

Dear Sirs,

I wish to congratulate the VDS Steering Group Committee for creating such a professional Village Statement. It is immediately apparent, that a lot of care, consideration and diligence has gone into creating the document; I also believe that the unbiased professional opinions which have provided, make the document more robust and more interesting.

There are some points that I'd like to make, which I hope that you will consider.

1. At the moment, Trefonen, Treflach and Nantmawr are separate entities and I think that distinct character of each must be retained – the fields and land surrounding the existing settlements should not be developed.
2. The West side Trefonen which is built on rising hillside should be protected from further development. The hillside contributes significantly to the character of the village and more development in that area would have a detrimental effect – something that would be noticed by both residents and visitors. All approaches to the three settlements (whether by road or on foot) should be protected from development – to maintain their rural character.
3. I think that Offa's Dyke is a great asset, especially so within Trefonen, where there is very easy access for both casual and serious walkers. There is also good parking and a pub and shop close by. People walking the Offa's Dyke Trail Footpath greatly appreciate that they can see the Dyke in a green field as they walk into the centre of Trefonen. I think that the character of Trefonen is largely founded on its heritage assets and its rural nature. Residents and visitors to Trefonen especially appreciate the green corridor through the village, provided by Offa's Dyke and the Offa's Dyke path. No-one wishes to walk through a housing estate - the context and setting of the Dyke is very important – which is why there were hundreds of objections to the proposed Whitridge Way development.
4. I am very concerned, that certain parties are still citing the 'need' for more development.

I think that it is very important, that the VDS Committee considers the developments that have **already** taken place in Trefonen. The Martin's Field and Chapel View (Galliers) developments were built in a short period of less than ten years and added over **fifty** houses to Trefonen. In such a brief period of time, that's a huge increase in housing provision.

A review of the three planning applications that were made in 2014, shows that they were supported by just seven people – all of whom, were friends and associates of the land owners; by contrast, there were many hundreds of objections. Approval has been given, for 900 homes in Oswestry – near the Leisure Centre; many of these will be affordable. Trefonen is not a good place for starter homes, any purchasers of such homes, would require a car and would have to spend a fair bit on petrol to get to work - because there are no jobs in the area. People need jobs before they can buy houses; there simply is no work in Trefonen and very little in Oswestry.

5. Regarding more housing, why is the focus always on Trefonen ? Why not build more houses in Treflach and Nantmawr, and develop those communities – but only if the residents of those villages are receptive to the idea.

**There should not be any development outside the current built settlement edge – the boundary defined by Shropshire Council in 2016.**

6. **All** residents should show pride in the appearance of the three villages.

Fields should not be used as unsightly dumping grounds for rubble, barbed wire and surplus building materials; trees should not be cut down unless they are diseased or there is an absolute need to do so. Indeed, wouldn't it be a good idea, to start a tree planting initiative ?

I think that it is important, that the 'character features' of the three settlements are retained. Primary amongst these, are the stone walls and hedges – concerning the walls, there are grants available to help fund their maintenance.

7. I see no mention in the VDS of the **Shropshire Way** Footpath – the Northern Loop goes through Trefonen. I think that Trefonen's status as a great place for walkers is of great value – and there's a new walk called the **Oswestry Round** which is going to be very popular. <http://www.oswestryround.co.uk/events.html>

I think that the local walking group has done a terrific job in maintaining the local footpaths and stiles. I found some new footpaths that I didn't even know existed; work done by local interest groups, really benefits the wider community.

8. I query the comment in the VDS, which mentions that 'Treflach and Trefonen are provided with a 'regular, daily bus service'. I certainly wouldn't call it 'regular'; unless you know that there are only a two or three buses each day, anyone waiting at the bus stop will be standing a long time.

I hope that you will give consideration to the points that I've raised. I do live in Trefonen and have done so for almost ten years and my views are not made, because I wish to derive some direct (or indirect) financial gain or benefit.

All points considered, I think that the VDS is a document of considerable merit – 'well done' all involved. I hope that it is accepted as a complete document and I look forward to seeing the final, online version.

Best wishes,

Jason Tyler