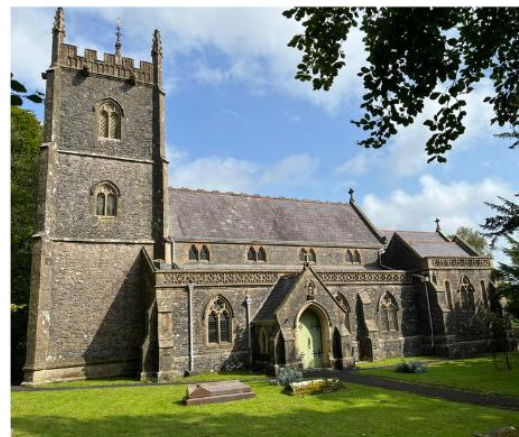




Ashwick Parish Community Review 2024



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Appendix 1. Survey comments (available as a separate document)

Action plan (available as a separate document)

Background and Context

Ashwick is a small rural parish, lying towards the eastern end of the Mendip Hills, about three miles from Shepton Mallet and six from Wells. It is an ancient settlement, mentioned in the Domesday Book, its Parish Church (St James) dates from 1413. Since the early 1800's the population has remained fairly steady between 900 and 1,300, recently rising to about 1,400. Today the village of Oakhill accounts for about half this number, with the remainder living in scattered farms and among several hamlets: Ashwick, Nettlebridge, Neighbourne, Benter, Moorwood, and part of Gurney Slade. It is hilly countryside, with narrow (often steep) lanes running between the hamlets, plus two (often congested) main roads connecting it to other places. Most of the countryside is farmland, mainly permanent pasture (supporting beef cattle, some dairy and sheep), and also areas of woodland including part of the ancient Harridge Wood.

For most of its history much of Ashwick's land and property was owned by a succession of great landowners, but most parishioners now own their own home with some renting. In past centuries employment was mainly in agriculture, with a relatively small amount in quarrying and coal mining. The area was locally important in the wool trade, with Ashwick specialising in stocking-making.

In 1767 the Oakhill Brewery was established, quickly becoming the main employer and having a huge influence on the village. This famous brewery had a very large output, with depots around the country. It owned many houses in the village, many public houses elsewhere, and ran its own railway. Due to the brewery the standard of living in the village was then higher than in most other villages nearby. But in 1925 the brewery suffered a serious fire, from which it never recovered. Several subsequent efforts to restart a brewery lasted only a few years. The brewery buildings have now been converted to residential dwellings.



Figure 1: Overlooking part of the Parish southwards, Bath Road running up from the bottom left, Oakhill High Street turning off right and Fosse Road to the left by the Oakhill Inn.

Most of the older buildings in the village and outlying hamlets, including the larger houses and workers' cottages dating from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, are built of local stone (a few from locally produced red bricks), with slate or tile roofs. This gives an attractive traditional character to it. Some newer houses, with different building styles, are interspersed among the older houses in the village. Most of the old cottages have no parking facilities and any pavements are narrow and often faulty.

Today the parish benefits from a variety of amenities: a primary school; two thriving pubs; a village shop in Gurney Slade (including a post office) and two churches (St James & All Saints – part of a wider benefice), with church halls and associated activities. There is an excellent medical practice and a Care Home in the village, though other medical facilities are at a distance from the parish. There is also a popular Village Hall and recreation ground with a good car park. The recently refurbished Village Hall houses the Oakleaf Café, which is open two days a week (with volunteer staff). This has quickly grown into a popular meeting place; with several associated clubs and social activities. Some previous clubs, though, have been discontinued since Covid. The recreation ground (with a childrens' playground and adult outdoor gym apparatus), plus a golf club just outside the village, and many footpaths and bridleways in the parish, help cater for physical activity.

There is a strong sense of community in the parish, with the village atmosphere being much valued by those who live here. However, despite the positives there is very little employment today in the parish itself, apart from some in the service industries, most parishioners either travelling outside it (often commuting to Bath or Bristol), or working from home. The only public transport is a one hourly bus route with limited hours running between Wells and Bath via Shepton Mallet. The roads mainly lack pavements and in many places are dangerous to walk or cycle along. This being the case, and with the parish being at a distance from towns, more social and physical activities need to be catered for within its boundaries.

A previous Ashwick Parish Design Statement was published in 2003. This was informed by an extensive consultation across the parish (similar in intent to the current one), held on 29th April 1997 under the auspices of Mendip District Council. The reports produced contained statistical data highlighting issues of importance to the community, recommendations for what they like to retain and what to improve, which contributed to the Design Statement.

With the changes taking place in the demographics of the parish and in local government it is now time to produce a new Community Plan that reflects the current needs and wishes of the Community.



Methodology

In 2023 the Parish Council (PC) was considering the development of a new Parish Design Statement when it became aware of the opportunity to benefit from an initiative being run by the Community Council for Somerset (CCS). This was to provide support for a Community Review which, essentially, had the same aims namely, undertake a Community-wide consultation to establish the views of the Parishioners on the pros and cons of living in the Parish: what are the good things, the not-so-good things and how they would like the Parish and its Community to evolve? It was recognised that a report based on a wide consultation across the Parish would be very useful in seeking support, including funding, for any changes that might be desired.

A successful application for support was duly made to CCS early in 2024. A CCS Advisor was appointed and a Community Review Steering Group formed comprising members from across the Community, with the first meeting being held in March 2024. This was used to agree and confirm the aims and objectives, an overall timeframe with target dates for strategic stages of the process, etc. Further meetings led to the production of a Communications Channel Pyramid to ensure as broad a consultation with, and engagement by, the Community as possible could be achieved and members of the Steering Group who would take responsibility for reaching this goal.

Publicity was achieved through social media, posters around the Parish, leaflet drops to houses, businesses, GP Surgery, Village Hall, Oakhill Primary School, Pubs, Phoenix Magazine, etc. A Public Drop-In Session was held in the Village Hall on 27th April 2024 to encourage members of the Community to highlight issues and topics of concern to help inform the scope of the main consultation survey.

With support and guidance from CCS a final set of questions for the on-line survey was devised and promoted extensively using all the publicity channels listed above which led to a final figure of 305 accredited responses being received. The Steering Group were very satisfied with this as it was significantly higher than the figure of 102 for the previous review in 1997. It may, of course, have helped that the Steering Committee was able to offer a Prize Draw due to the generosity of local businesses offering 7 Prizes to winners selected at random from those who completed the Survey.



Figure 2: One of the Display Boards during the Drop-In Session for collecting the views of Parishioners on what topics they felt are important to them.



Demographics

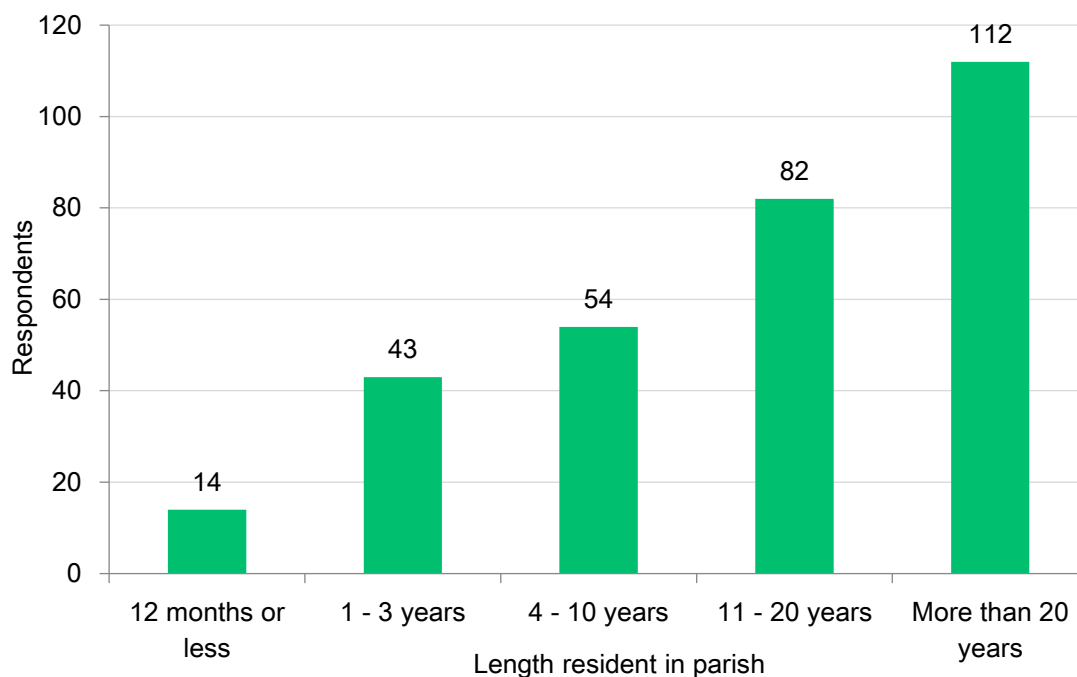
An introduction to who has completed the survey, including some basic background questions about age, household size and how long they have lived in the area. Please note that Census 2021 data is now available at <https://census.gov.uk/census-2021-results>

Q1 Do you live and/or work in Ashwick Parish?

Answered “yes”: 305 Skipped: 0

Q2 How long have you lived in Ashwick Parish?

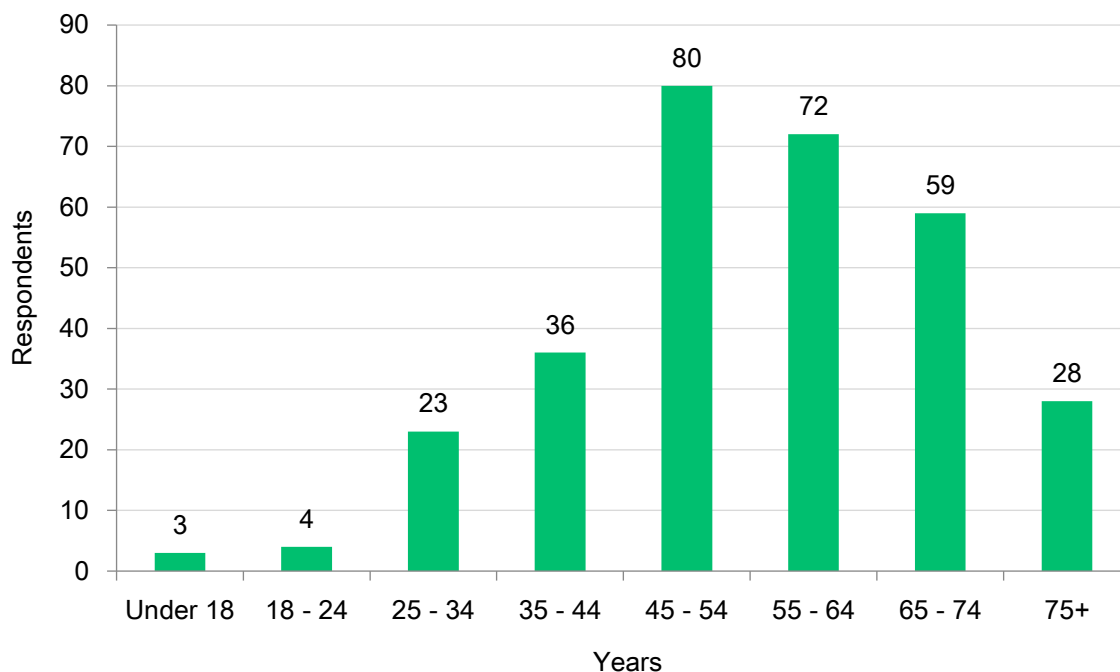
Answered: 305 Skipped: 0



Nearly two thirds of respondents have lived in the Parish for more than 11 years. 57 have moved to the community since 2021, during or since the Covid 19 pandemic. The smallest group of respondents are those newest to the Parish.

Q3 What age group do you belong to?

Answered: 305 Skipped: 0



The sizeable majority of respondents are working age (18-64 years). Around 1 in 3 people are older respondents (65+ years), while there are a very small number of under 18's who took part in the survey.



Housing

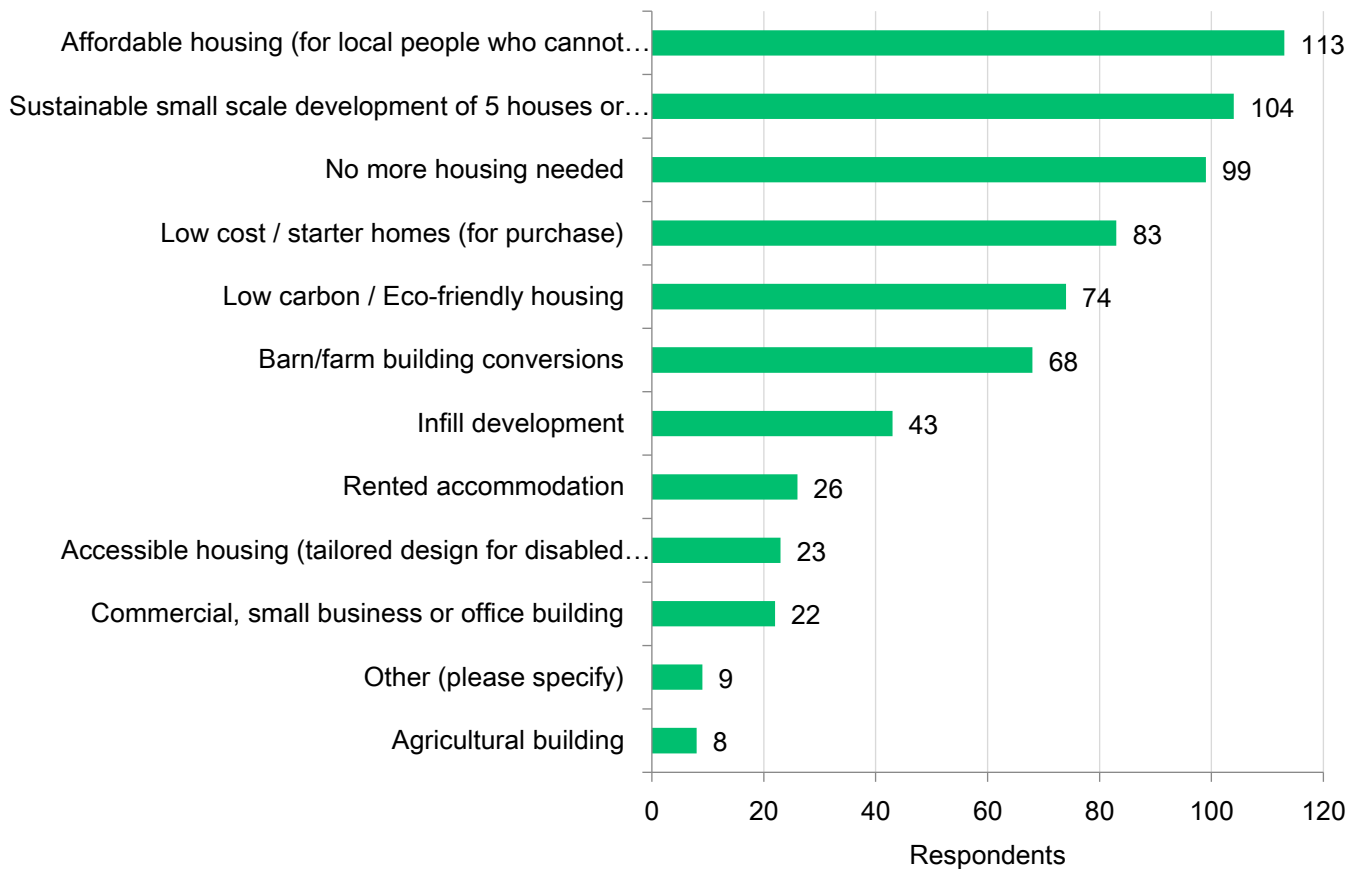
This overview of your needs and current housing situations will help inform the decisions made by the Parish council on planning applications for both large and small developments. Please note this is not a housing needs survey so will provide indicative information only.



Figure 3: A mix of older and newer housing styles, including converted brewery and church

Q4 What types of housing and development do you feel Ashwick Parish needs most in the next 10 years (please tick any that apply)?

Answered: 303 Skipped: 2



Affordable housing (113) and sustainable small scale development (104) are most important to respondents. Nearly one third of respondents feel that no more housing is needed, supported by comments:

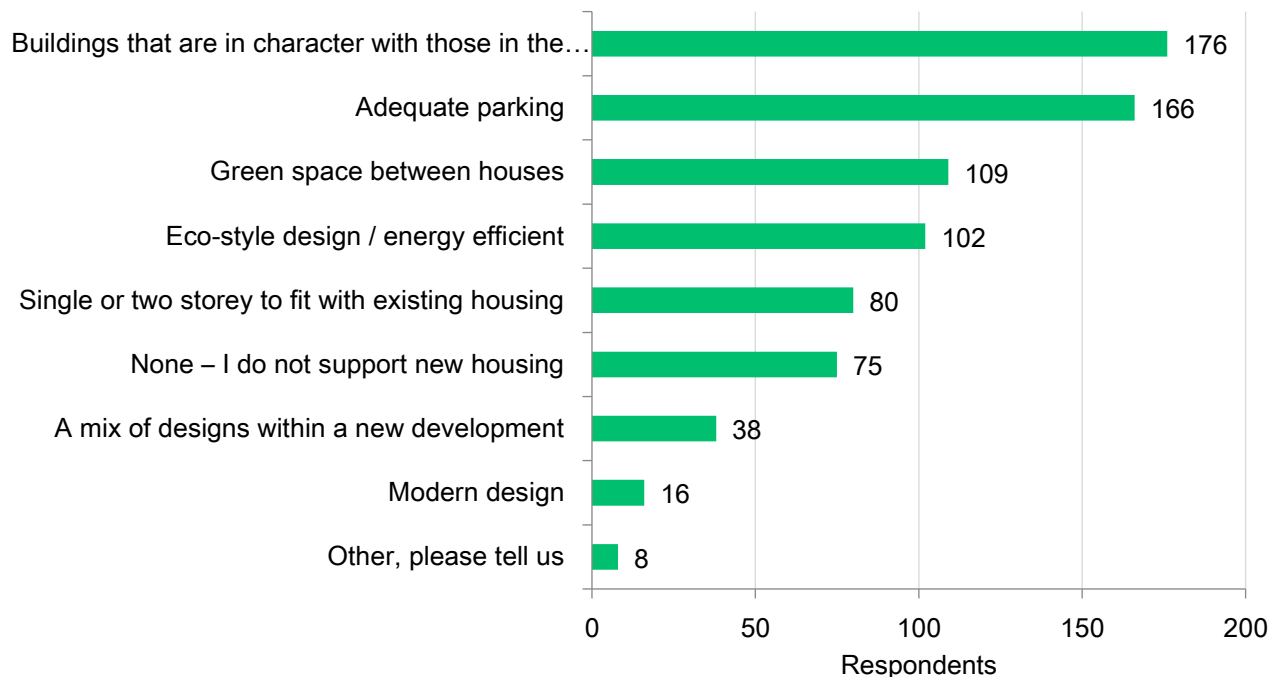
- *Definitely no more housing within Oakhill village due to current overcrowding, lack of infrastructure and parking/traffic issues. I have not been in the area long enough to judge more rural areas, but schools and health services will be impacted adversely by more housing.*
- *I am not aware of a great demand in this village.*

Other comments included:

- *Just to help first time buyers buy their first house.*
- *Property suitable for down sizers*
- *Property suitable for older residents I.e. downsizers*
- *Regeneration of empty buildings*
- *Small start-up business & allotments for local people should always be considered*

Q5 What is important to you in the design of new build housing? (tick any that apply)

Answered: 303 Skipped: 2



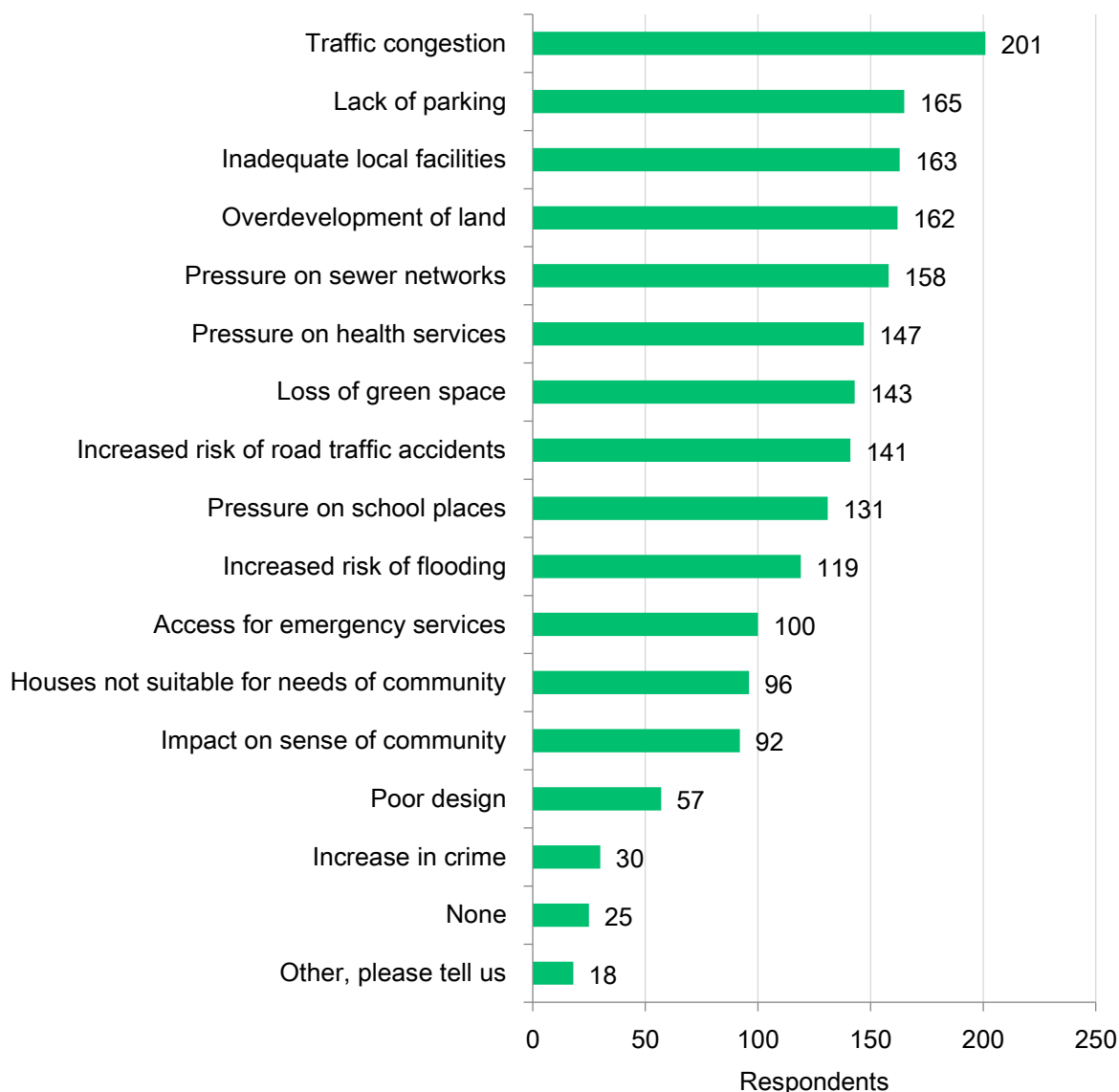
Most important are the buildings are in character with those in the Parish (176) and that there is adequate parking (166) considered in the design of new build housing. Green space and energy efficiency are important factors, with specific ideas offered in the comments below. In contrast to most respondents, some other comments queried whether there was an existing character/style within the Parish currently.

- *All houses should have bat/swift boxes, insect & bird nesting bricks. Trees planted. Built to include nature.*
- *Consider US-style 'Tiny Homes' and Modular Construction using sustainable materials*
- *Dwellings with appropriate spaces for residents who work from home*
- *EV charging wiring ready fitted even if point not fitted yet*
- *Regeneration of empty buildings*
- *I do not support more houses but if there is, then to be in character and with lots of green space*
- *There is no specific character of housing in Oakhill now.*
- *There is such a mix of styles and character in the village that it depends what any building was immediately surrounded by and how visible from the road/public path they would be*

75 respondents reiterated their view that no further housing is needed.

Q6 What concerns, if any, do you have about the Chapelfield development being proposed for Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 299 Skipped 6



There are clear concerns of the effect on local infrastructure this development may bring, with traffic (201) and parking (165) at the top, and to a lesser extent a perceived risk of road traffic accidents (141).

- *Congestion on High Street. There are big breaks in pavements so have to walk on road*
- *High St is already a problem for Emergency vehicles, more traffic could be disastrous*
- *Too many parked vehicles*

These concerns are also closely linked with inadequate local facilities and pressure on infrastructure (sewers) and health services. Many also consider that this is overdevelopment of land and that there is a resulting loss of green space.

5 respondents didn't feel they knew enough about the scheme to comment. Others felt it could set a precedent for future:

- *Change of culture from village to town*
- *Precedent being set that encourages more and more development of "large" estates - have seen this in Chilcompton, Midsomer Norton, etc*
- *Scale & density of proposal is totally out of proportion with the local area*
- *Ecological impact*
- *Light pollution*

Positive comments:

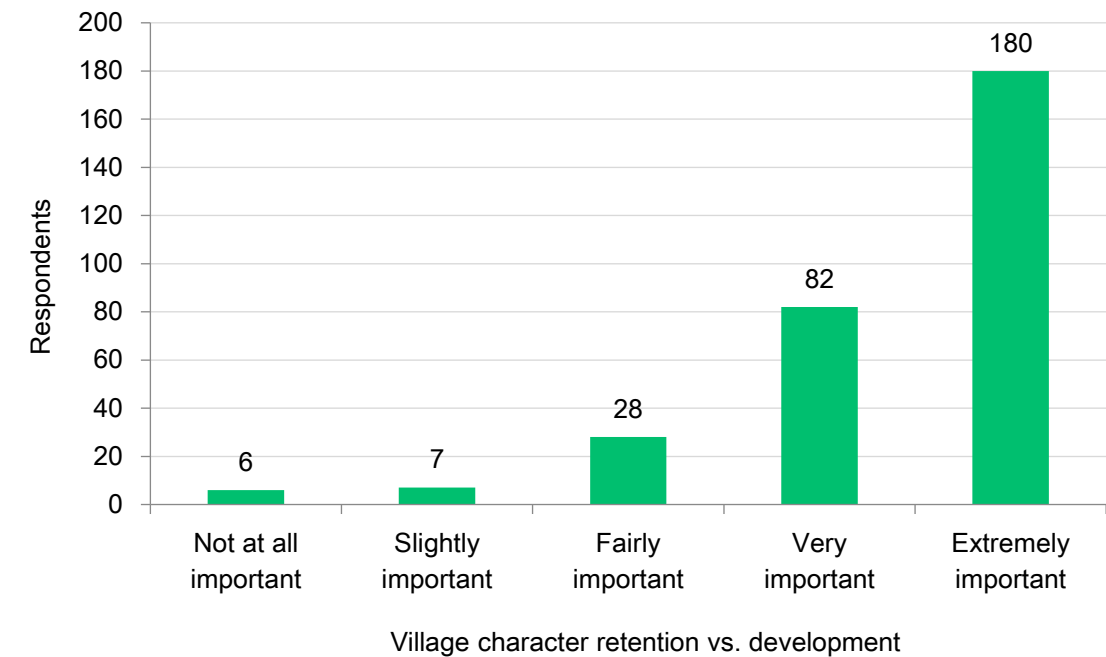
- *I personally think that Chapelfield is an ideal site for additional housing, especially first buyers and low cost... Maybe the proposal needs to be scaled back but not to the point that the Parish Council would like as ... fewer houses with much larger gardens and grounds will again be outside the pocket for the youngsters. The argument that the developers will get half way through the project then say they can't afford to build the low cost housing as they did with the brewery complex could be addressed by ensuring these properties are completed first or that any completed builds are sold off to enable the low cost housing to be completed.*
- *We want new housing and should encourage it.*
- *Why is there no consideration of the positive side of such a development?*



Figure 4: A large, older, house now converted to a Care Home, Pondsmead

Q7 How important is it for you that Ashwick Parish retains its village character with the onset of surrounding development?

Answered 303 Skipped 2



262 of 303 respondents consider it very or extremely important that Ashwick retains its village character. This resonates with the findings throughout the housing questions.

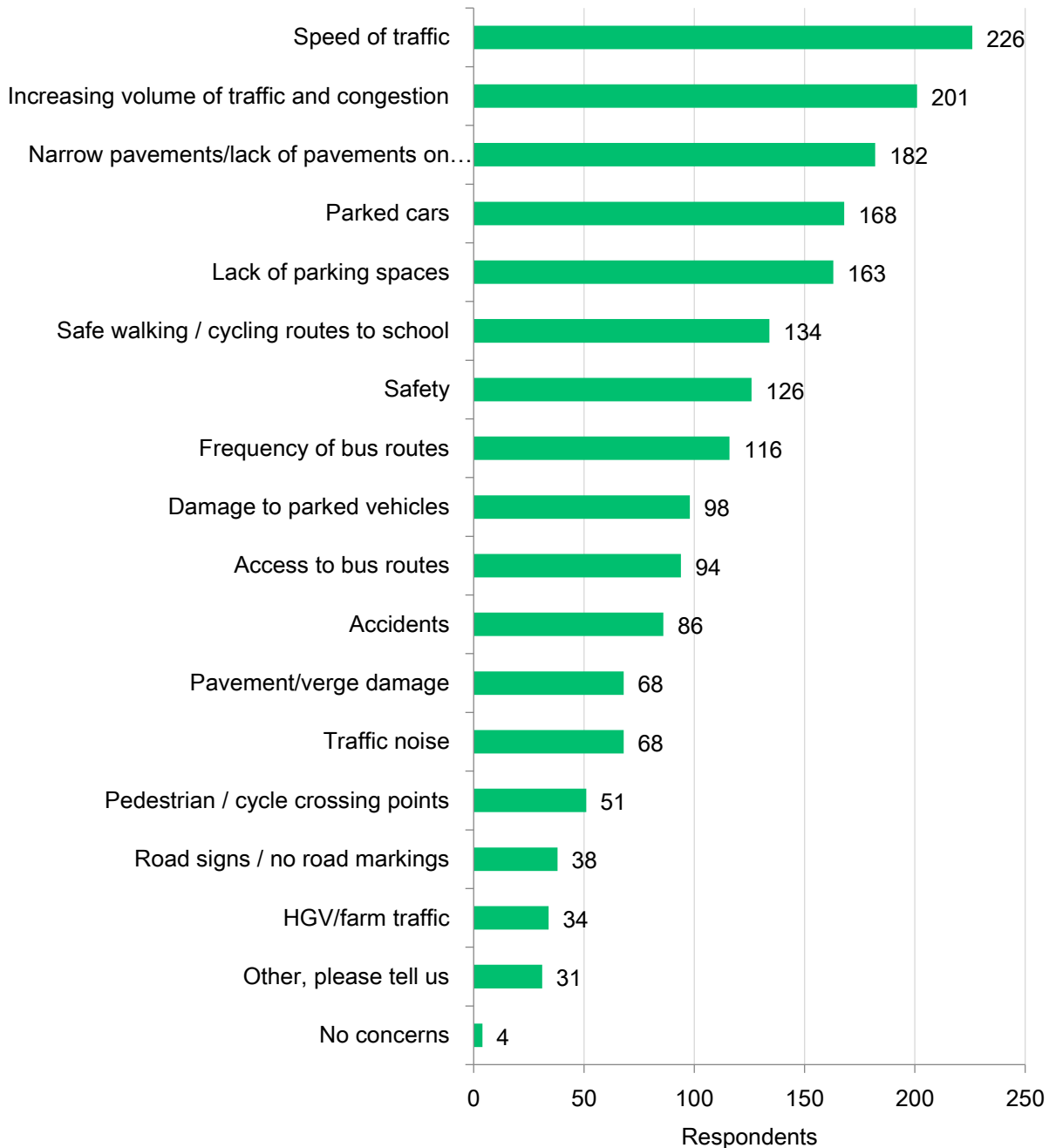


Traffic, travel and transport

Cars are essential for many people in rural areas, but to address the challenges of congestion and climate change, we can look to improve the provision of public transport, and encouraging walking and cycling, to reduce car journeys.

Q8 What concerns, if any, do you have about traffic and public transport in Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 305 Skipped 0



Speed of traffic is the greatest concern (226). As seen in Q6, congestion and parking are also top concerns. Reference to public transport comes in nearly halfway down the table with greater concerns about traffic speed, parking and lack of parking space. General safety and safe walking/cycling routes to school are also a significant concern. This appears again in Q29 with Children/Young People's concerns around moving around the Parish safely on foot and by bike and appears in Traffic Q10.

Themes in the comments include:

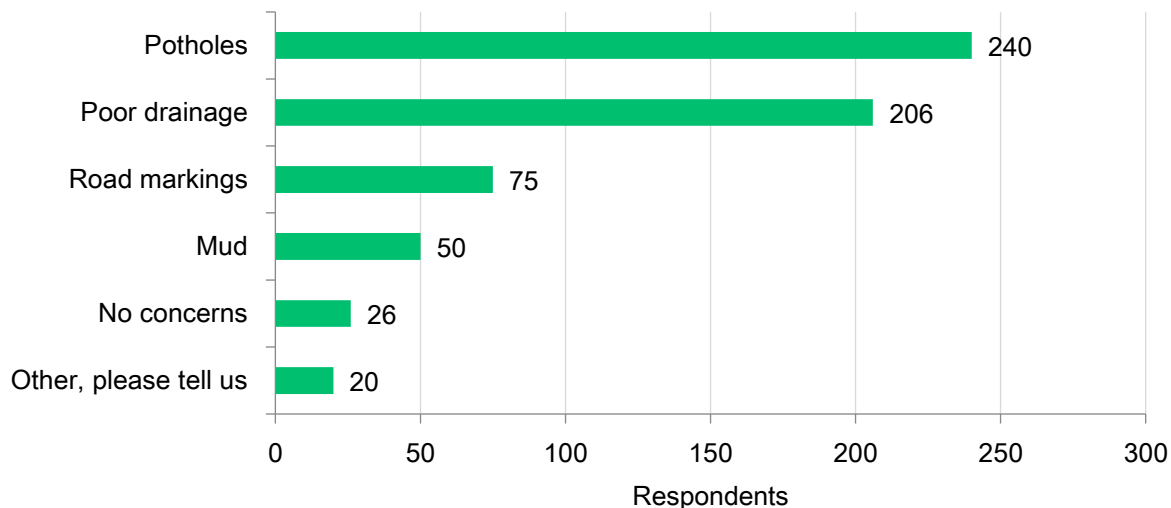
- Call for speed reduction to 20mph through the village
- Call for speed reduction and traffic calming initiatives
- Concerns around HGV traffic (*definitely there are issues with HGVs getting stuck in Fosse Road*)
- Parking (on pavements, at school time, High Street, bottom of Zion Hill, junction of Fosse Road, opposite Oakhill Inn, Bath Road junction)
- Maintenance of verges and paths (*Overgrown pathways hanging bushes and trees from gardens blocking pathways*)
- Safe off-road routes for horse riders and dog walkers
- *Desperate need for traffic management on the High Street - similar to that in Stoke St Michael and Stratton with bollards and priority signs*
- *Traffic calming should be introduced and narrowing of the high street with wider pavement from the Granaries behind Courage Cottage up to the Old Maltings*
- *Walking to Oakhill surgery up the A367. Fast traffic, narrow pavement, debris on pavement, overhanging foliage.*



Figure 5: A tight squeeze, narrow and absent pavements.

**Q9 What concerns, if any, do you have about the condition of the local road surfaces?
(tick any that apply)**

Answered 303 Skipped 2



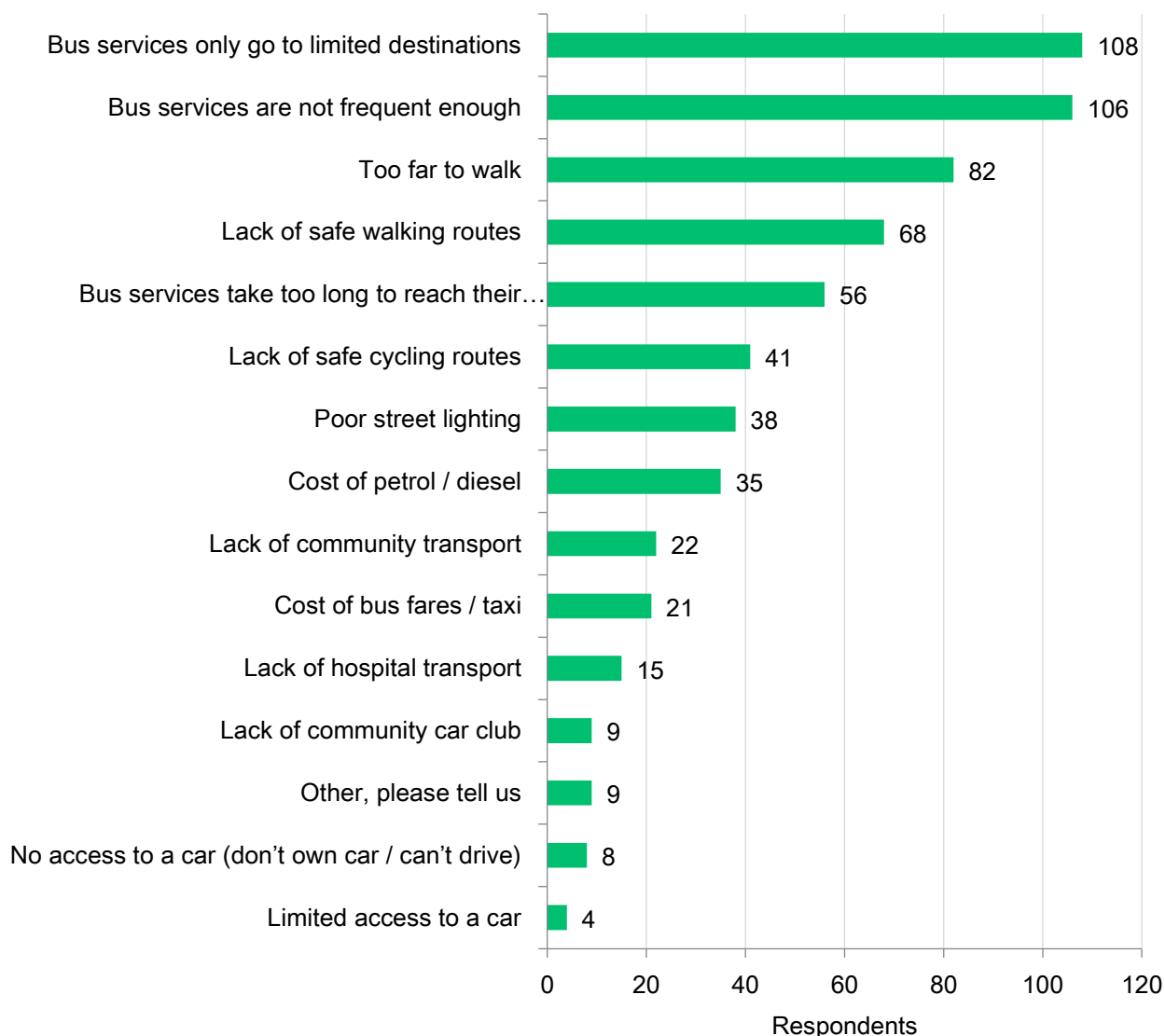
Potholes and poor drainage are the main concerns for respondents.

Comments – with a focus on improving drainage and flood mitigation - include:

- *Deep drops by verges*
- *Drains need to be cleared regularly to reduce flooding and road damage*
- *Weed growing on pavements and in the road. Bad potholes*
- *Failed road resurfacing project last year and road flooded and verges washed away and road surface damaged*
- *Flooding*
- *Flooding to the High Street, lack of maintenance, road sweeper when leaves falling, blocking and filling gulleys up, old gulleys not fit for purpose, and no new ones getting installed despite constant promises from Somerset highways. Bad maintenance to no maintenance at all.*
- *No storm sewers means flooding, on roads and nearby properties*
- *Our country lanes are being washed away. When potholes are filled it seems only some are cherry picked.*
- *Road surface is awful. Drainage inadequate and causing water damage to my property.*
- *Tarmac edges of some lanes very deteriorated which is difficult pulling over for cars to pass*
- *The pavements are in a dreadful state in places causing people with walking aids to walk in road.*
- *The quality of some of the roadworks has been poor eg on the A37 the turn into the village is already breaking up*

Q10 If you cannot easily reach your destination / local facilities, what stops you from being able to get there? (tick any that apply)

Answered 220 Skipped 85



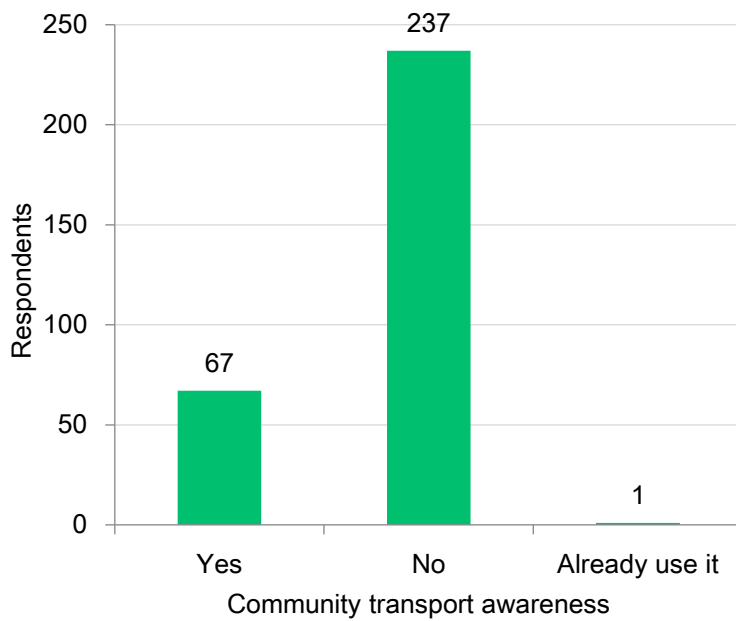
In addition to the shortcomings of public transport (citing limited destinations (108) and frequency (106)), safe walking and cycling routes are also a barrier to reaching destinations for a sizeable proportion of respondents while many consider their journey is too far to walk.

Other comments include:

- *Badly parked cars blocking access.*
- *Bus services don't run into evening*
- *Buses are very reasonably priced, but the early time of the last services through the village push us to use the cars more than we would do out of choice.*
- *Buses through the village mid/late evenings*
- *Cannot safely walk to the bus stops that are 5 minutes and 10 minutes [away]*
- *Increase in traffic and dangerous driving*
- *Lack of bus*
- *Lack of multi-use paths to include horse riders*
- *Need to drive to all local shops and services*

Q11 Did you know community transport is available in Ashwick Parish (for those who do not have their own transport or find it difficult to access public transport)?

Answered 305 Skipped 0



The lack of awareness of this service – and the single respondent who already uses it – suggests there is some communication work to do around promoting community transport.



Figure 6: Narrow streets, narrow/absent pavements, overhanging vegetation.

Climate emergency

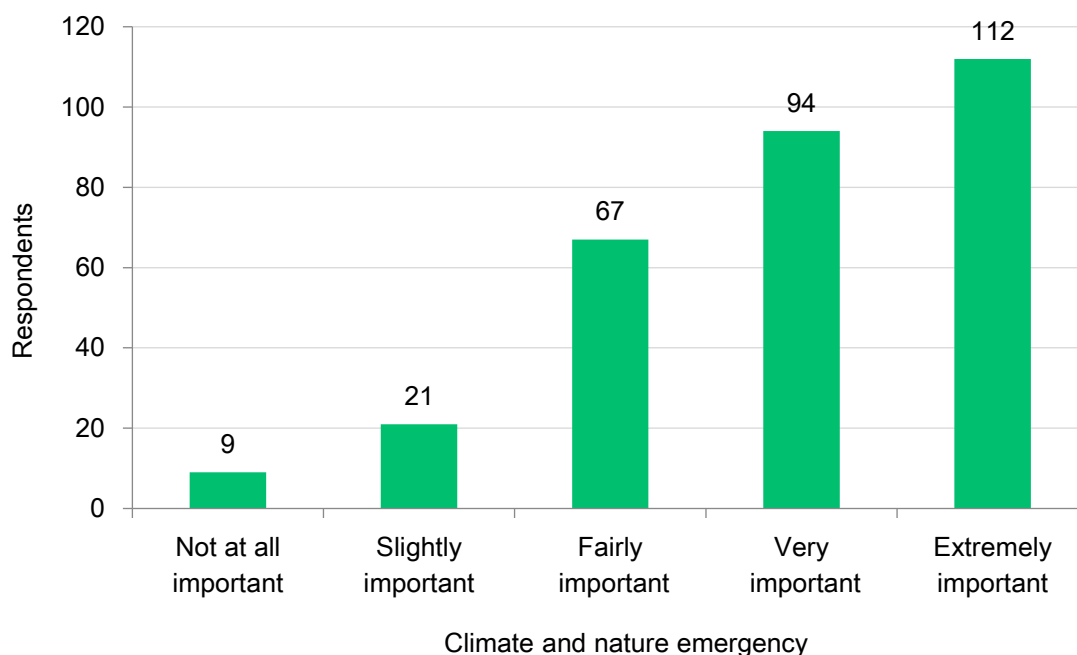
The challenges of the Climate and Nature Emergency are serious concerns for the future. To address this, it is going to require positive changes to all our lifestyles. The information gathered from our residents, businesses and other key groups in the parish will highlight what we can all do as a community to help achieve the goal of being carbon-neutral by 2030.

Figure 7: Flooding in the High Street following not unusual amounts of rain. Note narrow and absent pavements!



Q12 How important is the climate and nature emergency change to you?

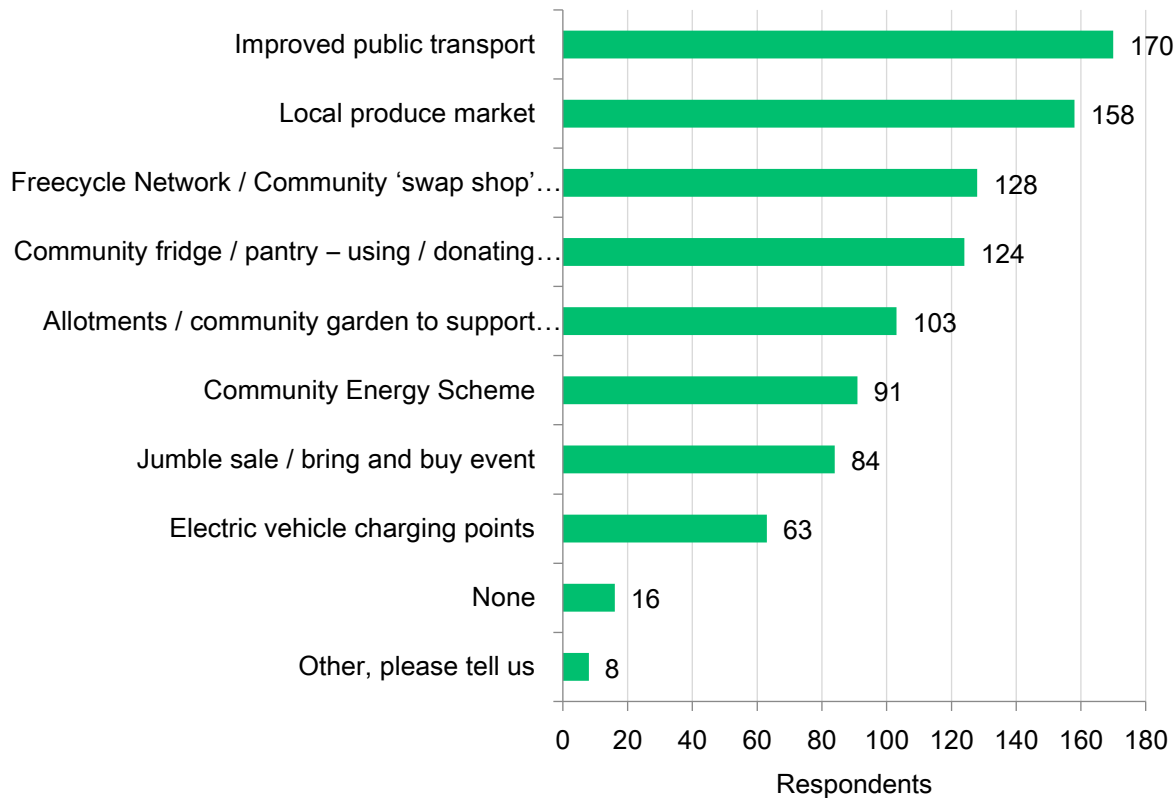
Answered 303 Skipped 2



Two in three respondents indicate that the climate emergency is either very or extremely important to them.

Q13 What services or facilities would you use to help reduce your own carbon footprint if these were available in Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 301 Skipped 4



As in Q10 where limitations in public transport stop respondents from reaching local facilities, local public transport is also frustrating efforts to reduce individual carbon footprints (170).

More than half of all respondents would use a local produce market, while there is also sizeable interest in a community fridge/pantry and to a lesser extent allotments or a community garden.

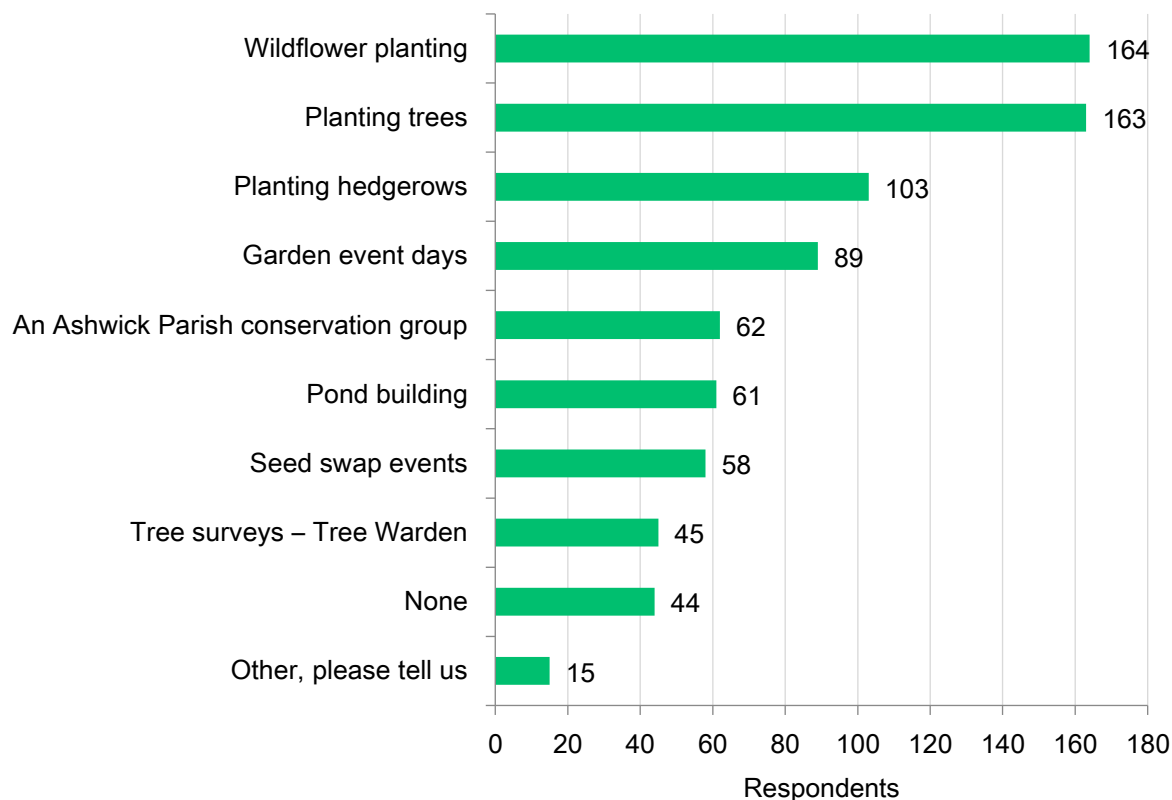
A local platform enabling re-use of unwanted items is also seen as a viable solution for respondents to reduce their impact on the environment.

Other comments:

- *Local shop like Chilcompton has*
- *Village shop*
- *A garden share scheme, where older people are asked if they'd like to share a garden and a more able person would grow vegs to share*
- *Decent broadband for rural houses would save me driving into work*
- *Have already partaken in the Bristol Green project for Solar-panels, ASHP, Radiators & Cavity-fill*
- *Safe access to bus stops*
- *Support planning applications that are eco friendly*

Q14 Which of the following in Ashwick Parish would you get involved in to improve biodiversity and wildlife conservation? (tick any that apply)

Answered 296 Skipped 9



Planting wildflowers(164), trees (163) and hedgerows (103) are the priority calls here with only 44 respondents not wishing to get involved in any activity, supported by comments around time and access:

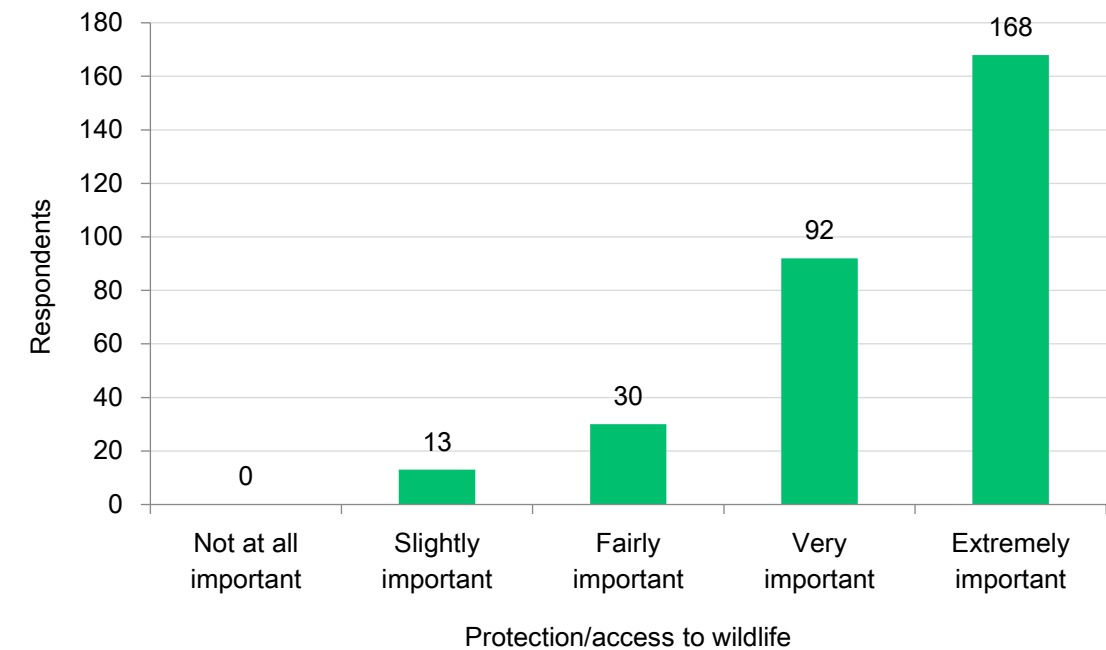
- *All important but too disabled to be able to get involved*
- *Already committed*
- *Already do those ticked above*
- *Although am interested in many of these, I am already fully occupied with community volunteering (VH & Cafe)*
- *Due to life circumstance and busy-ness I am unlikely realistically to get involved yet*
- *If younger I would have been interested in all the above*
- *Limited by health issues. Would consider helping in a community shop though*
- *No time*
- *We have already planted a large number of trees and a wildlife area*



Figure 8: New pond and wildflower planting

Q15 How important is it that we take steps to protect wildlife and access to it?

Answered 303
Skipped 2



The outstanding majority consider it either very or extremely important to that steps are taken to protect wildlife and access to it.



Figure 9: A line of new trees at the Ashwick & Oakhill Village Hall Recreation Ground

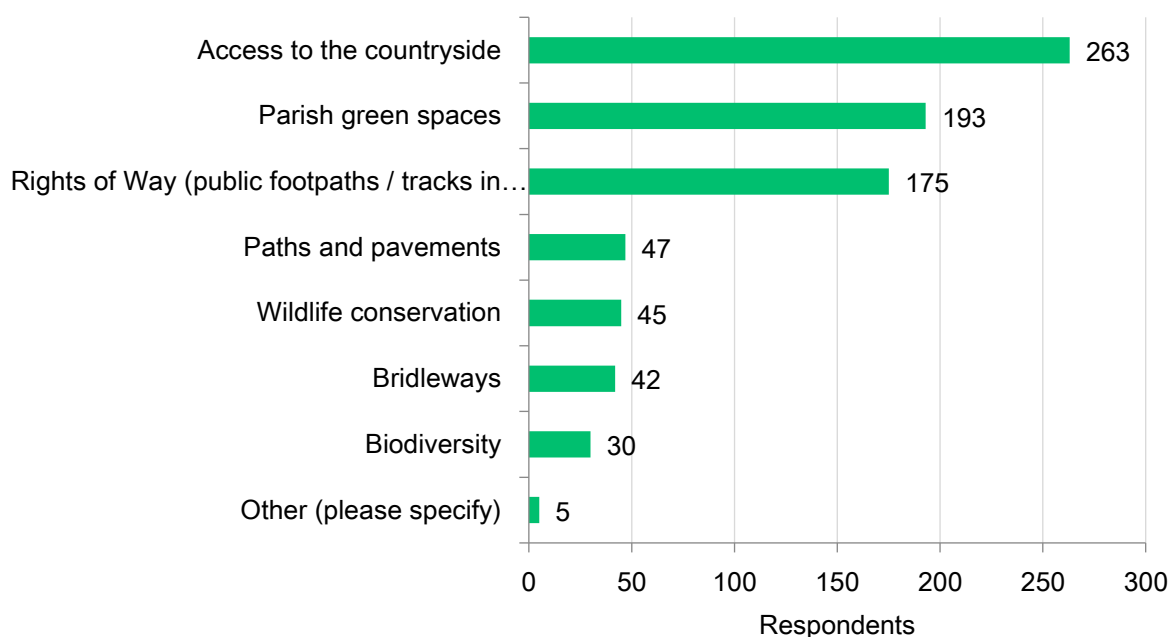


Local Environment

It can be easy to take for granted what you value about your surroundings. Or you may feel you don't have a say in the changes that might happen. These questions will help you consider what's important to you about your local environment, including Rights of Way and shared space in your community.

Q16 Which of the following are you satisfied with relating to your local environment in Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 290 Skipped 15

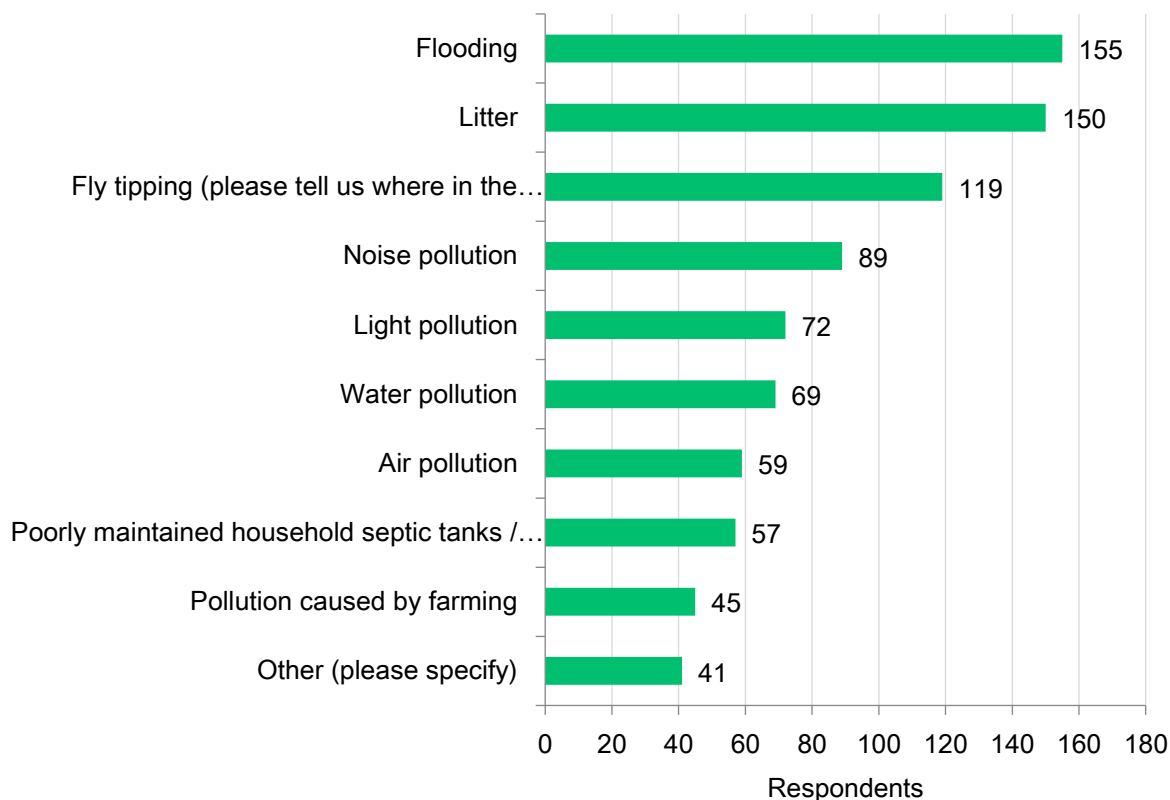


The 3 most positive responses to the local environment are access to the countryside, parish green spaces and Rights of Way (although there appears to be significantly less satisfaction around Bridleways). Comments raise some specific concerns around footpaths:

- *Access to some existing Public Footpaths are in need of attention*
- *Footpaths are great - pavements are not*
- *Some footpaths are over grown & need trimming back one with a lot of stinging nettles & better signposting sometimes needed on some footpaths*
- *The closed footpaths in Harridge Woods need maintenance as they will be lost for good in a year or two due to low footfall suppressing the weeds and brambles*

Q17 Which, if any, of the following issues are you concerned about affecting your local environment in Ashwick Parish?

Answered 278 Skipped 27

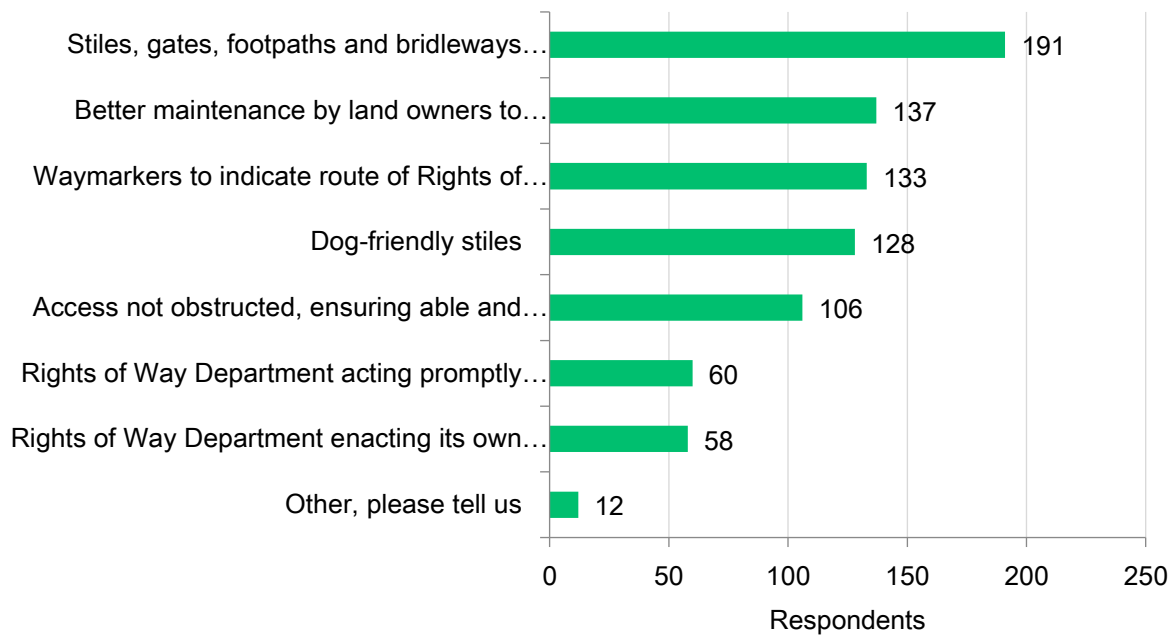


Flooding, litter and fly tipping are the highest listed concerns. Pound Lane is mentioned in 12 comments as a fly tipping site along with Galley Batch junction. Other locations mentioned:

- *At the Old Brewery bins where people dump things over the wall who don't have access to the bins. Also furniture, white goods, electricals etc*
- *At the top of Badgers Cross*
- *Benter near there*
- *Everywhere, rural lanes, laybys, farm gateways*
- *Highcroft Lane litter*
- *In the entrance to the old Oakhill Manor Railway*
- *Lay-by/ gateway between Morris & Perry Quarry & Stockhill Road.*
- *Local gateways /Roemead Lane*
- *Fosse Road*
- *Simbriss Rd / Galley Batch junction*
- *Sweetleaze Lane*
- *Flooding: Tape Lane*

**Q18 What would improve your experience of using Rights of Way in Ashwick Parish?
(tick any that apply)**

Answered 273 Skipped 32



Picking up from Q16, which demonstrated the importance of access to the countryside and Rights of Way to respondents, here we find that better maintenance is key to improving the experience. The comments further support improving access:

- *Bridleways cleared to a height to accommodate horse riders at least 9 feet*
- *Footpaths are often overgrown during the summer making them impassable. The footpath alongside Oakhill Manor further down from the Dower House, being one in particular*
- *More bridleways*
- *New footpath gates alongside the old stone stiles*
- *Pram friendly gates (one at Rec is inaccessible with pram)*
- *Stiles and gates pushchair friendly especially in the recreation ground*
- *The local wood pathways are not maintained and kept open*
- *We don't go on local walks as my husband partially sighted*

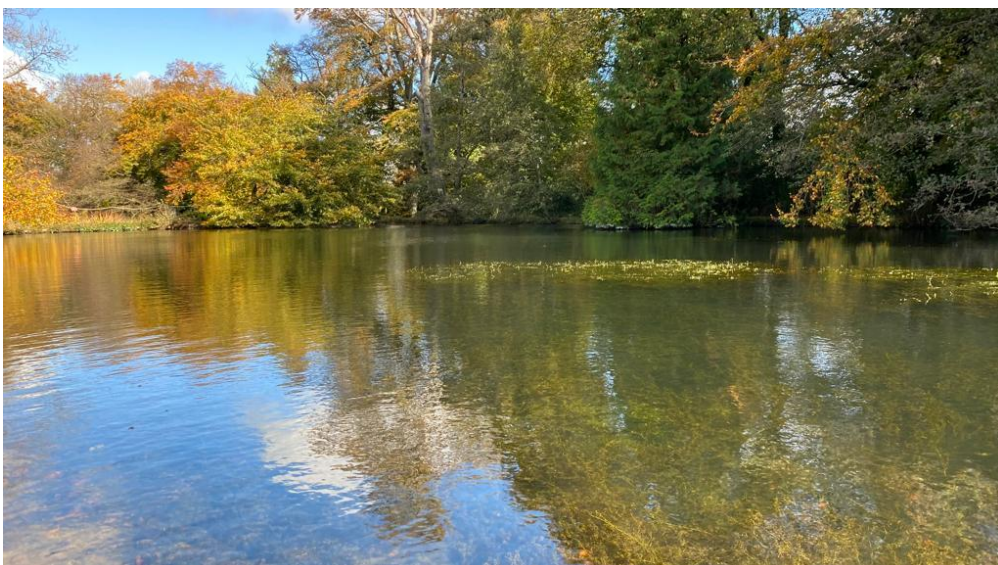
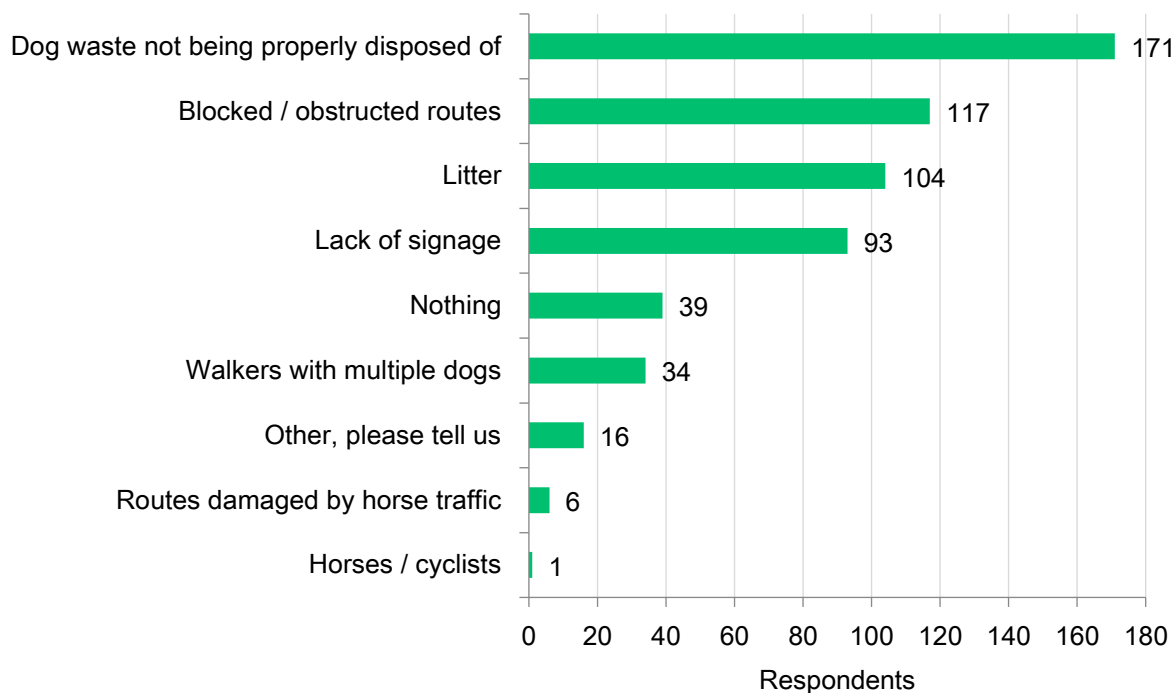


Figure 10: A local lake in the grounds of 'The Beeches'.

Q19 What, if anything, spoils your enjoyment of using Rights of Way in Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 289 Skipped 16

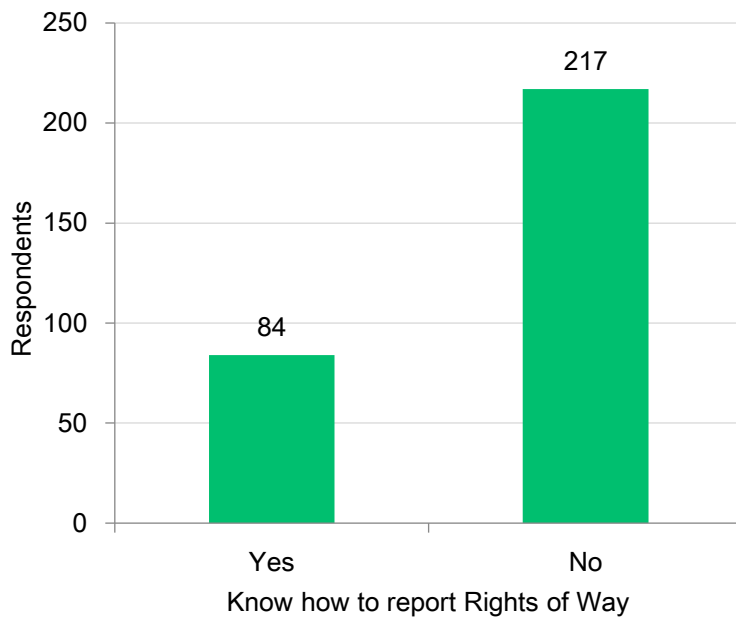


Dog waste is the biggest concern. Overgrown and blocked routes continue to be a theme, and the comments again highlight the lack of disability access and lack of dog friendly stiles/gates. There are also some comments highlighting areas where landowners could improve:

- *Intentionally 'hostile' by design gates/ stiles from the farmers. Deliberately left unmaintained and difficult to pass through. Some footpaths are so overgrown you can not use them at all*
- *Irresponsible farmers not picking up the wrappings from their silage bales & general plastic farm waste*
- *Livestock not used to walkers. Scary experience with cows. Stiles that are not dog friendly is a big issue!*
- *Public footpaths being blocked by electric fences*

Q20 Do you know how to report Rights of Way issues?

Answered 301 Skipped 4



The majority of respondents do not know how to report Rights of Way issues. The lack of awareness around this suggests there is some communications work to do around promoting reporting process.



Figure 11: Winter grazing.

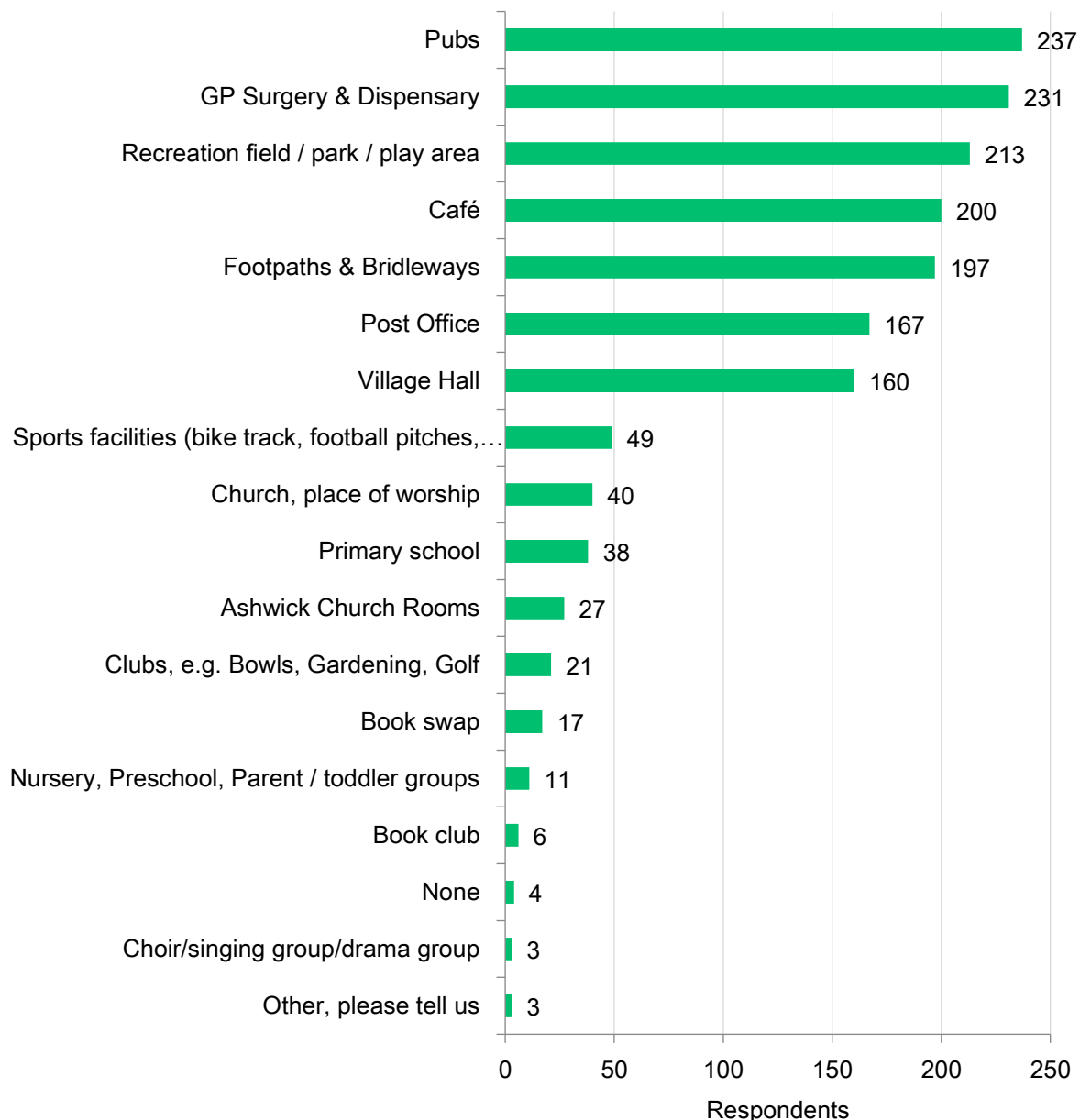


Community facilities and services

We have a number of community facilities in Ashwick, by that we mean buildings, equipment for recreation and places to assemble for meetings, events and social gatherings. These questions have helped us understand whether the facilities are suitable for the community, where improvements are needed or if new facilities are needed.

Q21 Which resources in Ashwick Parish do you currently use (as an individual, not a household)? (tick any that apply)

Answered 304 Skipped 1

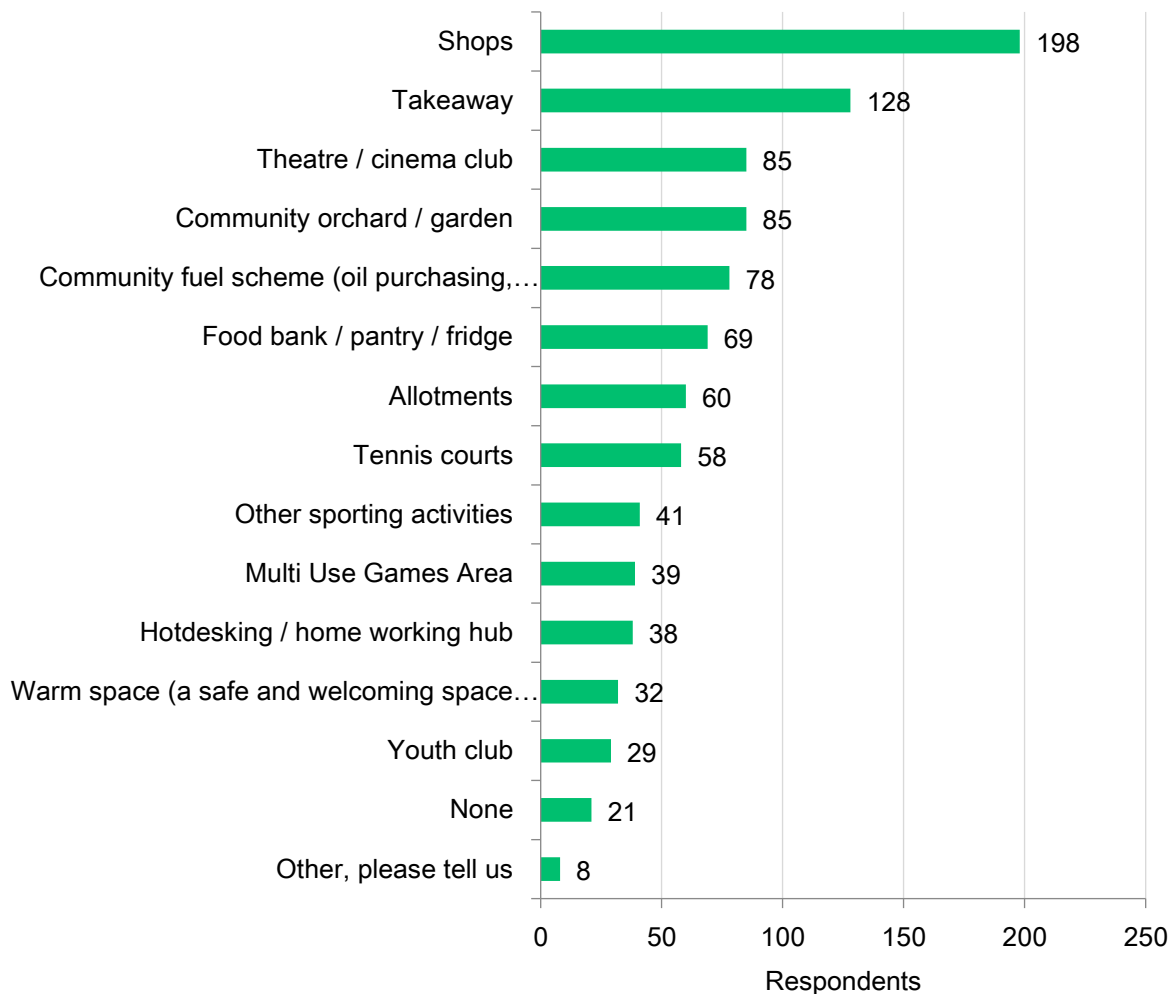


The top 3 responses here are Pub, GP Surgery and the Recreation Field/Play/Park Area. The comments were all querying Post Office provision:

- *I didn't know there was a post office in Ashwick*
- *I use post office in Gurney Slade, is that part of our Parish?*
- *Where's the Post Office in Oakhill?*

Q22 As an individual, which resources would you use if they were available in Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 294 Skipped 11



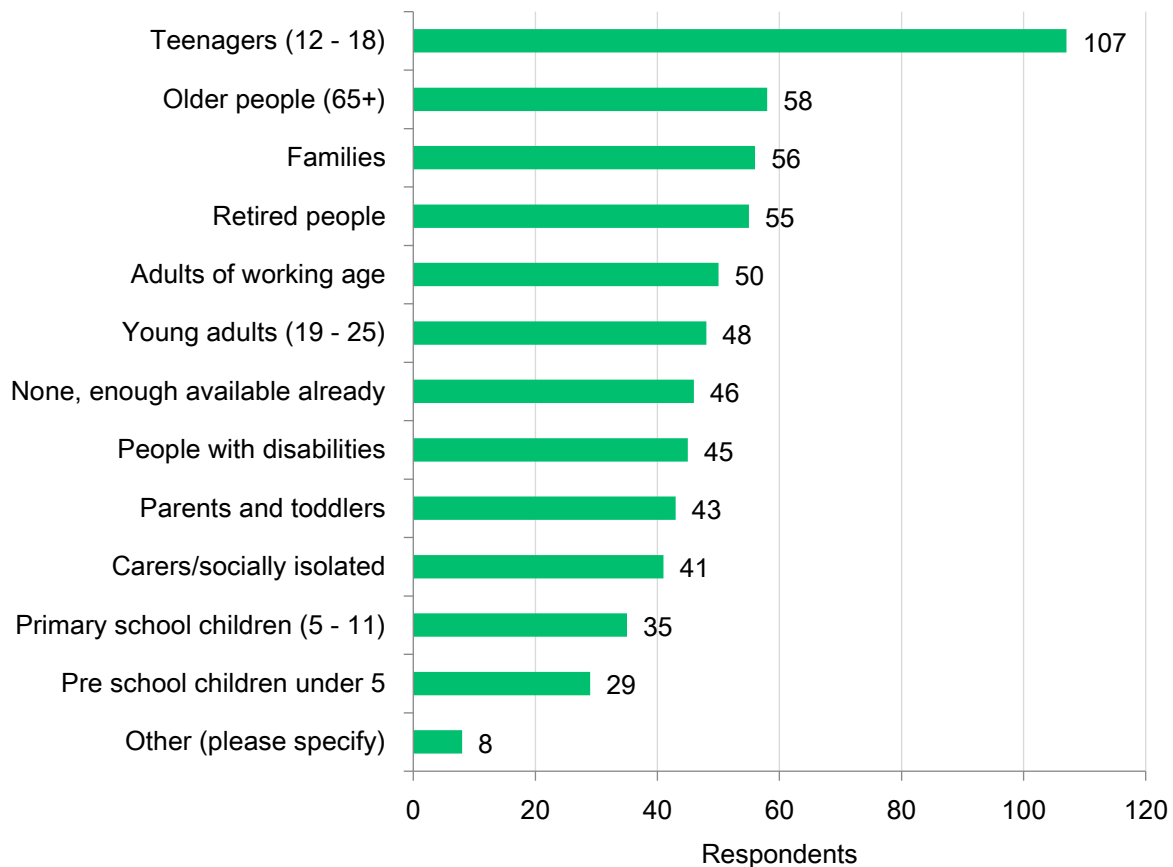
Respondents indicate that more shops, takeaway, a theatre/cinema club and a community orchard/garden would be the most popular new amenities in the community. There were 2 comments calling for a skate park (to save travel to Pilton or Stoke) and other suggestions included:

- *Bakery*
- *Cafe if open for more than 2 days a week, absolutely love having it in the village!*
- *Car park other than the pub car park*
- *Green energy scheme would be great for not only my household but others as well*
- *Horse canter track*
- *Village walking group*

Q23 Should there be more / new leisure and recreation provision in Ashwick Parish for any of the following specific ages or groups? (tick any that apply)

Answered 248

Skipped 57



Teenagers are the priority group here when increasing leisure and recreation provision in the parish. Other comments included:

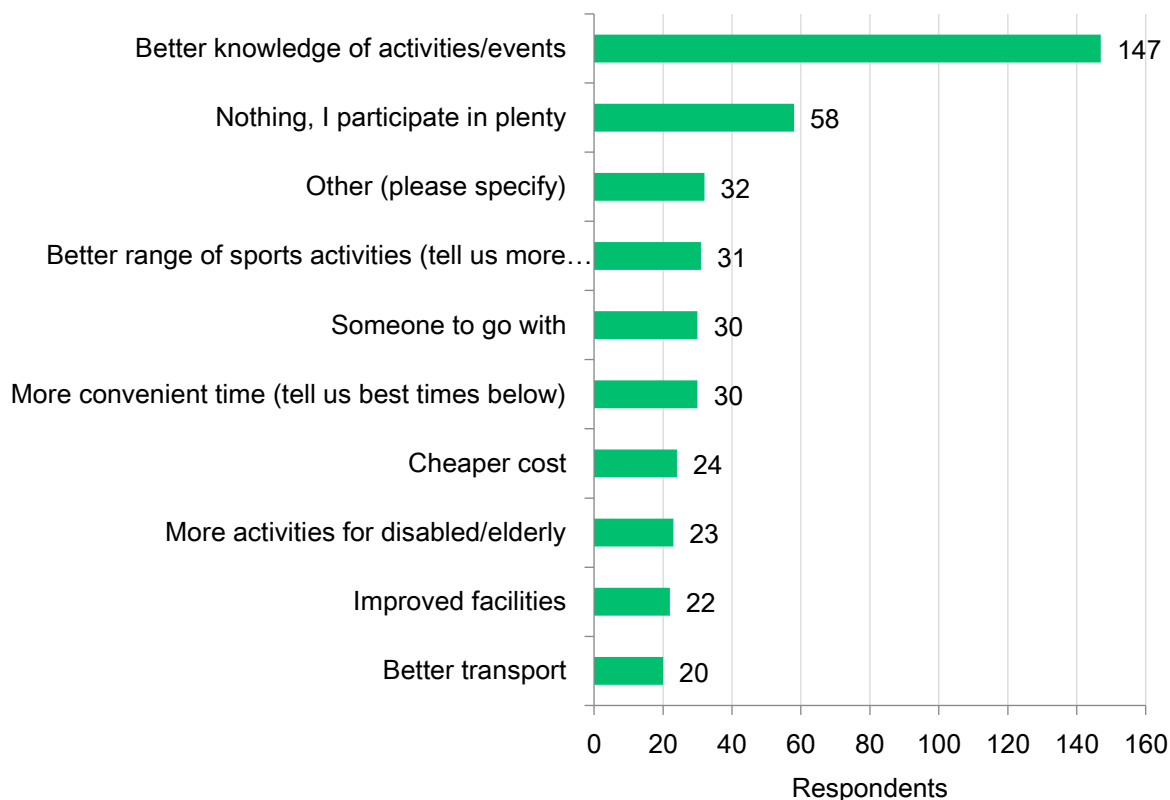
- *Promote more use of the village hall for groups appealing to all ends of the spectrum from toddlers to retired locals*
- *Gym*
- *I am retired, there is enough for me. Not sure about other age groups*
- *Music, African drumming, dance for fun and health*



Figure 12: 'Murder Mystery' Social Evening in the Village Hall

Q24 What would help you take part in more social or community activities in Ashwick (please tick any that apply)

Answered 250 Skipped 55



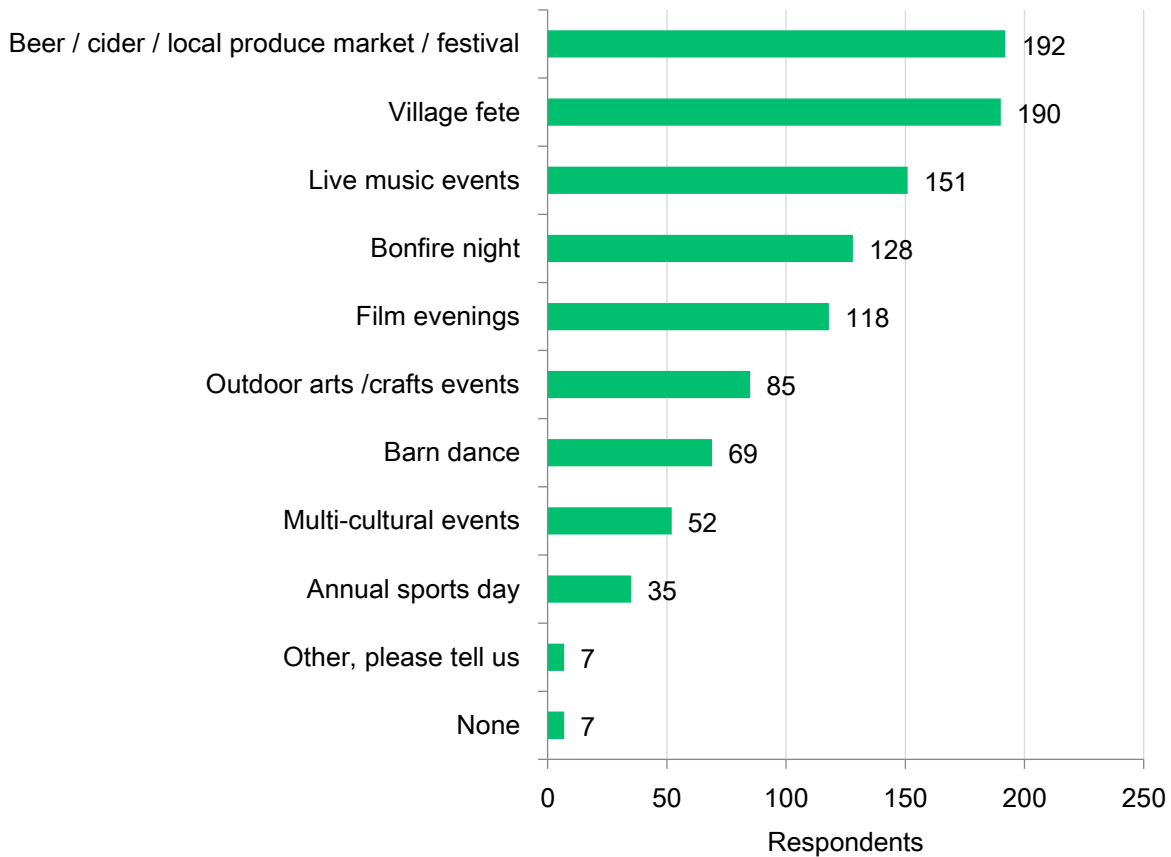
Better communications (147) would help respondents to take part in more social or community activities. One comment asked for improved “*knowledge for those not using social media*”.

Around timings, 17 comments expressed a need for more evening activities (outside of core working hours). One called for a “*safe road to walk to get there*”. Other suggestions of new activities:

- *Baby groups*
- *Fitness classes in the village hall on an evening*
- *Fitness classes/boot camp*
- *Golf society, boules club*
- *I would be interested in a team sport such as basketball/netball etc*
- *Indoor bowls*
- *Park Run*
- *Running club?*
- *Tennis courts*
- *People work so a bingo evening would be good not day time*

Q25 What community events would you like to see take place in Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply)

Answered 284 Skipped 21

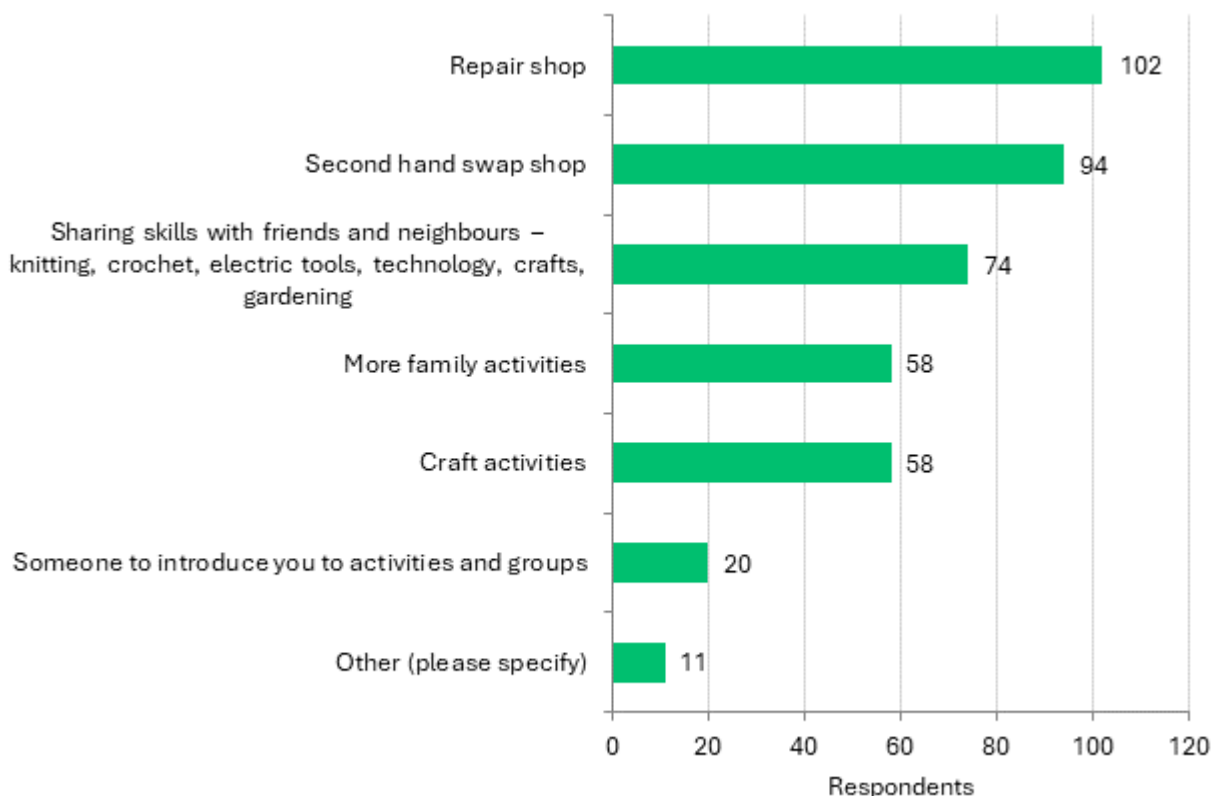


The top three responses were a beer/cider festival (192), village fete (190) and live music events (151). Bonfire night and film evenings would also be popular with a sizeable number who responded to the question. Other comments included

- *Drain and ditch clearing parties to prevent the flooding which Somerset isn't acting on*
- *Men's club!*
- *Park Run then cake in the cafe!*
- *Plant sale, local growers*
- *Televised sports events such as World Cup etc*

Q26 Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall is designed to be used as a community facility. Alongside existing events and clubs what else would help you to engage and feel a sense of belonging with your community?

Answered 201 Skipped 104



For those answering the question, recycling activities around re-use/re-purposing were most important in this question as repair shop (102) and second-hand swap shop (94) are closely aligned at the top. Sharing skills and crafts was also a popular activity for many (74). Other new activities which could foster this community feel included

- *A choir group*
- *Art and craft classes; cooking classes and demos*
- *Baby groups would be amazing!*
- *Club to bring elderly and lonely people together to chat*
- *Computer/technology lessons for the elderly*
- *Fitness classes*
- *Library of things. Two possibilities: toys for children to borrow; tools for adults (e.g. power tools, scaffolding tower)*
- *Proms in the Park - bring your own food, drink etc. minimal charge!. Car Boot Sales on the Rec*
- *Shop for groceries*



Figure 13: Oakleaf Community Cafe



Young People and Children

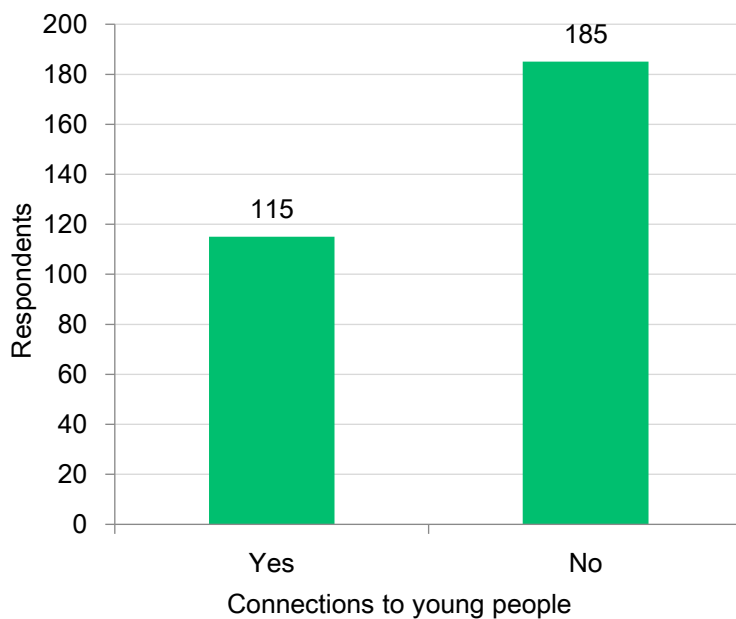
We want to offer children and young people in Ashwick or who visit the Parish the best possible services so we can provide families an enriching experience. Having your opinions on current services and facilities now enables us to plan future services for children and young people.



Figure 14: Mathematics problem solving

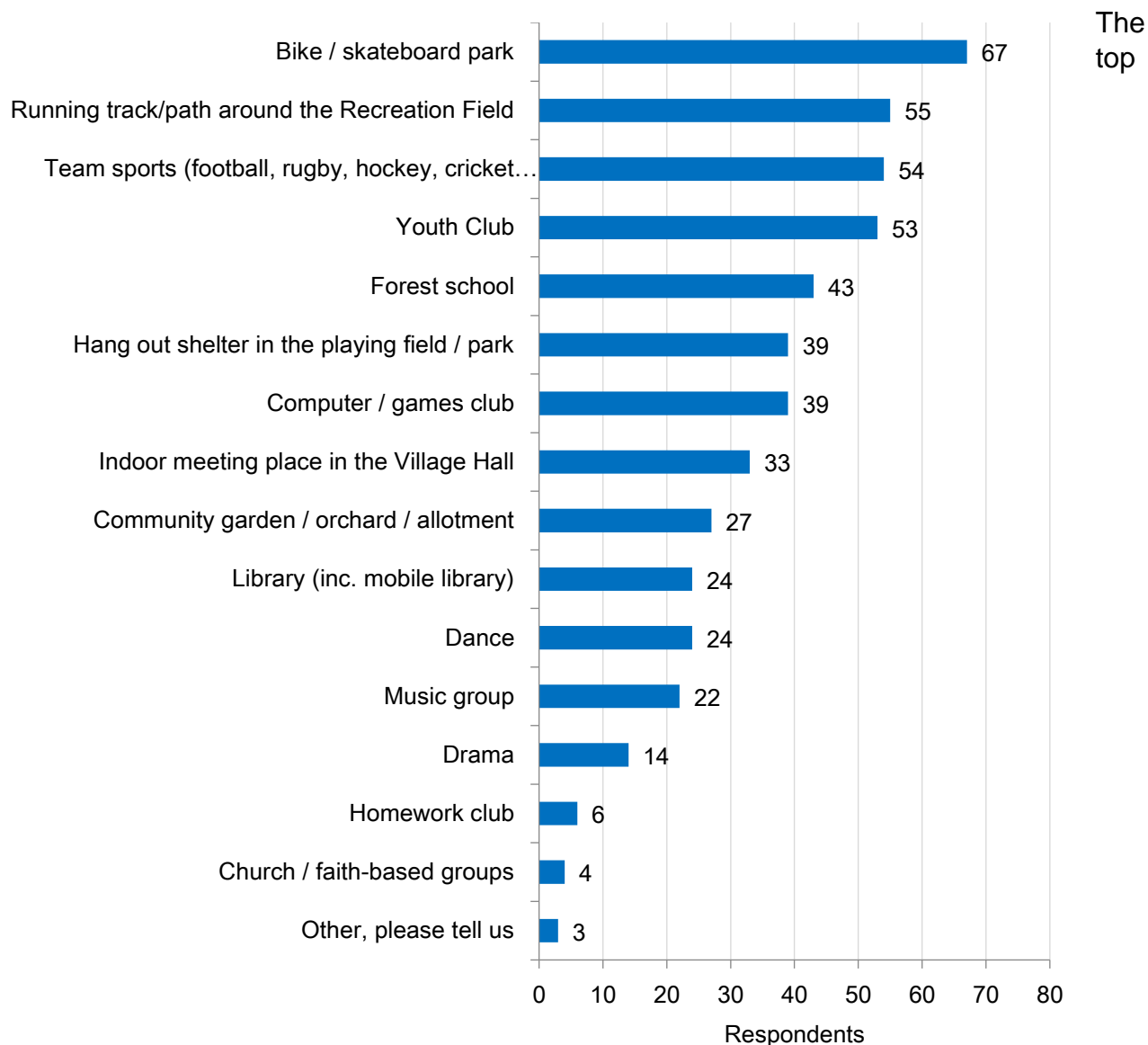
Q27 Do you have children and young people in your family who live or regularly visit the parish? If yes, please answer the following questions. If no, please move on to the next section:

Answered 300 Skipped 5



The following analysis has cross referenced responses from 115 who have connections to young people only.

Q28 Which of the following would young people use if they were to be provided in the Ashwick Parish? (tick any that apply) Answered 110 Skipped 5



response was for a skate park (67) which was also commented on Q21. Running (55) also appears in other questions in the survey around setting up a running club or Park Run provision. Team sports and Youth club are also fairly closely aligned with nearly half of these respondents wanting to see some provision for young people. For younger children, a Forest school appears another strong choice. Other comments here included:

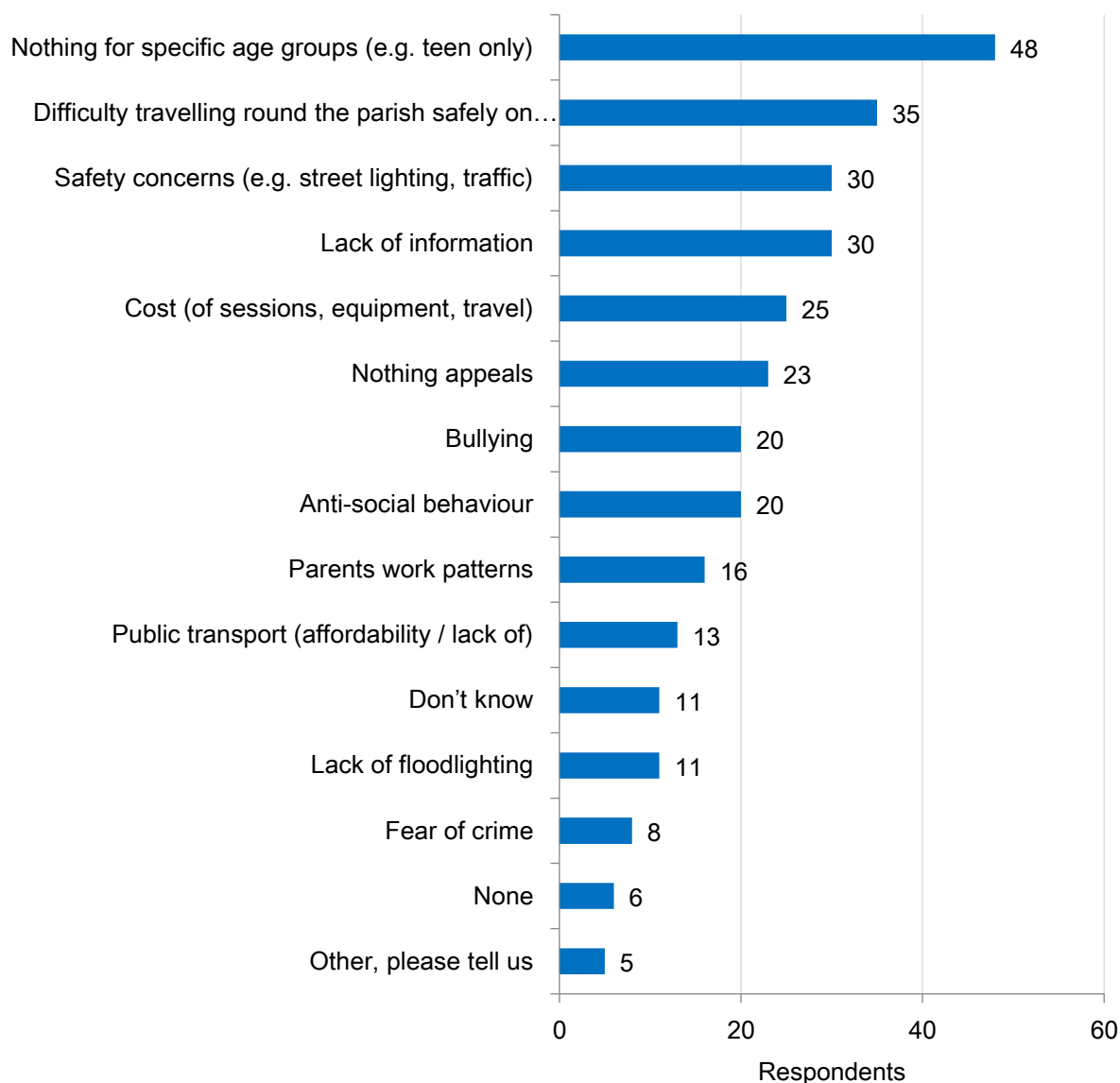
- *Better facilities in the play area*
- *My boys are both over 18 but under 24 there is nothing for them in the village apart from the pub. They came along to party in the park but there is so little available that most of this age group have departed*
- *Scouts*



Figure 15: A new Reception class

Q29 Which, if any, of the following prevent children / young people from engaging in activities more generally? (tick any that apply)

Answered 107 Skipped 8



The top barrier is there being nothing for specific age groups (48), followed by difficulties around travel (35) and safety concerns and lack of information (30 in each case). Comments include:

- *Intolerance of adults to the needs of youth*
- *Links between playing fields and school aren't pushchair friendly*
- *Not going to local school*
- *Small size of certain age-groups in the community / lack of info - e.g when I was younger I would have joined a parish football team but there weren't the numbers for a teenage boys' team or even for a men's football team*
- *There isn't anything really on*



Health and Wellbeing

Health & Wellbeing is one of the priority topics for consultation in this Community Review process. You'll find that many of the other topics covered in this questionnaire will affect our health in some way too (Traffic & transport; Climate Emergency; Cost of Living Crisis; Covid recovery).

Q30 How do you rate your general health and wellbeing?

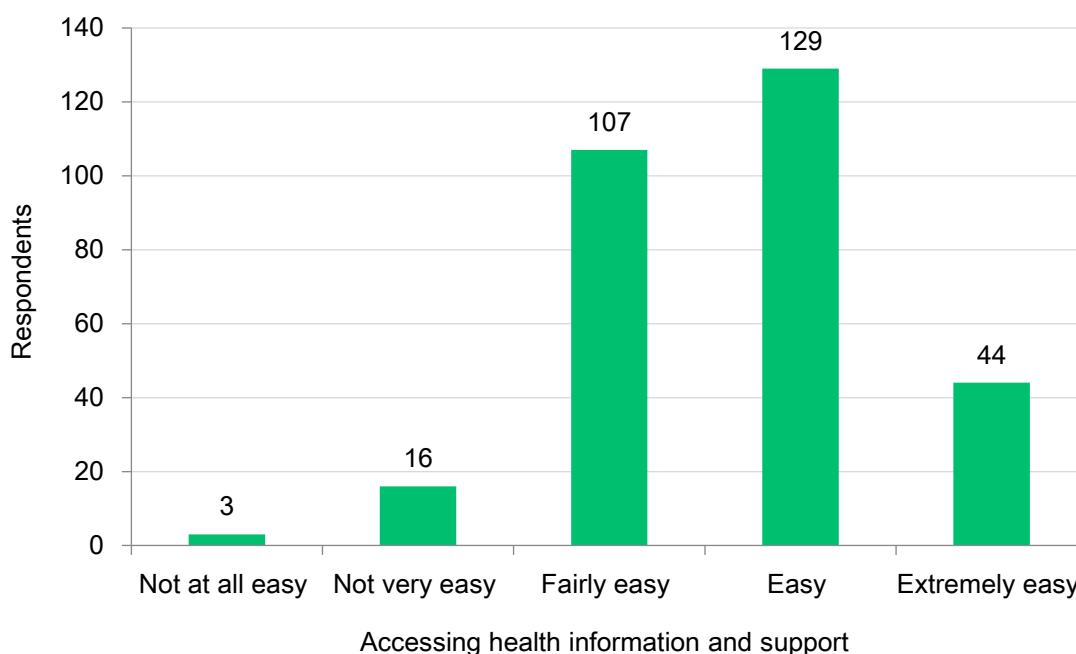
Answered 301 Skipped 4

	Very bad	Bad	Fair	Good	Very good
Physical Health	1	12	58	149	79
Mental Health	0	15	52	148	81

Excellent to note that 228 respondents report themselves to be in good/very good physical health, and 229 report themselves to be in good/very good mental health. Still concerning that 28 consider themselves to be in very bad/bad mental/physical health. "Bad" assessment of Mental Health spans all age ranges apart from under 18s. Physical health concerns are not surprisingly more prevalent in 55-74 age range.

Q31 How easy is it for you to access the relevant health information and support that you need?

Answered 299 Skipped 6

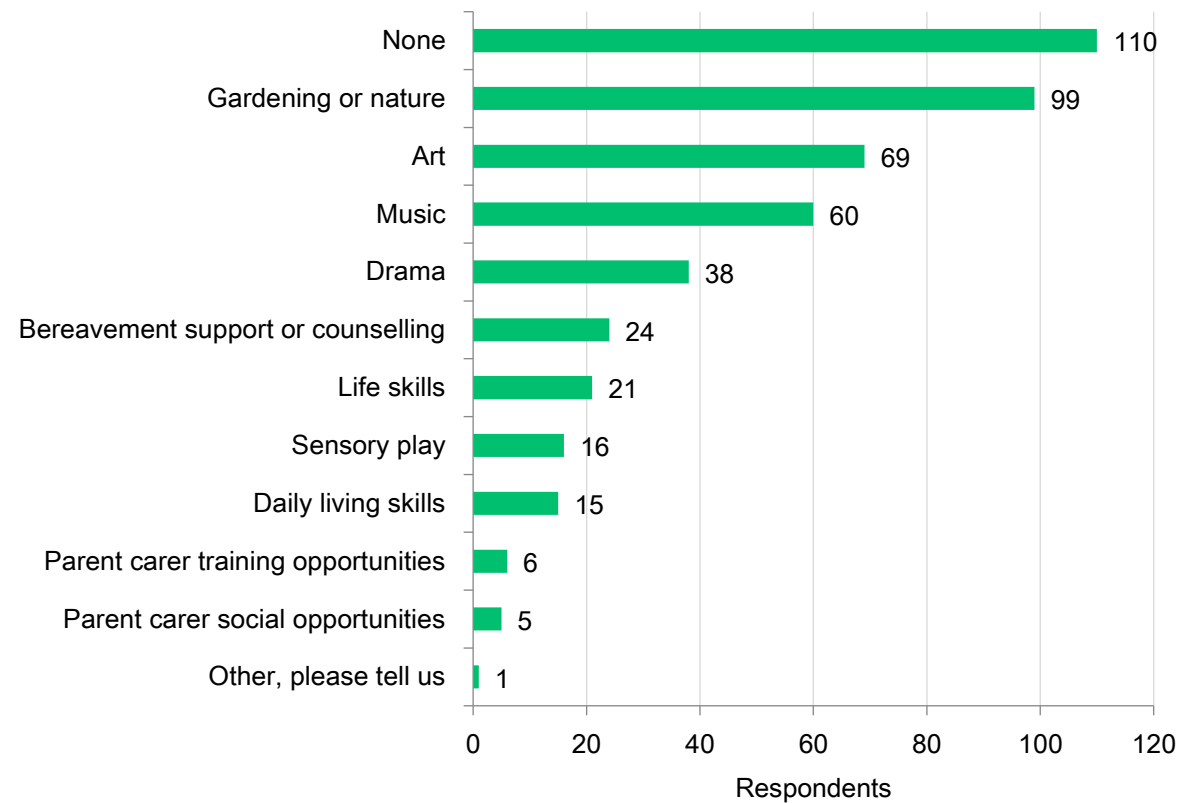


Again, the responses show that most find it fairly easy (107), easy (129), extremely easy (44) to access health information and support (total 280).

3 find it not at all easy and 16 not very easy (total 19). Cross referencing these findings with Q30, 5 have bad/very bad physical health, 4 reported bad mental health.

Q32 Would you, someone in your household or someone you care for, use or attend any of the following health and well-being inclusive activities or therapies? (tick any that apply)

Answered 264 Skipped 41



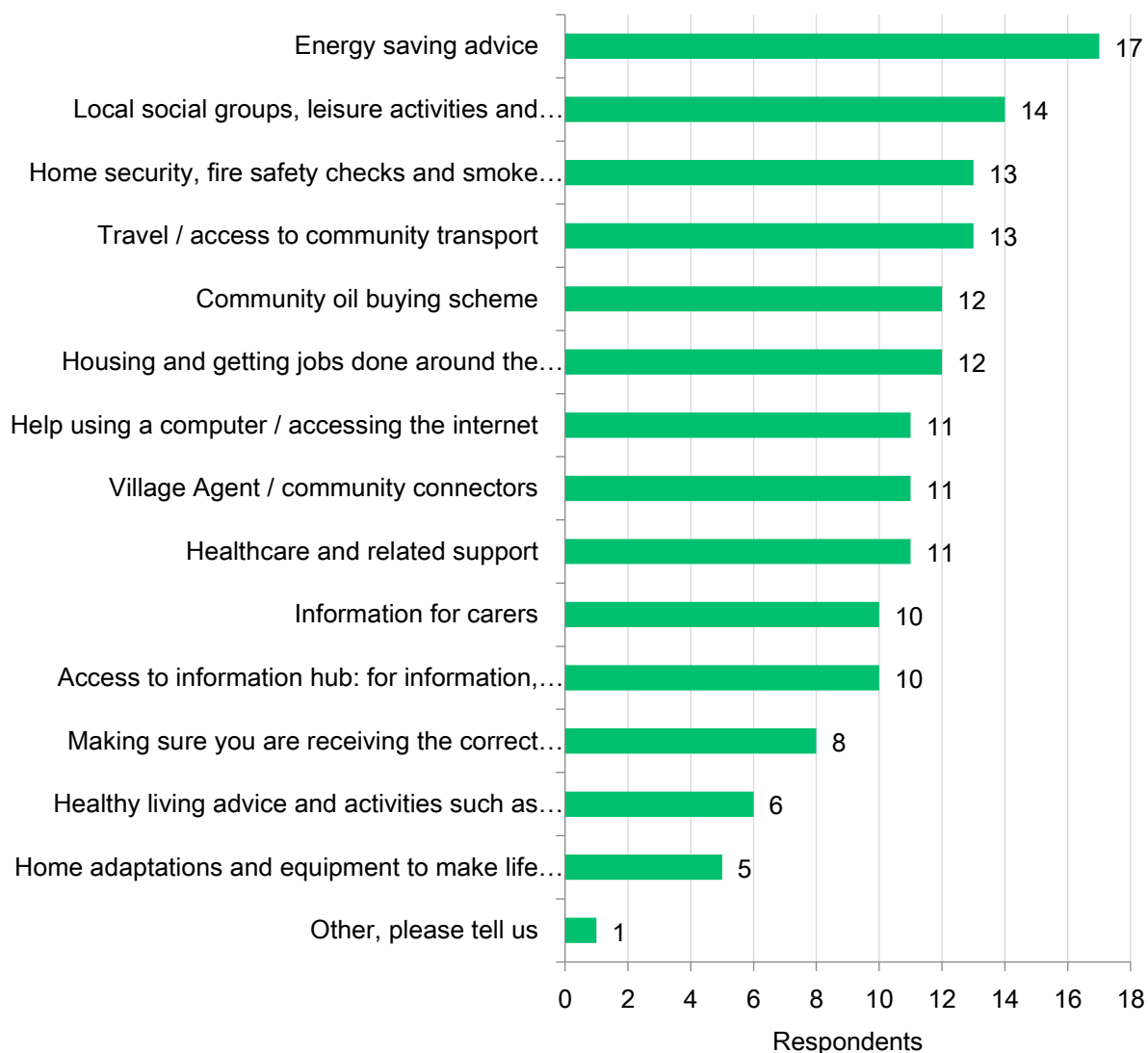
Most respondents (110) answering the question do not feel they require any additional activities or therapies. For others, gardening or nature activities are the most popular (99), followed by art (69) and music (60). The comment was in reference to a choir, which was also raised in Q26 when looking to improve community belonging.



Figure 16: Old friends reminiscing in the Oakleaf Cafe

Q33 Do you need help to access any of these services? (tick any that apply)

Answered 77 Skipped 228

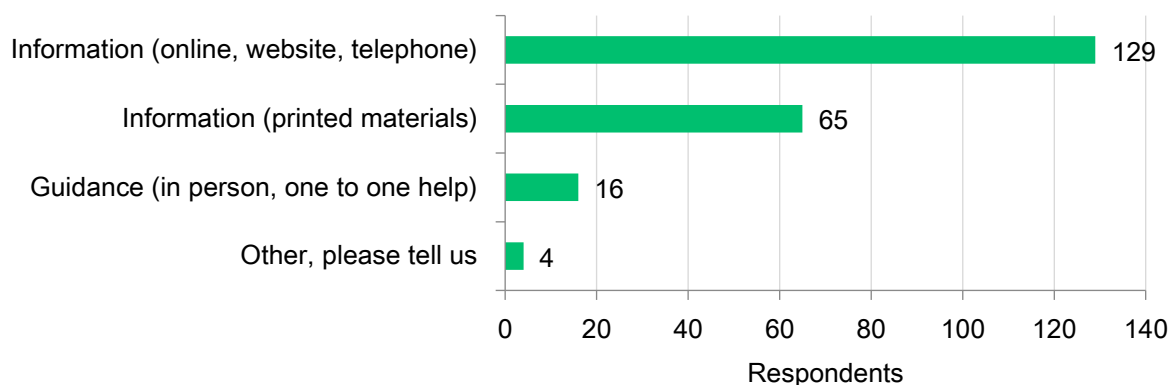


The very low response rate to this question suggests that most respondents are confident with accessing information and services locally. As energy costs continue to fluctuate, it is little surprise that most respondents (17) ask for support with energy savings advice.

- *The carer support group held at the village hall has provided me with information that I have asked for.*

Q34 How would you prefer to learn more about these services?

Answered 176 Skipped 129

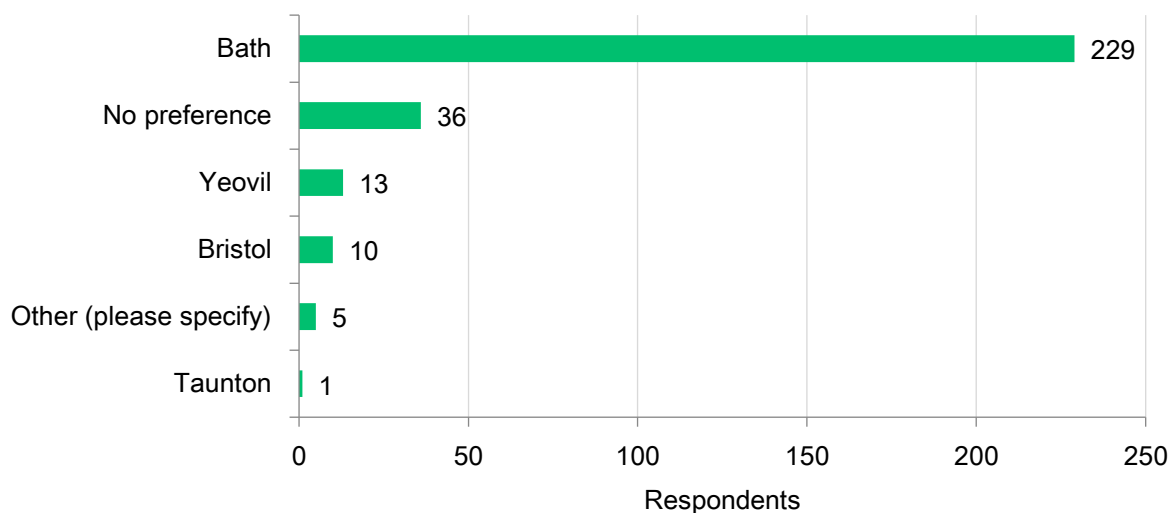


Even if they did not answer Q33 and need help accessing services, most respondents to this question want to access support online or by telephone (129) with only 65 requesting printed materials. 16 want in person, one to one support and most of these respondents answered Q33 above needing help. Comments included:

- *Not the telephone*
- *Parish magazine*
- *Social media*
- *Village Facebook page*

Q35 To which A&E centres would you prefer to be taken in case of serious accident or emergency?

Answered 294 Skipped 11



The outstanding majority would prefer to be taken to Bath in the event of a serious accident or emergency (229). The comments to this question all pointed to Minor Injury Units/Urgent Treatment Centres around Somerset:

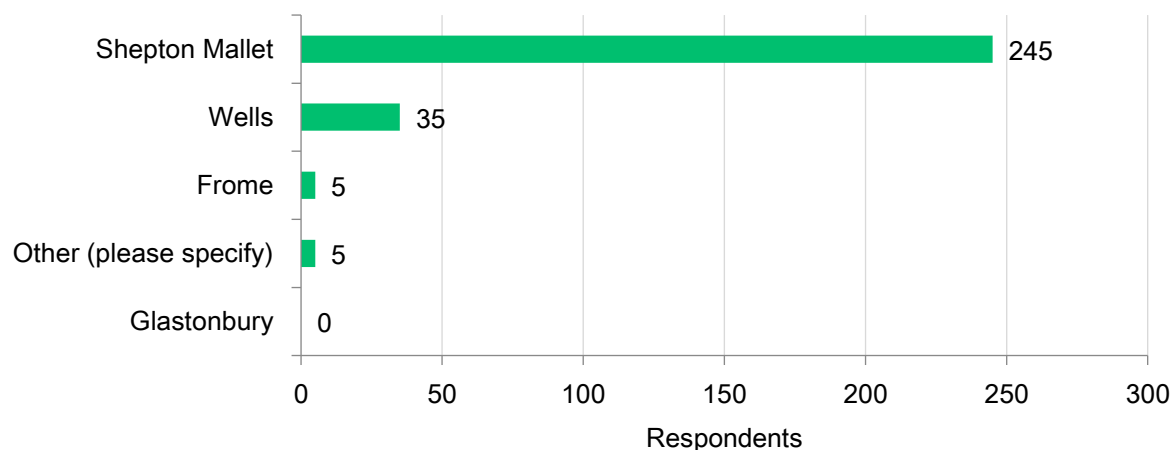
- *Frome*
- *Glastonbury / Shepton mallet*
- *Shepton Mallet (2)*

Furthermore:

- *It depends on the emergency. We are a very long way from most good facilities, and Bath or Bristol may be better for some things*

Q36 There is a vision to develop a local Community Hub, working alongside the five GP Practices and neighbouring PCNs, that helps support healthy communities and assists in managing the recovery journey of patients leaving hospital. In such cases, treatment options might be available at local Community Hospitals, Medical Centres and Health & Wellbeing Clinics in our area. If this were to be appropriate in your case in which locations would you prefer to attend should appropriate facilities be available?

Answered 290 Skipped 15



An outstanding number of respondents would prefer Shepton Mallet to attend a local Community Hub for their health needs (245).

Other comments suggested

- *Any of above*
- *Any of the above*
- *No preference*
- *Oakhill x 2*



Figure 17: Adult exercise equipment at the Ashwick & Oakhill Village Recreation Ground

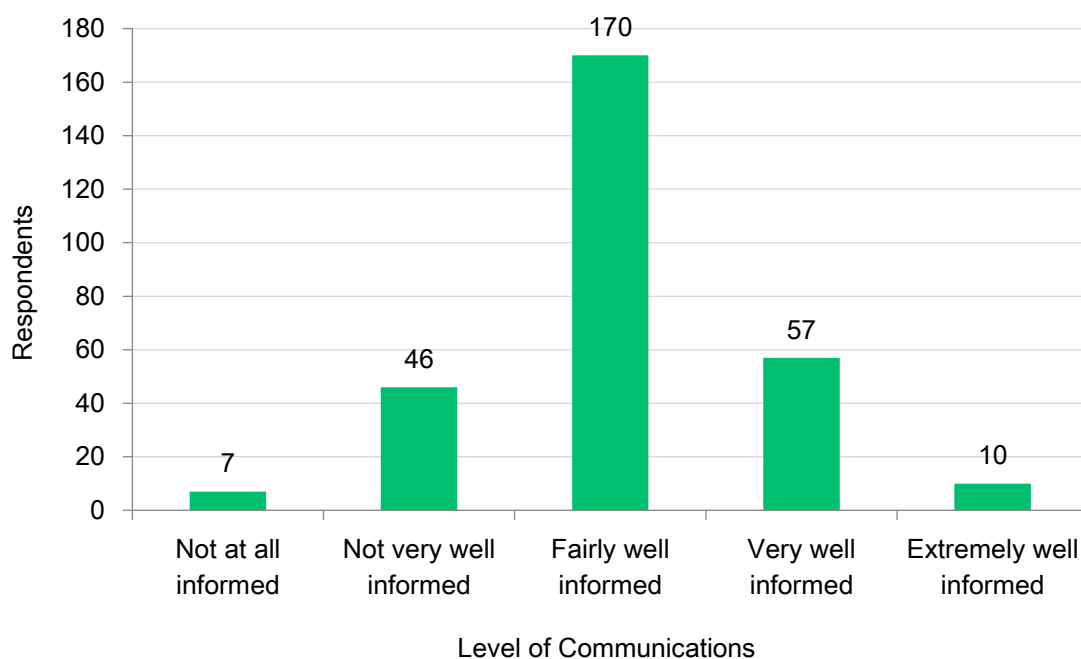


Communication

We wanted to find out which methods of communication are used to find out about what activities and events are going on in Ashwick, as well as how people keep up to date with Parish Council matters and anything around local business and commerce. Findings will now help us improve our methods of communication and ensure that we communicate with the whole community effectively.

Q37 How well informed, if at all, do you feel about activities and events in your local area?

Answered 290 Skipped 15



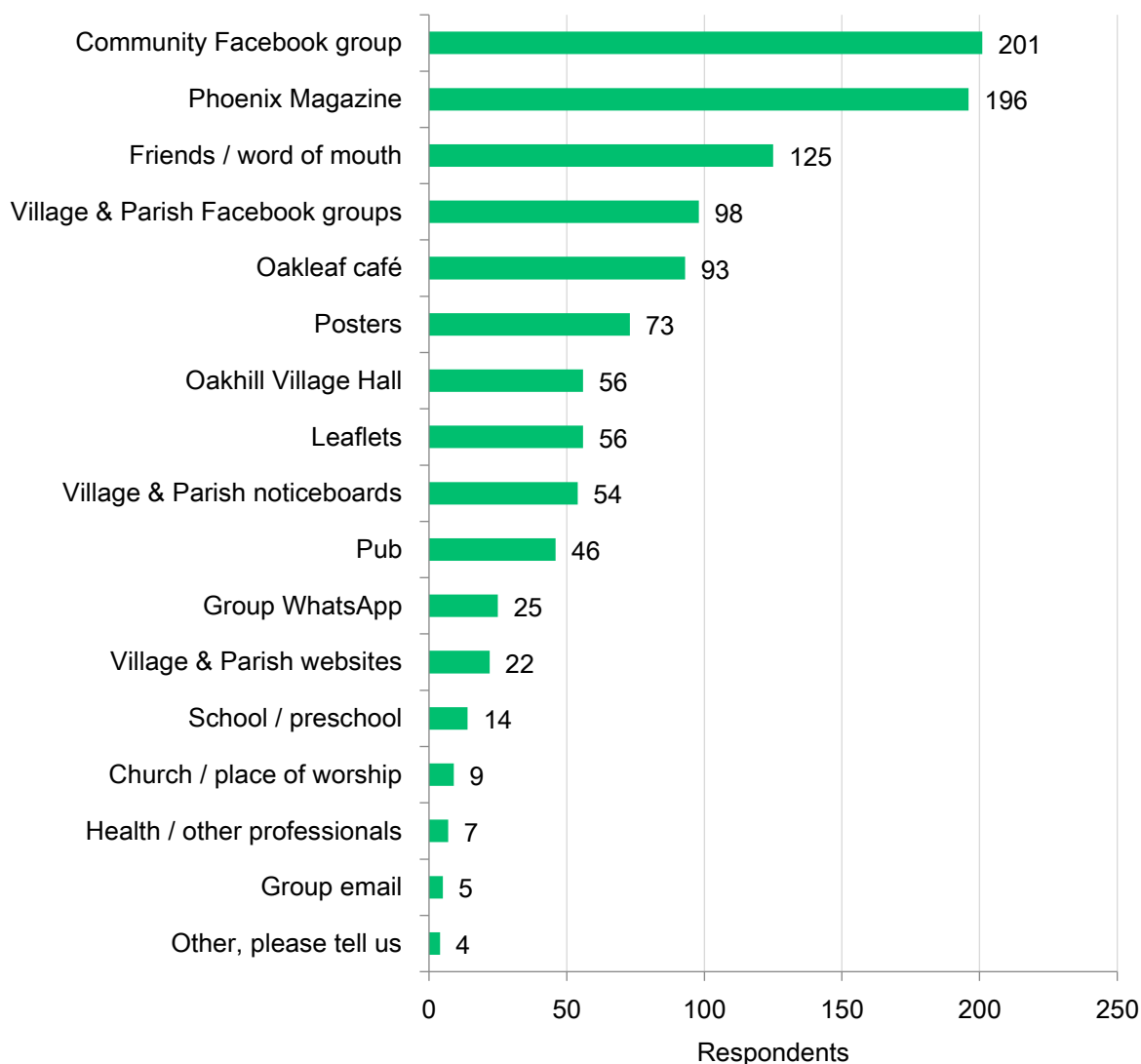
170 respondents indicate they feel fairly well informed. However, 1 in 5 respondents - more than 50 - feel not at all informed or not very well informed.

Figure 18: Notice Board for Ashwick & Oakhill Village Hall



Q38 How do you find out about what's going on? (tick any that apply)

Answered 293 Skipped 12

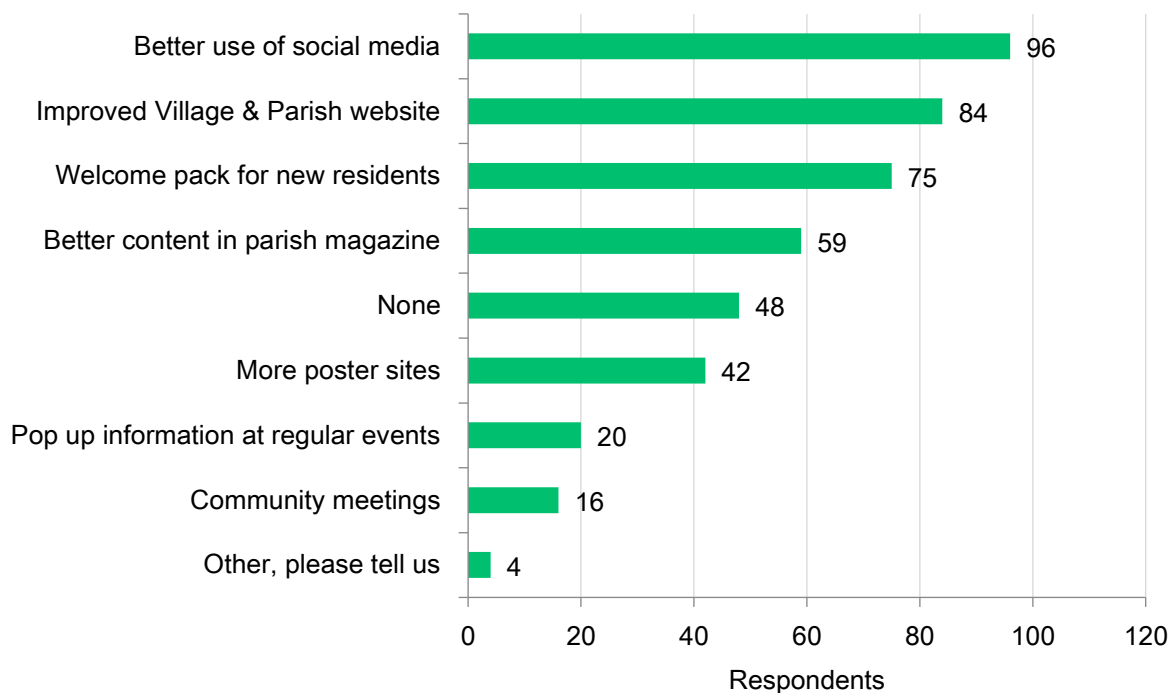


The community Facebook page is the most popular means of finding out what's going on (201), closely followed by Phoenix magazine (196) and to a lesser degree via word of mouth (125). Other comments include:

- *If you are not on Facebook you need someone who is to tell you about notices, some of which come out ONLY on Facebook*
- *Notices/flyers in Gurney Slade Stores*
- *The Phoenix Magazine is delivered way too late. As some of the events are at least 2 weeks old and have already taken place!*

Q39 What improvements could be made to keep you informed about local news? (tick any that apply)

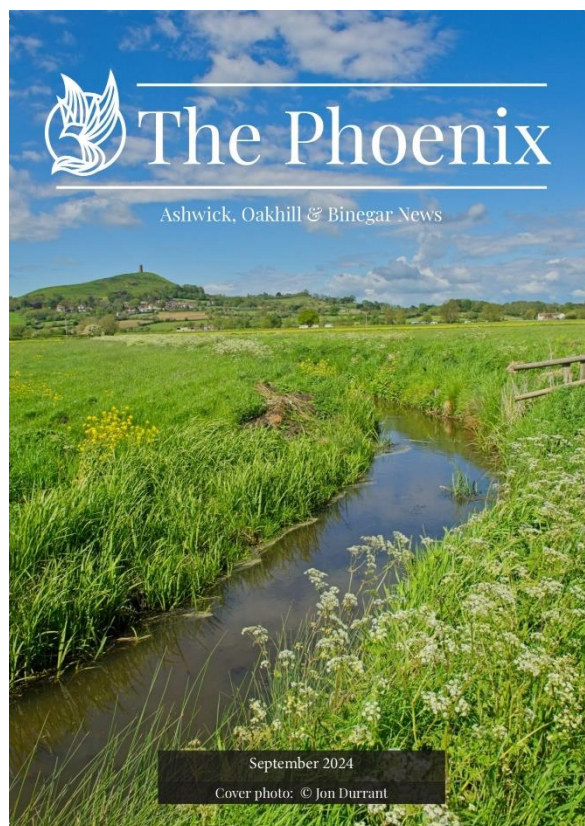
Answered 257 Skipped 48



Responses show that better use of social media (96) and the village/parish website (84) are needed, alongside a welcome pack for new residents (75). Other comments included:

- *Bigger notice boards not enough space in existing ones*
- *E-magazine*
- *I wasn't aware that there was a village website. Needs to be advertised*
- *More advance notice of event dates rather than just the month in question*

Figure 19: Specimen cover of the Phoenix, the monthly Magazine for Ashwick Parish.



Next Steps

The Steering Group is now developing an action and funding plan to delivery on those issues raised by the community through this work. This will be a focus and priority of the Parish Council over the next couple of years as they oversee the proposed actions which ideally are undertaken by the most appropriate community group or individuals. The Parish Council will review progress against actions on a regular basis and will include an update in its annual report.

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Digital copies are retained for 12 months and deleted after this period. Any personal data that is captured is anonymised with the report and held securely for the purposes of analysis.

No data will be published which can identify an individual without their consent. If you have entered your details to take part in the prize draw and you win, your data is shared with Ashwick Parish Council Community Review Steering Group.

If you would like to find out more about how we use your data or want to see a copy of information about you that we hold, please contact info@somersetccc.org.uk or call 01823 331222. Protecting your Personal Data is important and we fully comply and adhere to the Principles of Data Protection set out in our Data Protection / Privacy Policy visit: <https://ccslovesomerset.org/data-protection-policy/> and <https://ccslovesomerset.org/privacy/>

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