

Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire: Spring 2013

As part of our evidence gathering to inform the production of the Neighbourhood Plan we undertook a resident survey. The survey was included in the Spring edition of the Parish Focus (The Parish Council's magazine). This is distributed to around 1,299 households in the Parish.

Opinions:

Respondents were asked their opinion regarding a number of potential areas of activity, in terms of the extent to which they either agreed or disagreed [4 point scale – Strongly Agree through Strongly Disagree] with the statement posed. The opinion areas explored were:

- Housing
- Economic and business development
- Transportation
- Environment
- Countryside
- Community services
- Safety and Security

The above aligns with the Terms of Reference for the Neighbourhood Planning Committee.

Overall opinion

Over all, those areas that residents agreed required the most attention were:

- Environment (84% strongly agreed)
- Safety and security (80% strongly agreed)
- Countryside (77% strongly agreed).

In contrast, the area least considered as a priority by respondents was:

- Economic and business development (25% strongly agreed)

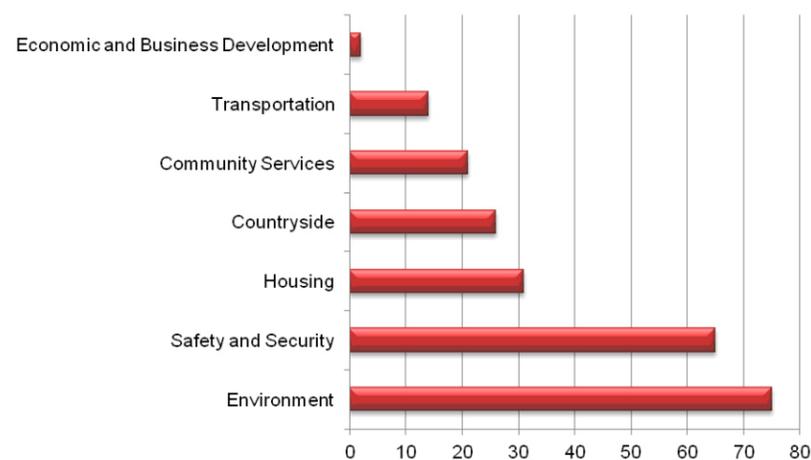
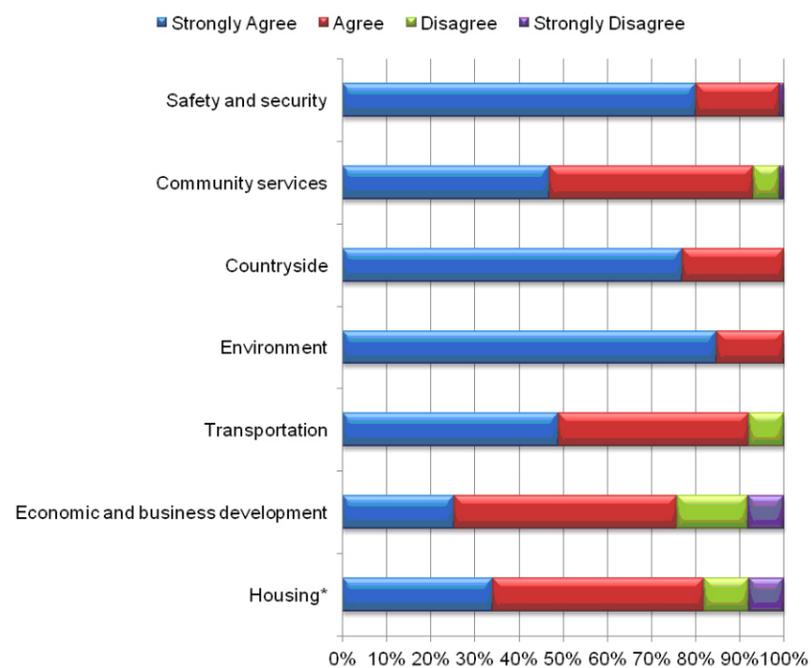
Most Important Issue:

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the issues stated, they considered to be the most important.

- The 'environment' emerged as the most important of the issues, with around a third of respondents (33%) identifying it as such.
- Likewise, 84% of respondents had 'strongly agreed' with the proposed focus activity in respect of the 'environment'.
- 'Safety and security' was considered the most important issue by over a quarter of respondents (28%). Eighty per cent of respondents had 'strongly agreed' with the proposed focus of activity in respect of 'safety and security'.
- Economic and business development was only considered as important by 1% of respondents (2 people).

On the basis of age a slight variation emerged in terms of what respondents identified as the issue they considered to be the most important.

- 56% of those aged 19-30 years considered the environment to be the most important
- 28% of those aged 31-45 considered safety and security to be most important, and further 27%, the environment
- 33% of those aged 46-60 considered the environment to be the most important, and 29% safety and security
- 42% of those aged 61-75 considered the environment to be most important, and 23% safety and security
- 31% of those aged 76 years and over considered safety and security to be most important, and 22% housing.



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Positive features of living in the Parish:

Residents were asked what they like about living in the Parish. In total, 236 people (95%) offered comment. On the whole, the parish was considered to be a 'great' place to live, characterised by its locality and rural aspect, convenient location and pleasant living environment.

"Just a great place to live"

The most commonly occurring features that residents liked about living in the Parish related to its rural or semi rural location and proximity to the countryside, urban centres and transport links.

"I like the rural environment and close proximity to Worcester and Droitwich"

The parish was also considered as being friendly, with a sense of community and a village feel and atmosphere. In addition, residents liked the peace and quiet of the parish.

"Very nice area and I like the village type feel"

"Quiet and peaceful with friendly neighbours and residents"

Respondents liked the fact that the parish was relatively safe and free of crime and anti-social behaviour.

"Safe rural feel"

"Very quiet and no crime, and anti social behaviour"

Other features that residents liked about the Parish included:

- the school
- recreational activities, such as cycling or country walks

Suggested improvements:

Residents were asked what they would like to improve within the parish. In total, 211 respondents (85%) offered comment. Nine respondents stated that there was nothing they would change about the parish.

In the main, suggested improvements were focused on:

- access to and the provision of amenities
- travel and transportation, to include roads, foot paths and public transport
- potential and intended development.

In relation to amenities, it was considered that some additional amenities were necessary for the local community. These included health care facilities, activities for members of the community and shops. In terms of specific suggestions:

"The main need will be for a doctors surgery. Imp Post Office and shops"

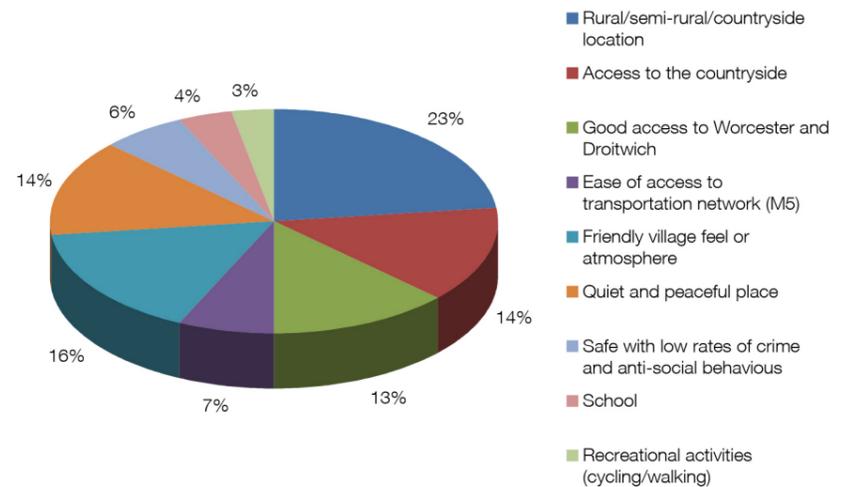
In relation to traffic and transportation, suggestions were for the improvement of the quality of roads and footpaths, for improved traffic management, reduced congestion and improved public transport.

"Tidy up the existing roads and fix the footpaths and widen them to make it safer to walk on"

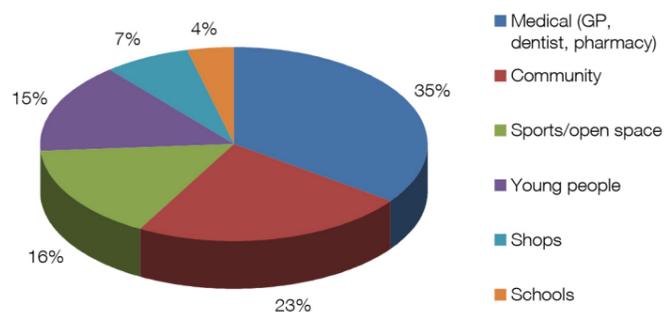
In relation to proposed development in the Parish residents suggested that there should be less housing development and fewer large scale developments.

"Less housing developments. Any further would spoil countryside / environment"

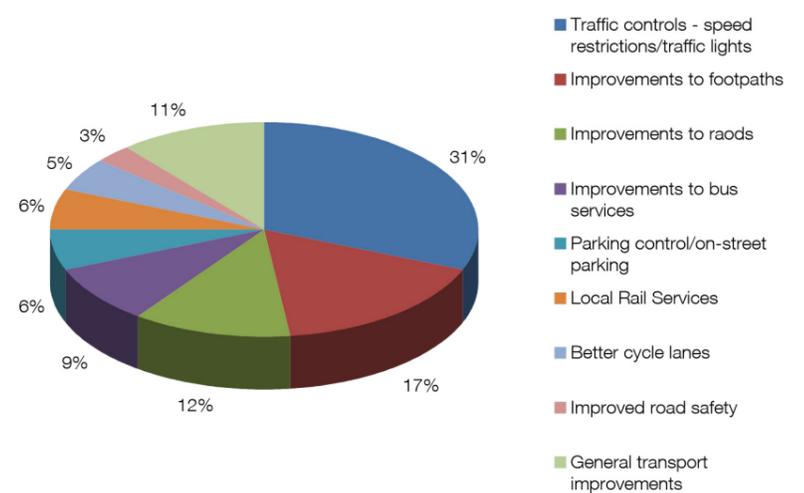
"Fewer plans for large scale development to retain village identity"



What people like about living in the Parish:



Access and local amenities:



Traffic and transportation:

Making the Parish a better place to live and work:

Residents were asked what they considered would make the Parish a better place to live and work. Many of the responses reflected the suggested improvements offered. In the main, many of the suggestions focused on maintaining and preserving the environment, the countryside and the general community of the parish. As expected, repeated reference was made to the threats posed by proposed housing developments and the negative impacts that such activities might have on the environment and the community.

“Protecting, as far as possible, the rural surroundings”

“Not to enlarge housing. To keep village atmosphere, instead of almost merging with Worcester. Keep greenbelt”

Of the 192 respondents (65%) who offered comment, around a fifth indicated that they were against further residential development within the parish, highlighting the negative impacts associated with large scale housing developments. Others suggested that any development should be controlled, carefully planned and sympathetic to the environment.

“No more large developments of houses. We have Warndon Villages that is the largest estate in Europe!!! We shouldn't need more”

“Planned sensitive development reflecting the character of the Parish”

Other specific suggestions made by residents were focused around:

- Community amenities.
- Travel and transportation
- Traffic management

“A community centre to draw community together, more services, particularly Doctors”

“Cheaper and more regular bus transport”

“Railway station allowing commuter access”

Reflecting concern that had been expressed throughout the survey regarding road safety, traffic management and congestion, suggestions offered to improve the parish included:

“Reduced traffic flow on rural lanes”

“Careful attention to traffic access should be given when planning future housing developments”

Other Comments:

153 comments made. Most related to concerns about proposed developments:

- Increasing traffic and congestion
- Harming the countryside and environment
- Preserving the character of the Parish and the village

Some respondents considered that future development was inevitable and as such it should be:

- Carefully planned and managed
- Sympathetic to the character of the local environment
- Not large scale
- Accessible from the A38

65% of residents provided comments

20% Against further residential development

14% Improving and enhancing the provision of village; amenities

11% Better bus services and a local train station

11% Traffic management

9% Speed restrictions