cliff	63	60	32
Lowfields	109	105	61
Total	237	224	137

encouraged by government subsidies. Currently the ideal field size for arable cropping is considered to be at least 50 acres/20 hectares and there are some units of over 80 acres/33 hectares within the parish, but the obverse of this more 'agriculturally friendly' countryside has been the estimated loss of well over 20 miles of hedgerows.

The end result has been the countryside assuming a more open character, which is not unlike the hedgeless medieval open arable fields familiar to our peasant ancestors. Other casualties of these 'aggressive agricultural' methods has been the removal of some of the traditional stone and clay pantile farmsteads as they have become redundant, as for example, at Glebe Farm, Grange Farm and Cocked Hat Farm. In general, older farm buildings have been replaced by much more visible utilitarian and multi-purpose units constructed in concrete and with asbestos or metal cladding.

Today only 1% of the parish is wooded, mainly on the uppermost slopes of the Cliff, and hedgerow survival is most likely where they coincide with property boundaries or the highway. Within a mixed farm economy many small field ponds formed valuable wild life habitats and perhaps as many as 80 were present in the parish 50 years ago. The great majority have been filled in, with under ten surviving in the few remaining areas of grassland. Conversely, the construction of two large irrigation reservoirs on the Cliff and in the Lowfields and the regeneration of scrub woodland along the former railway embankment have in part redressed the adverse impact of agriculture on the natural landscape features throughout the parish. Similarly a three year long conservation project between 1984 and 1986 - a co-operative venture involving Welbourn Parish Council, local landowners and farmers, North Kesteven District Council and the Countryside Commission - resulted in the planting of several thousand trees and hedgerow shrubs, so enhancing the new pattern of field boundaries. Under the Single Farm Payment Scheme there will be financial benefits for farmers who leave uncultivated strips alongside hedgerows and water courses as well as field side buffer zones to create more varied wildlife habitats. Only the Heath area of the parish still closely resembles the so-called traditional enclosure landscape which we associate with the classic image of the English countryside as a regular patchwork of fields. This is largely because the Heath lands were originally laid out on a more generous scale for arable cultivation than the much earlier enclosures on the Cliff and the Lowfields.

Location and Average Field Size (Acres)

	1904	1956	2004
Heath	20	22	29.5
Cliff	11	11.5	20.5
Lowfields	11	11.5	20.5

10.3 Access to the Countryside

The comprehensive re-shaping of the parish field system also removed much of the long established network of fieldpaths which originally radiated out from the village to access outlying farmsteads and cottages. Along with the ploughing out of these cross-field paths went the removal of many of the familiar landmarks of hedgerow trees and dykes. However, in 1999 after a long period of gestation and thanks to the successful co-operative efforts on the part of Welbourn's landowners, farmers, Parish and District Councils, a new network of fieldpaths was established creating mainly circular walks well adjusted to the new agricultural landscape. This series of walks, now part of the North Kesteven Stepping Out Walks Programme, are popular with both local walkers and visiting ramblers, more especially the tracks following the top of the Lincoln Edge and the former railway embankment. Within the village the purchase by the Parish Council of Castle Hill Field in 1998, with the aid of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, has provided a much valued open space for informal leisure and relaxation on a site rich in archaeological remains and with varied wildlife habitats.

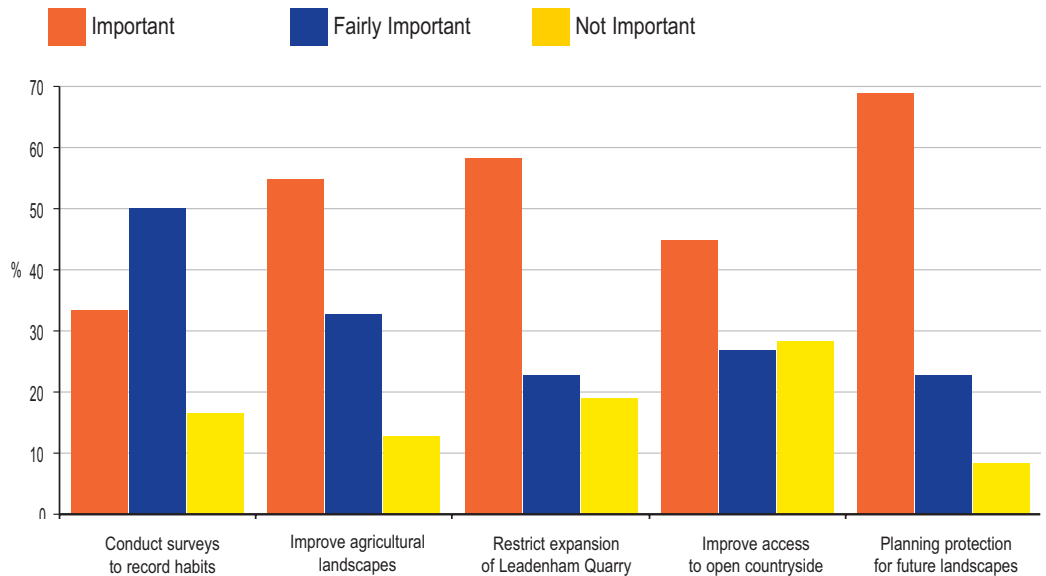
Appreciation of the open countryside surrounding Welbourn ranked high in the household survey of 2004 with strong support for extending public access, for improving the existing agricultural landscape and for conducting detailed surveys of landscape features and important wildlife habitats. Residents also wished to see the existing planning protection of our most significant landscape features strengthened, in particular for the Lincoln Cliff Edge and the Roman Ermine Street or Highdyke. The latter also has important World War II relics flanking the former site of RAF Wellingore. In similar vein there were strong objections to any further extension of limestone quarrying near the crest of the Cliff.

In support of these positive public attitudes towards the protection of the open countryside is the fact that walking and cycling were recorded in the Parish Survey as the most popular leisure activities. There are now two organised walking groups in the village and this accords with national opinion polls which consistently show that we value the open countryside as the one place where we can achieve rest and relaxation. Nine out of ten people stated that they wished to keep the countryside the way it is. To the majority of our parishioners the landscape around them is seen as 'their countryside' available for quiet enjoyment, but to those who farm the fields and maintain the hedgerows and dykes, this is agricultural land for growing crops to make a living. Reconciling the two views will continue to be a challenge.



Farming today on the Cliff Edge

Fig 14. Public Attitudes on Countryside Issues (Source: Household Survey 2004)



11. The Planning Framework

11.1 Planning and Development: The Current Position

The Welbourn Village Appraisal 1979 (a collaboration between North Kesteven District Council and Welbourn Parish Council) established the firm principle of a curtilage line – “intended to ensure that new development occurs within the established built area of the village, thus protecting the open attractive setting of the village”. Earlier in 1977, the District Council had designated much of the historic core of the village as a Conservation Area (63 acres/26.2 hectares) including some 19 buildings individually listed as being of historic and/or architectural interest and with many important groups of mature trees. The District Council also recorded that within the village Conservation Area the roads were narrow and irregular and any upgrading of the highway infrastructure would destroy the essential rural qualities and historic character of the village resulting in a more suburban appearance. These moves accorded with the Lincolnshire County Structure Plan of 1978, which described Welbourn as a minor village settlement where only infill development would be acceptable.

The North Kesteven Local Plan, which was adopted in February 1996, confirmed the existing curtilage line which closely follows the present built-up edge of the village. Other important outcomes of this major planning review were: the designation of Castle Hill Field (a scheduled ancient monument – SM 33129) as a visual amenity area and the recording of the embankment of the disused Lincoln to Honington Junction railway line as a site of Nature Conservation interest. The open countryside immediately surrounding the village was placed within the Area of Great Landscape Value following the Lincoln Cliff Edge, a designation first proposed in 1954 by the former Kesteven County Council. The undeveloped frontage of Hall Orchard Lane was also allocated for future housing development.

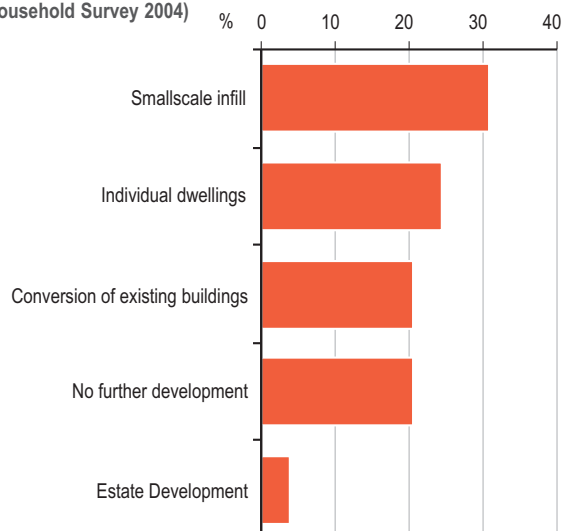
11.2 Planning and Development: The Future

Currently the County Structure Plan and the District Local Plan are under review and subject to possible modification following a Public Inquiry. However, the emphasis is likely to remain on the concentration of residential and commercial development in major settlements and in particular on the Lincoln area and to protect the open countryside. Within the emerging Revised District Local Plan for the period 2004–14, Welbourn has been designated as a Third Tier Settlement where “small scale residential development may be appropriate on redundant sites or vacant frontage plots in otherwise built-up frontages”. In addition “new employment development will be appropriate provided it is of a scale to meet local needs only”. Further it was stated that villages such as Welbourn “may be appropriate locations for minor investment in shopping, social, health, leisure and community service that will serve the needs of the settlements community”. Minor changes were also proposed to extend the village curtilage boundary to include some garden areas and surprisingly to withdraw the designation of the former railway embankment as a Nature Conservation Area. (see Fig. 18).

Looking further ahead, in April 2004 the Government issued a new planning policy guide for rural areas which would encourage “some limited development in or next to rural settlements that are not designated as local service centres”. This policy statement also seems to imply there will be less protection from development in the open countryside and for agricultural land as well as for our distinctive landscape areas. More disturbing is the proposal to move away from single comprehensive planning documents such as the District Local Plan to a piece-meal approach dealing with specific planning issues so encouraging more frequent reviews and updates. County Structure plans may be another casualty of this approach in favour of more ‘broad-brush’ regional policy statements. It seems possible that when fully adopted the District Local Plan for 2004-14 may only have a very limited life-span.

Fig 15 Preferred Housing Development

(Source: Household Survey 2004)



11.3 Proposed Residential Development in Welbourn

Within the current village curtilage there are outstanding planning permissions for approximately 40 dwellings. Namely for land off Hall Orchard Lane, 2 sites for 15 and 10 homes respectively, and the former grounds of Brook House off Beck Street has permission for 8 houses with a number of single windfall house sites making up the balance. These developments, when completed, would increase the village housing stock by almost 15%. In addition the 2001 census recorded 15 vacant dwellings with some 12 properties in the parish currently for sale. It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that Welbourn has more than adequate provision for any future owner-occupied housing development and there should be scope within these proposed developments to provide an element of low-cost or affordable housing to meet local needs.

12. Conclusions . . . Facing the Future

"Choosing to live in a place means accepting some responsibility for its well being."

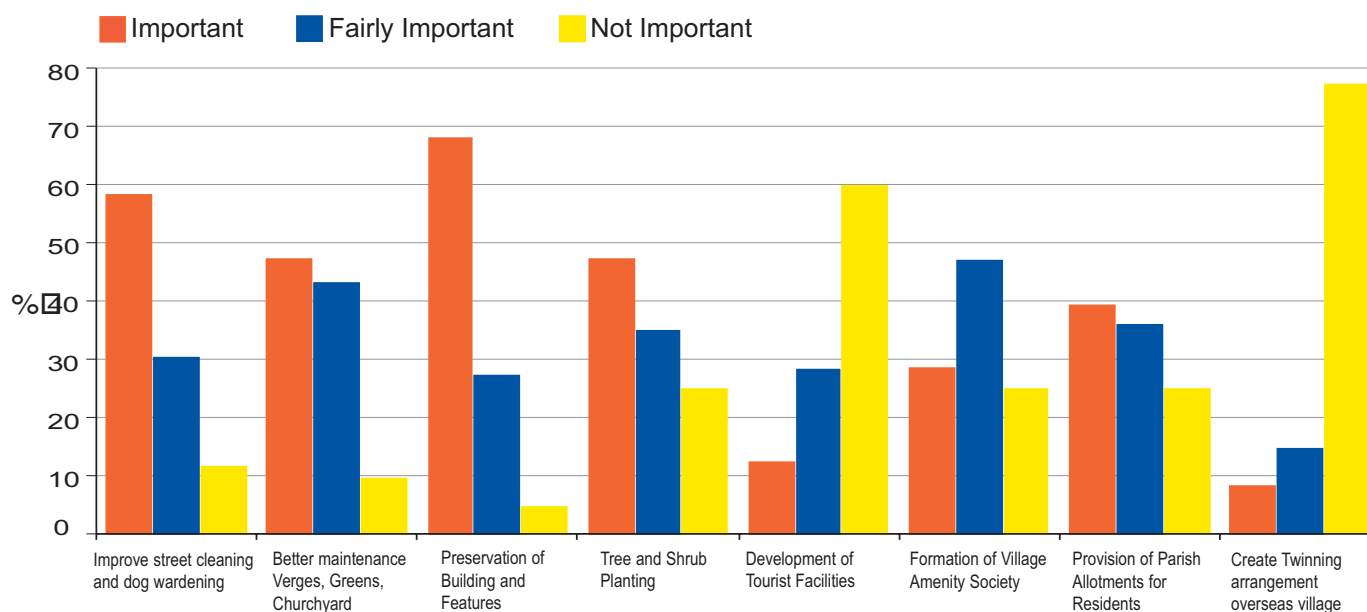
Countryside Agency Survey, The State of the Countryside, 2005.

For the majority of Welbourn's residents, as for much of rural Britain, the quality of life, at least in material terms, has much improved since our previous village appraisal in the mid 1970's. Increasing levels of home ownership, higher incomes, shorter hours of work, improved housing standards, better educational facilities including access to IT services, improved medical services, together with greater personal mobility and wider access to leisure pursuits and holidays have enriched the lifestyles of most households. However, it is important to take account of the fact that not all households have shared equally in this rising prosperity or have had the opportunity to take up the options available to the more affluent and mobile majority. Some householders, more especially pensioners, have low incomes and in any case average incomes in the East Midlands are 9% below the national average. Some do not possess a driving licence or own a

car, or perhaps they care on a full time basis for a sick or disabled family member. Those living in a tied house may have concerns for their security of tenure, while others feel their chances of buying or renting a house in their home locality are negligible as house prices continue to rise relentlessly. Above all, many of those who live alone, and more especially the elderly, are often subject to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Overall our rural areas are also paying 3% more for their public services while receiving a 10% worse service than their urban counterparts (Survey of 50 English local authorities, May 2005).

The public perception is one of growing levels of petty crime and anti-social behaviour, although the reality is that crime in rural areas is less than half of that to be found in our urban centres. Nevertheless, burglar alarms and security lights are now common place and there is considerable public concern over the inadequate levels of rural policing even with the support of a local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. This issue may partly explain the number of requests in the parish survey for improved footway lighting in the village. Parents are no longer willing to allow their children to

Fig 16 Attitudes Towards Environmental Improvements (Source: Household Survey 2004)



roam at will in the countryside and all young children are strenuously warned at school on the dangers of contact with strangers. The all too common practices of fly tipping and depositing of roadside litter is also viewed as an unpleasant form of anti-social behaviour.

Nor is the open countryside quite the same 'green and pleasant land' which we have traditionally valued for rest and recreation. This rosy picture has to be set against the intrusive realities of modern day large scale mechanised arable farming with the widespread use of agri-chemicals, and the noise in season generated by irrigation pumps, corn drier fans, the repetitive explosions of bird scaring gas guns and the fusillades of gunfire from the organised shooting of semi-wild game birds. Farmers, as traditional custodians of the land, are in danger of being seen as a group apart in the village, while at the same time fewer village residents themselves still have close connections with the rural economy to the extent of even growing their own fruit and vegetables or keeping chickens, and the backyard pig is now a distant memory. Unsurprisingly, vacant plots on the parish allotments are now almost impossible to let.

Despite these perceived drawbacks in rural living, Welbourn does nonetheless appear to be highly regarded by its present residents as a place to live. In fact over 95% of respondents in the parish survey rated Welbourn as a good or a very good place to live and no one scored the village as a poor location. In a similar vein there is strong support for both preserving and enhancing the key features of our village built environment.

At the beginning of the 21st century the villagers of Welbourn have much to be grateful for in their quality of life and well-being. But in a rapidly changing countryside only a vigorous and vigilant community can aspire to even maintain the status quo let alone seek further improvements. The newly launched Commission for Rural Communities, part of DEFRA, with the remit to "challenge government, to make sure the rural voice is heard and listened to at all levels", may be one way of presenting our case.

To date, Welbourn has retained much of its distinctive character and identity and maintains a good balance of facilities, services and social organisations. New residents have mostly been absorbed into the existing community networks and support systems, since new housing development has been gradual and small scale, although increasing population mobility may change this situation. But the balance will always be a delicate one and the Welbourn Action Plan for the period 2005-2015 has been compiled to address these key issues for the future. The challenge is broadly one of retaining our position as a 'sustainable' rural community while at the same time addressing new opportunities as they arise. For the most part we can only achieve these ambitions through our own co-operative efforts.

Bill Goodhand, October 2005.

13. Welbourn Parish - Significant Changes in Landscape, Economy and Services post 1978

The Welbourn Parish Appraisal of the 1970's (completed in 1978) recorded a rapidly changing rural scene and this process has continued until the present time as outlined by the following details. It seems likely that such significant changes will continue into the future.

13.1 Landscape

- Extension of the Area of Great Landscape Value to include the village of Welbourn and the former railway embankment. District Local Plan 1996.
- The former railway embankment lowered to the north-west of the village but enhanced as a wildlife habitat by considerable tree growth to the west and south of the village.
- River Brant further straightened and canalised by the Drainage Board to the detriment of wildlife conservation.
- Field boundaries and hedgerows – continuing erosion and removal due to the intensification of arable farming especially in the Low Fields area.
- Woodland – the Cocked Hat Plantation (not in Welbourn parish) has been reduced to one third of its original area.
- Two farm reservoirs constructed – on the Low Fields circa one hectare, and bordering the A607 circa two hectares. These have provided a new and more varied form of wildlife habitat although their principal use is for crop irrigation.
- Leadenham quarry – limestone extraction has now extended well into Welbourn parish. (The quarrying activities have also revealed the site of a former Romano-British farm/villa in this area).
- Public viewing point on Pottergate Road constructed by funding from the Countryside Commission
- Parish tree planting scheme 1983-85, 7,500 trees and shrubs planted mainly on the Low Fields and Cliff Edge areas of the parish. Project funded by Welbourn Parish Council, NKDC and the Countryside Commission. Small scale tree planting has continued each year since this scheme was completed.
- The Heath, Overton Farm – conversion of two cottages to one dwelling and conversion of a range of farm buildings to one dwelling. Hilltop farm rebuilt and extended and conversion of stables to one dwelling (holiday let).
- The Cliff – new bungalow at Colsterworth Poultry site. Wellingore Road houses, two cottages converted to one dwelling.

13.2 Leisure and Rural Recreational Development.

- Fieldpaths – complete restructuring of the former radial network of paths from the village also incorporating part of the former railway embankment, to complete a series of circular walks (see Welbourn Stepping Out Walks leaflet) project funded by Welbourn Parish Council and NKDC.
- Castle Hill – purchased by Welbourn Parish Council with the aid of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and restored and developed for full public access.
- Ermine Street/The High Dyke – designated by LCC as part of the Viking Way passing through Lincolnshire and Rutland. (Also popular with travellers and fly tippers!)
- Cycle path along the A607 – improved public access towards Wellingore and Navenby.

13.3 Agriculture

- Closure of pig farm (Leadenham piggeries), conversion of buildings for use as commercial storage.
- Conversion of farm buildings at South Barn Farm for use as offices and a chemical store. (Zeneca).
- Welbourn Farms (The Burtts) conversion of two large grain stores to use for agricultural engineering and building construction.
- Colsterworth Poultry, construction of additional poultry houses for rearing young birds.
- Co-op Farm – conversion from dairy unit to arable.
- Cocked Hat Farm – demolition and removal of a range of traditional farm buildings (in stone and pantile).
- Over the parish as a whole the conversion of grass land to arable has continued throughout this period to the point that only one farm now continues to rear livestock.

13.4 Industry and Employment.

- Former Leadenham Station Goods Yard (note that this is in Welbourn Parish) establishment of Pecks and later Houshams Engineering (agricultural spray equipment) also now incorporating the former goods shed, circa 35 employees.
- Welbourn Farms – the site now includes Welbourn Engineering and Hart Properties with some 30 plus employees.
- North Kesteven District Council Office, Manor Close (in former Warden's residence) circa 10 employees.

13.5 Services, Amenities and Utilities.

- Education – both Welbourn schools have expanded in terms of numbers on roll and facilities.
- Sir William Robertson High School from approximately 400 pupils in 1978 to over 800 (despite losing its sixth form provision for the time being.) New buildings include a large sports hall, music rooms and classrooms. It is also a Specialist School in Modern Languages.
- Welbourn Church of England (Controlled) Primary School from approximately 45 pupils in 1978 to over 65 in 2005. Two small extensions provided an office and staff room and converted the kitchen area into an I.T. suite (after the loss of cooked school meals). In 2005 the school gained a mobile classroom.
- Electricity – renewal of power line to serve the village and some parts of the system has also been under-grounded.
- Water and sewage – extension of main sewage system to the remaining 25% of the properties in the village which were not connected in 1978, also a new pumping system installed.
- Public transport – new inter-connector bus service (buses at half hour intervals through the village) introduced together with redesigned bus stops with new kerbing to assist the disabled.
- Waste disposal – Three 'wheelie bins' per household to collect glass and green waste, recycling waste (plastic, paper, card, cloth) and all other waste. These are emptied on a fortnightly rota. Provision for depositing of domestic rubbish at Leadenham Quarry Waste Disposal Site (Saturdays and Sundays).
- Communications – Telephone connection to all houses and further extension to the system with broadband enabled local telephone exchange (Nov 2004). Mobile phone network coverage is available if somewhat weak in places. Television and radio communications are currently changing to digital.

13.6 Developments that did not come to pass:-

- Leadenham A17 Bypass was constructed to the south side of the village of Leadenham rather than between Leadenham and Welbourn as anticipated in 1978.
- The Witham Prospect – the borehole sunk between Welbourn and Brant Broughton discovered commercial coal seams, but there have been no proposals to develop those as yet.
- Nirex – Nuclear Waste Depository – which was proposed on a site at Fulbeck Airfield has been abandoned at least for the time being.

Fig 17 Public Services Provision: Cliff Edge Villages (Source: Local Surveys)

	Boothby Graffoe		Navenby		Wellington		Welbourn		Leadenham	
	1975	2005	1975	2005	1975	2005	1975	2005	1975	2005
Population	148	215	938	1442	617	695	530	646	414	408
Commercial Services										
Bank Mobile	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Café/Fish and Chips	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Garage/Fuel Sales	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1
Post Office	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Public House	0	0	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
Shops Consumer Goods	0	0	5	2	1	0	2	1	2	1
Shops Specialist Goods	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Shops Personal Services	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Private Bus Company	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Services										
Doctors Surgery	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile Library	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Resident Parson	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Policeman Resident	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Primary School	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Hospital Car Service	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Places of Assembly										
Chapel	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Church	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Parish Office	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Playing Field	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Village Hall	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Social Activities										
Guides/Scouts	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Pensioners Club	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Play Group/Pre School	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Sports Club	1	0	2	2	1	1	2	0	3	2
Women's Institute	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Youth Club	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total Services	4	3	23	21	19	14	11	15	15	15

Useful Contacts: Organisations Concerned with Rural Issues

All relevant data and information gathered as part of Welbourn Appraisal is available on www.welbournvillage.org.uk

Central and Local Government

Countryside Agency/Commission for Rural Communities
www.countryside.gov.uk/www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk
 Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA.)
www.defra.gov.uk
 Department of Transport, Local Government and the Region, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
www.odpm.gov.uk
 East Midlands Regional Assembly
www.emro.gov.uk / 01664 502 555
 Local Government Association (LGA.)
www.lga.gov.uk / 020 7664 3131
 National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
www.nalc.gov.uk / 020 7637 185

National Lottery Funding

Lottery Good Causes www.lottery-goodcauses.org.uk
 Awards for all www.awardsforall.org.uk
 Heritage Lottery Fund www.hlf.org.uk
 U.K. Statistics website www.statistics.gov.uk

Voluntary and Community Organisations (National)

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
www.cpre.org.uk / 020 79812800
 Community Transport Association (CTA)
www.communitytransport.com

Community Service Volunteers (CSV)

www.csv.org.uk

Community Pubs Foundation

www.communitypubs.org.uk

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

National Association for Small Schools (NASS)

www.smallschool.org.uk 01929 463227

National Farmers' Union (NFU Countryside)

www.countrysideonline.co.uk

Post Watch

www.postwatch.co.uk

The Plunkett Foundation (Village Retail Services Association)

www.plunkett.co.uk

The Ramblers Association

www.ramblers.org.uk / 020 7339 8500

The Rural Development Network www.ruralnet.uk.org

The Women's Institute

www.womens-institute.org.uk

Rural Revival Campaign

www.ruralrevival.org.uk

Voluntary and Community Organisations (Lincolnshire)

Community Council of Lincolnshire

www.cclincs.com / 01529 302466

Countryside Committee of Churches Together in all Lincolnshire
 01522 529 241

Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils 01522 551 695



Fig 18 Welbourn: The Planning Framework 2004

(Source: North Kesteven District Council, District Land Plan 2004 *(under review)*)

Written by Bill Goodhand

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Photography by Ann Broadbent

Design by Graphics NK

Additional data and graphs available on www.welbournvillage.org.uk by Rod Storer

-  Village Conservation Area
-  Village Curtilage
-  Area of great landscape value