

Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen
Parish Plan

"The Report"

Summer 2014



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1. Introduction

The Rural White Paper (2000), provided communities with a fantastic opportunity to help transform their local environment in the form of a Parish Plan. The key to the success of the Parish Plan lies in its local implementation, giving a community the opportunity to interpret and present their output in a number of ways.

Communities of any size can produce a Parish Plan. To date around 3,000 communities have taken this opportunity, either individually or by forming local clusters. Local examples include Wimbotsham, Downham Market and Shouldham. These documents include the socio-economic and environmental issues of a community and their proposed remedies.

Communities are growing and changing all around us and most people have strong views on whether this change is for the better or the worse, but unfortunately for the vast majority of individuals this is as far as their involvement will go. Following on from a presentation given by the Norfolk Rural Community Council on 12th October 2011, with responsibility delegated from the Parish Council, a number of volunteers formed a Parish Plan Committee in order to produce a Parish Plan.

Parish Plans are intended to be evolving documents, outlining how a community would like to develop over the coming years, they usually include an action plan detailing how these developments can be achieved. One of the key objectives is to set out a vision for how the residents want the parish to develop. It identifies issues of concern that the residents within the parish feel are important to them, based on information gained from surveys, research and consultation with residents. It is action based; it involves the community coming together to compile an evidence-based document, a list of ideas, issues and the potential solutions needed to deliver the communities' long-term vision. There are many benefits to completing a Parish Plan; it can help determine how local services are delivered in the area; it can highlight innovative projects which need help and funding; it can create a real sense of community spirit; it can reinvigorate local democracy. Ultimately a Parish Plan provides clear evidence of a community's needs and priorities. The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk will support all Parish Plans as a material consideration and a local information source, provided that the Plan is representative of the whole community.

Undertaken objectively, the plan is a valuable and representative expression of the social, economic and environmental concerns of the Parish. It is based on

questionnaires designed by the Parish Plan Committee and was completed in June 2014. There was a substantial questionnaire for each household and supplementary youth (12-17 yrs.) and junior (8-11 yrs.) questionnaires for individual young people. The report has been based entirely on the questionnaire responses and it is the data from these results that is reproduced here. It is the voice of the residents and has given them the opportunity to influence future changes in the village.

The plan refers to the "Civil Parish Boundary" of Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen rather than other interpretations of the village boundary. Nowadays most parishes are Civil Parishes, like ours. They form the third level of local government, below the District or Borough Council and the County Council and as a result are closest to their residents and electors.

The Plan looks briefly at the past, analyses the present and finally focuses on the future through an action plan. 305 questionnaires were delivered and 192 collected by volunteers; there was an impressive household response rate of 62% and the results are presented in the following pages.



2. Acknowledgements

Parish Council Acknowledgement

Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen Parish Council

The Chairman and Members of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen Parish Council, would like to express their thanks to the Parish Plan Committee for the production of this document and all the work leading up to it. We appreciate the considerable dedication and effort that has been put into this project on behalf of all the residents of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen.

It would also be appropriate to express grateful thanks to the residents of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen, for completing their questionnaires and providing the essential input upon which the Committee has been able to work.

We hope this Parish Plan will provide an invaluable basis for the future directions and decisions of the Parish Council, when we are able to take into account the opinions, wishes and desires of resident as shown in this document.

I believe this signifies a significant step forward in local governance of the Parish and I am extremely grateful to all whom participated in this project.



P R Smith

Chairman, Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen Parish Council

Parish Plan Committee Chairman Acknowledgement

Back in October 2011 Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen Parish Council called a public meeting to consider whether there was interest in producing a Parish Plan. Villagers decided it was a good idea and I was elected to co-ordinate a small team of volunteers, The Parish Plan Committee.

The writing of this acknowledgement allows me to express my gratitude to the many organisations and individuals that helped us along the way. Thank you to all the households in Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen who completed their questionnaires and have been waiting patiently for the final Report to be produced.

Thank you to the households who tested our first draft questionnaire, all helping towards the gathering of information for the Parish Plan.

Lucinda Leonard from Norfolk Rural Community Council was a tremendous support in our early days. She attended an initial evening meeting and gave invaluable advice and confirmation that we were heading in the right direction.

The production of a Parish Plan requires financing and our project was made possible by the following organisations and individuals providing grant aid or support 'in kind'.

- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for providing a financial contribution and advice for the printing of the questionnaires and the Parish Plan Report.
- Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen Parish Council for kindly underwriting the various costs that have arisen during the production of the Parish Plan.
- John Anderson, David and Sarah Coles, Pam Murray and Rob Walker who invested considerable time and effort during the questionnaire delivery and collection phase of the project.
- Alan Sherfield, Jackie Spicer and Ian Stuart are also thanked for their contributions of various photographs contained within this document.

- Thank you to Mick Grady for producing a detailed map of the village (page 11).

Finally I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to the members of the Parish Plan Committee for being committed to over two and a half years of time consuming work in the form of questionnaire compilation, delivery, collection, data analysis, information gathering, photography, drafting, proof-reading and final editing. In comparison with other Parish Plan Committees our Committee was small; we started with a team of seven, with six volunteers lasting for the duration. Their skills and professionalism, combined with their firm belief in the value of the project have generated the report you see today.

I must not forget the husbands, wives, partners and families of the committee who have not only helped with the production of the Parish Plan, but have also endured committee meetings in their homes and remained supportive throughout the project.

The Parish Plan Committee have enjoyed the preparation of this report and hope that it will play a significant part in encouraging the widest possible participation in the process of assisting the village to address the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Members of the committee were Russell Chitty (initial phase only), Brenda Dent, Adrian Garrood, Chris Garrood, Jack Morton, Alan Sherfield and Graham Spicer.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Graham Spicer
Parish Plan Committee Chairman

3. Village History

A brief history of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen

Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen is an historic village situated on the west bank of the River Great Ouse approximately seven miles south of Kings Lynn and six miles north of Downham Market. The village boundary is approximately one mile to the west of the main rail route between London and King's Lynn. It covers an area of 17.76 km² (6.86 square miles) and according to the 2011 National Census had a population of 729 in 304 households. The village has a number of old buildings, it also has a church, a village hall, a primary school and a pub as well as a small number of independent businesses.

The earliest history appears to start from Saxon times, with references to the 'Great Swamp'. Wigenhales were part of several Lordships and villages dating from that time. Before 1181 (Henry II) there is no suggestion of any habitation or land that yielded profit, apart from the site of Crabbe Abbey. This being the only inhabitable place in the Parish, all the rest being watery and desolate fen. One of the first buildings was Crabbe House Nunnery, founded in 1181, of the Order of St Augustine. Magdalen appears to be the oldest settlement of the present four Wiggenhall villages.

The first Vicar, William de Confantis, was instituted in 1200 and there were records of 'general' habitation by 1220. A Vicarage was settled in 1227 and the second Vicar John de Pgrave, was instituted. The church, which is the largest of the Wiggenhall churches, has roof timber dated to being felled in 1360. It has rare medieval stained glass depicting saints dating back to the year 201. The glass was installed in the reign of Edward IV circa 1470. There are also two rare rood screen panels from c.1550 and a George III coat of arms (c.1770) at the back of the church. The church also has a rare alter slab and a 13th century tomb stone thought to have been that of a crusader with two crosses of the period carved into it. The date of the original Church is uncertain, but it has stood effectively in its present form from the end of the fifteenth century. Next to the church by the village sign is The Village Pound, a feature of many ancient villages in Britain. Stray animals, such as sheep, cows, hens and pigs would be rounded up by the Pound Keeper and locked within the Pound until the owners came and collected them. They would have to pay the Pound Keeper a small fine to get their livestock back, however, if the animals were left unclaimed after a couple of days the Pound

Keeper could take the animals to the nearest Market, sell them and keep the proceeds. So not only did it serve as a pen, it also provided an income.

The Priory, adjacent to the church bears the date of 1574 over the entrance and has seen many changes over the years. As well as the church the Village had three Methodist Chapels and a Baptist Chapel. By 1836 the village had a wooden bridge and 576 inhabitants. To help drain the fens there were three drainage windmills and a pumping station which was constructed in 1834, Magdalen was the first in the Norfolk Fens to have a steam engine known as a "Butterley Engine" which was 40 horse power.

Kelly's directory of 1875 states that the church is an ancient building, a School and School Board had been established, the Baptists and Primitive Methodists both had a chapel, and that Gustavus Helsham Esq was Lord of the Manor. Three quarters of the parish was fen, drained by the "Butterley Engine". The main crops were wheat, oats and beans. At that time the parish was 4,248 acres, rateable value £7,875, population 826. Services included a post office, tailor, shoemaker, blacksmith, dressmaker, surveyor, vet, two grocers and drapers and several beer retailers. The first National School was built in 1841 at a cost of £450 and was attended by 147 children. The 'New' Council school was built in 1875, attended at a cost of 2d per week. Between 1883 and 1932 the village had three inns: The Cock, The Dolphin and The Vine & Ivy in addition there were also The Galloping Donkey, The Lodes Head and The Carriers Arms public houses.

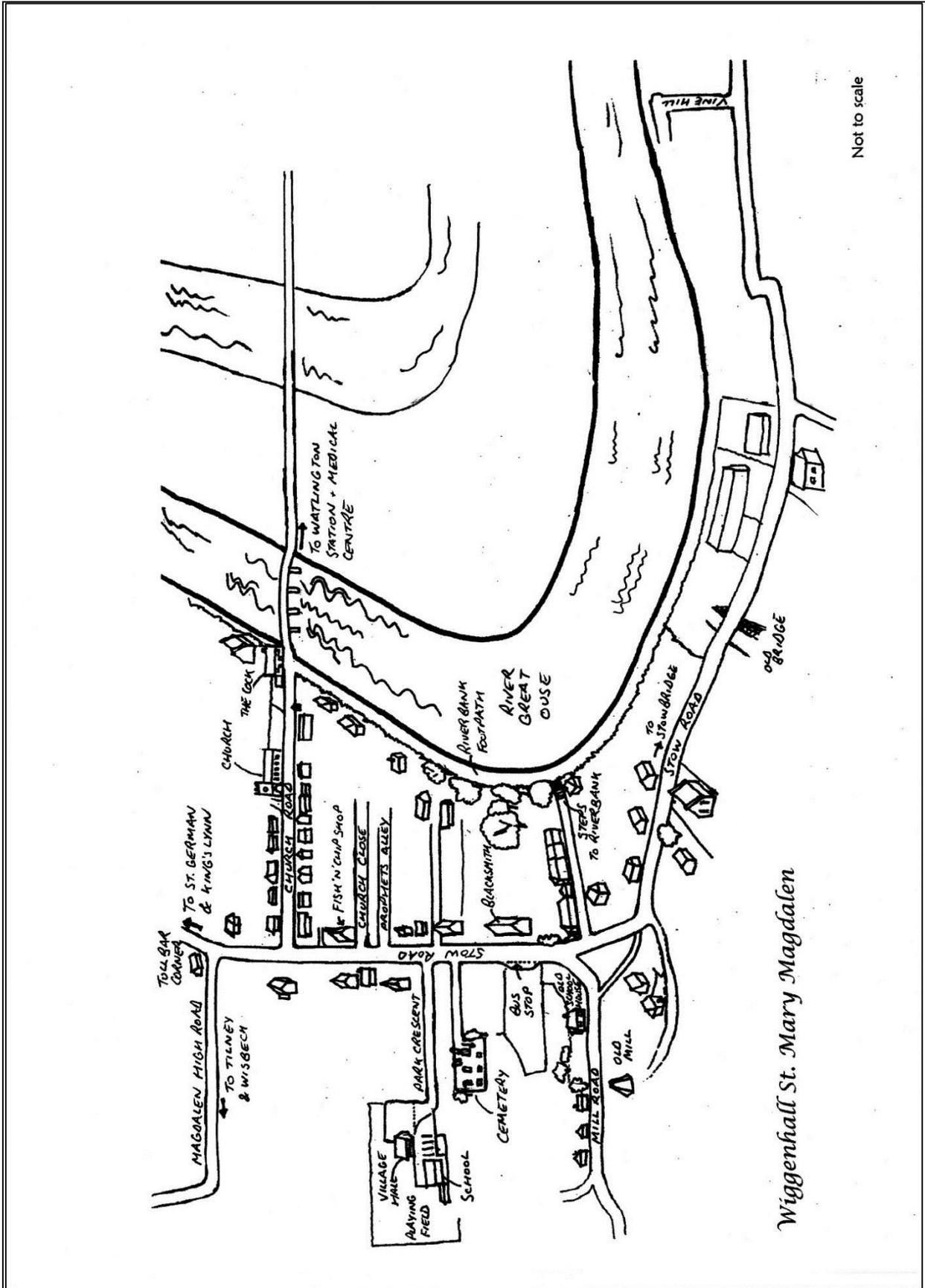
By the 1950's there were two butchers, two grocers, two shoemakers, a bicycle shop, a hairdressers, a post office, three sweet shops, a fish and chip shop, a harness maker and a blacksmiths. For the motorist two garages selling petrol, one also selling tractors, the other running a threshing and steam ploughing contractor business with over twenty engines at one time. There was also a carpenter, a Funeral Director, a builder and a local taxi.

The wooden bridge was replaced with an iron bridge in 1913, before the current one opened in 1993. Mains water arrived in the village during 1913, electricity during 1933, but not into the fen until around 1966. The War Memorial was erected in 1920 and the six church bells were restored in 1952. The playing fields were donated during 1953. The original Village Hall was built around 1954 and burnt down in 1986. The present hall rebuilding commenced during 1987, it was opened in 1990 and the school opened in 1997.

The River Great Ouse burst its bank in 1953 near the old railway bridge and water flooded Watlington and the surrounding land. There were no fatalities but the authorities decided that they must raise the river bank and adjust the course of the river, in addition a relief channel was constructed. This activity required the demolition of 49 homes that were on the river bank. As many of the people living in those homes worked in the village it was decided to build a similar number of houses nearby and Park Crescent was constructed.

Today, Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen parish includes a number of rural dwellings outside the main village as well as the surrounding countryside which is predominantly farmland but is readily accessible through public or permissive footpaths and bridleways.



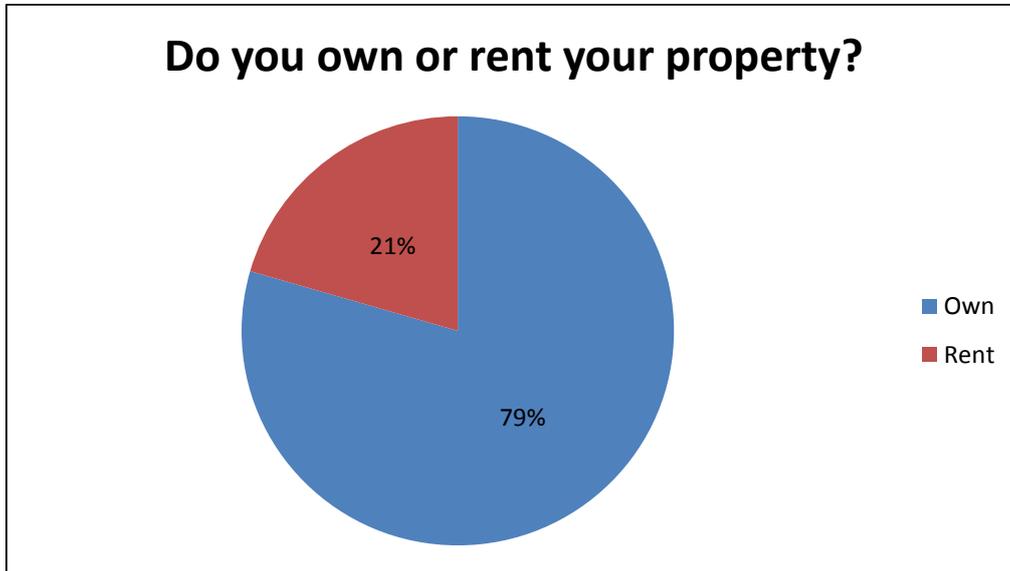


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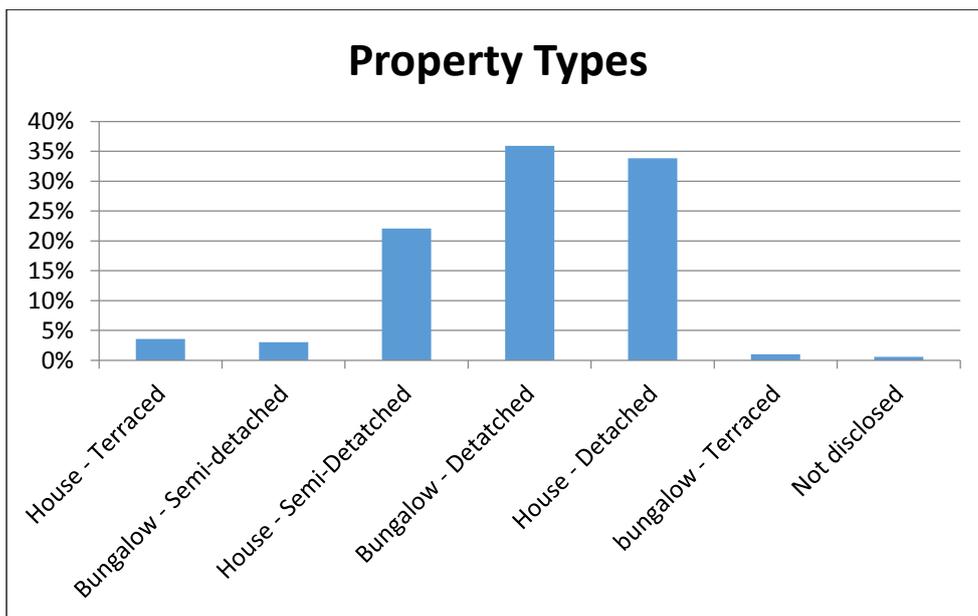
Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen

4. Residents/Villagers -The Locals

Out of 195 respondents 79% own their property, considerably above the average for England and Wales (according to The Office for National Statistics this was 64% in 2011).

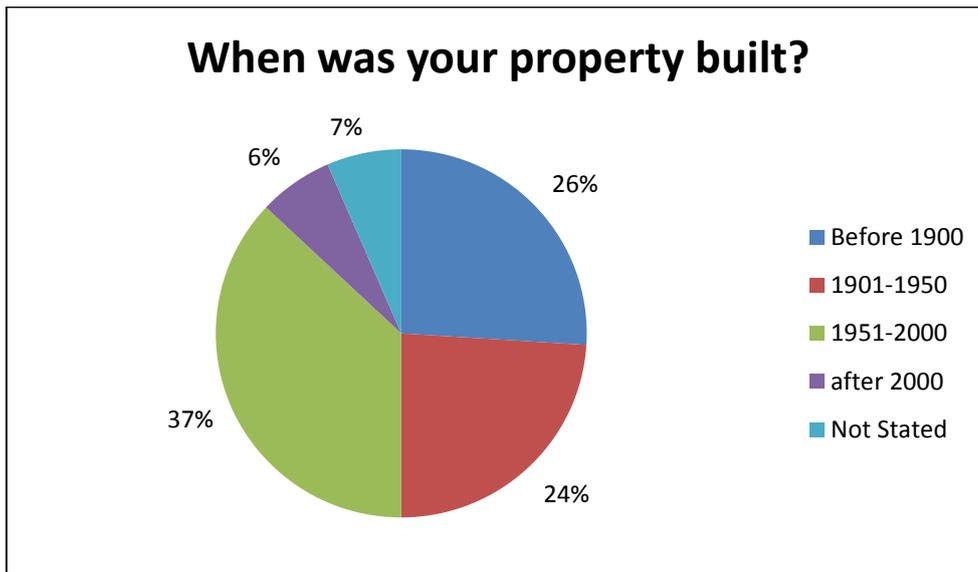


Detached bungalows are the most common type of property within the village, closely followed by detached and semi-detached houses. These three property types make up just fewer than 92% of the properties within the village, the remainder being made up of terraced houses, semi-detached and terraced bungalows (plus one property type not disclosed).



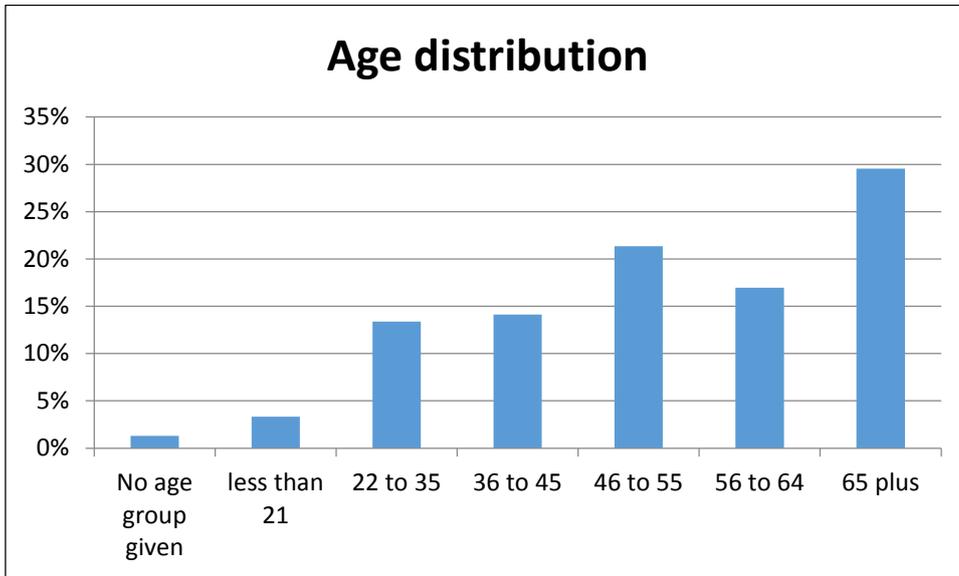
50% of the respondents state that their properties were built prior to 1950 (26% before 1900 and 24% between 1901 and 1950).

37% of the respondents state that their properties were built between 1951 and 2000, however since 2000 there has been a significant reduction in the construction of new properties as only 6% of the respondents state that their properties were constructed after 2000. Slightly fewer than 3% of respondents' properties are classed as "listed".

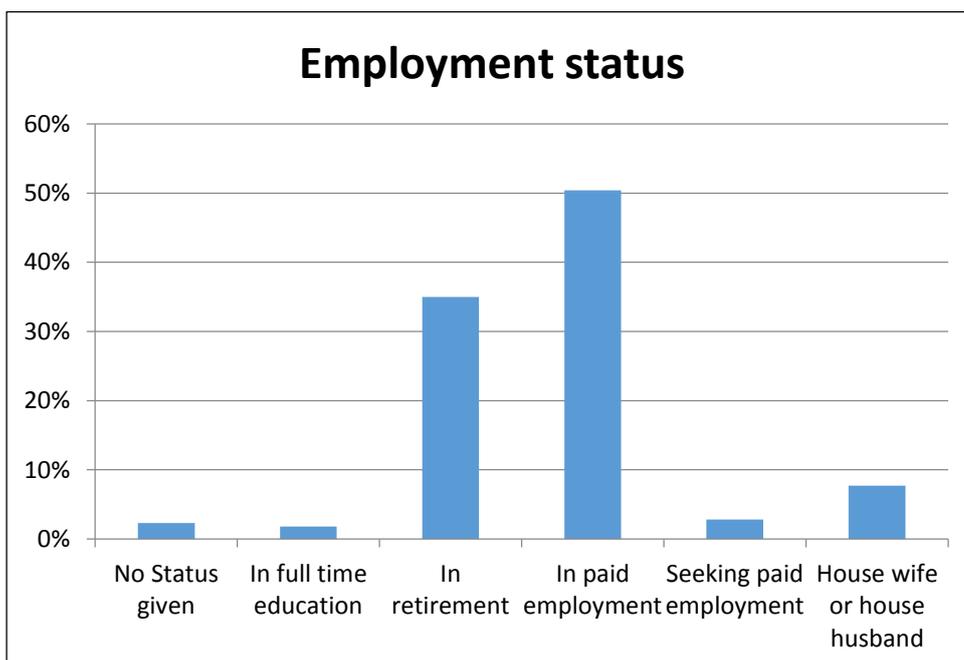


Questionnaire responses (62%) show a sum total of 389 adults (persons over 18 years of age) and 76 children (persons under 18 years of age). This averages 1.99 adults and 0.39 children per household. It is not possible to give a ratio of male/female adults due to lack of information entered on questionnaires however, the ratio of children (boys:girls) is almost 50:50. If figures are adjusted to consider non responses, it would suggest that the population of the village compares favourably to the 2011 National Census results.

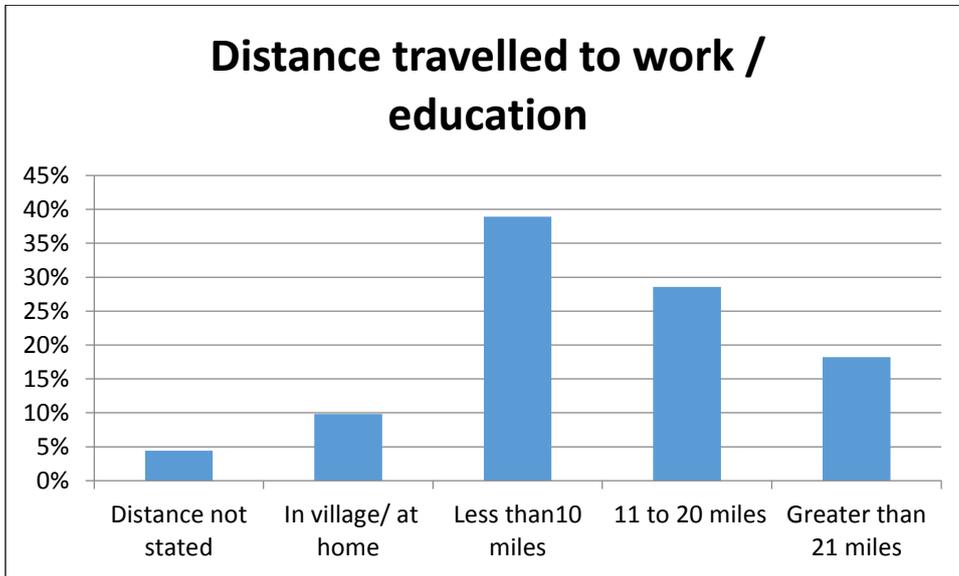
The questionnaire responses confirmed that the village has more older than younger residents and noticeably fewer young adults: 3% of the respondents are less than 21 years old. The community is markedly middle aged with the over 45 age group exercising a clear majority of 68% (21% Age 46 to 55, 17% Age 56 to 64 and 30% Aged 65 plus). Consequently, the village has a fairly stable population. The largest age group in the village is of working age, but all age ranges are well represented.



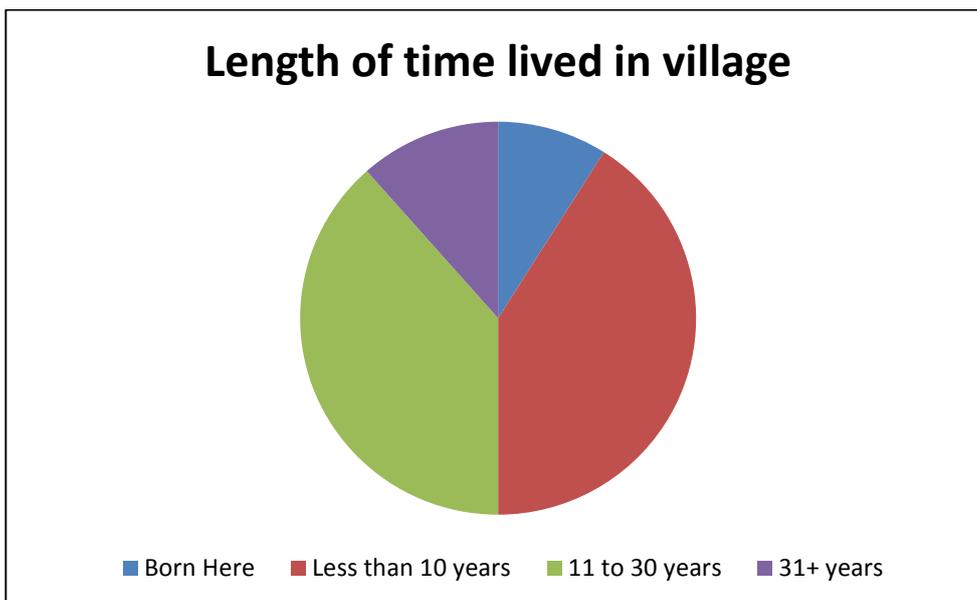
According to The Office for National Statistics the employment rate for those aged from 16 to 64 (from June to August 2013) was 71.61%, questionnaire responses show significantly less than the national average with a total of 50.4% in employment. It is suggested that this is related to the fact that we have a significantly higher than average population for the age group 65 and over. According to the 2011 National Census, 16% of the total population of England and Wales were aged 65 and over, questionnaire responses demonstrate that 29.55% of the respondents were aged 65 and over. Again, according to The Office for National Statistics the unemployment rate for June to August 2013 was 7.6% of the economically active population, questionnaire responses show a significantly lower figure of 2.8% within the village.



Today the village is home to many who work outside the immediate area. Just less than 10% of the respondents work in the village or at home, surprisingly 68% of the respondents are employed within 20 miles of the village (39% less than 10 miles, 29% between 11 and 20 miles), 18% travel a distance of more than 21 miles and some travel to Peterborough and Cambridge for their work.



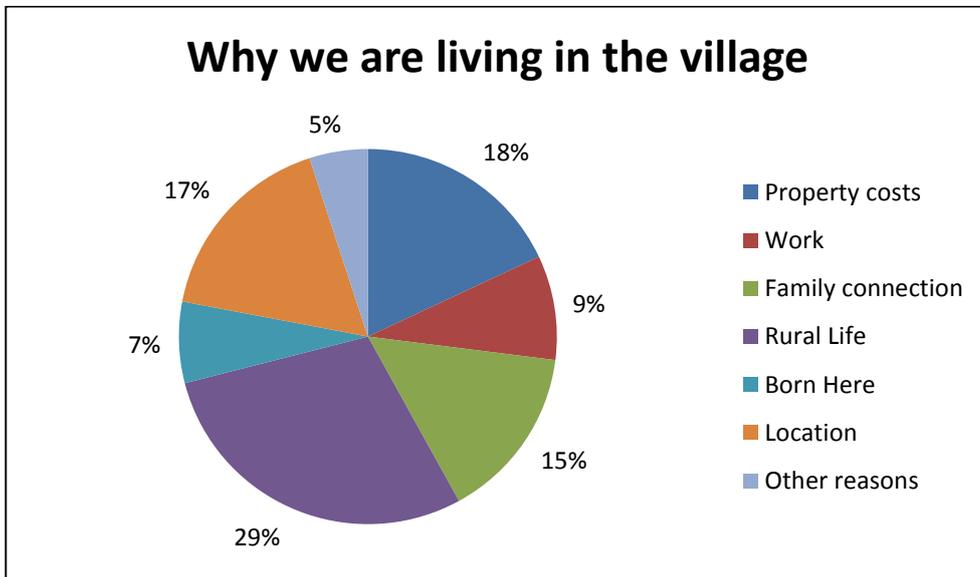
Historically the population consisted of those born and bred in the local area, in recent years this has changed significantly. The majority 41% have been living in the village for less than ten years, followed closely by 38% that have lived here for between 11 and 30 years and 12% that have lived here for over 31 years, surprisingly only 9% of respondents were born here.



Interestingly 29% of respondents choose to live here because of the rural life. 18% live here due to property costs, 17% live here due to the location, 15% have a family connection, 9% live here for work reasons, 7% were born here and 5% live here for other reasons.

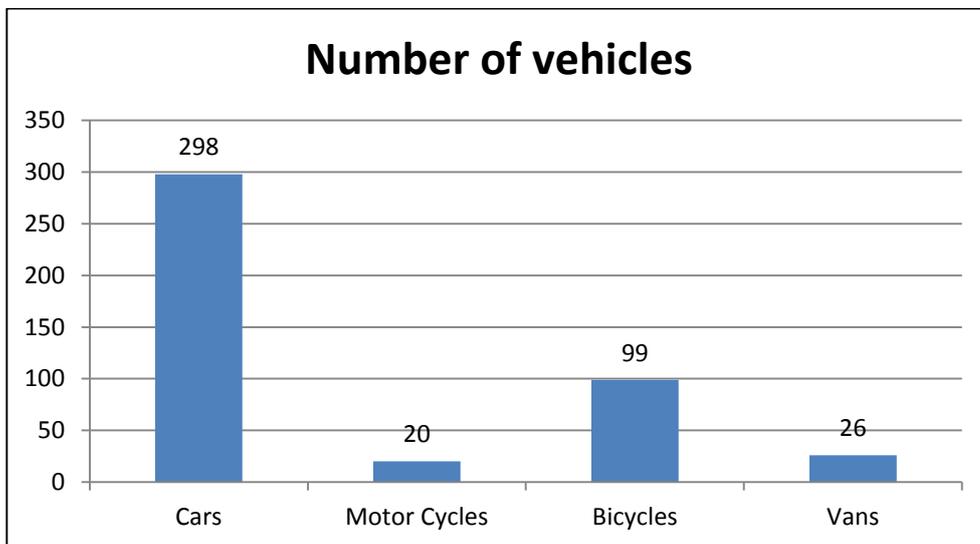
	Property costs	Work	Family	Rural Life	Born Here	Location	Other
Percent	18%	9%	15%	29%	7%	17%	5%

Nearly one third of the respondents are retirees who have chosen to come to live in the village and questionnaire responses suggest that property choice and price are major drivers of that choice.

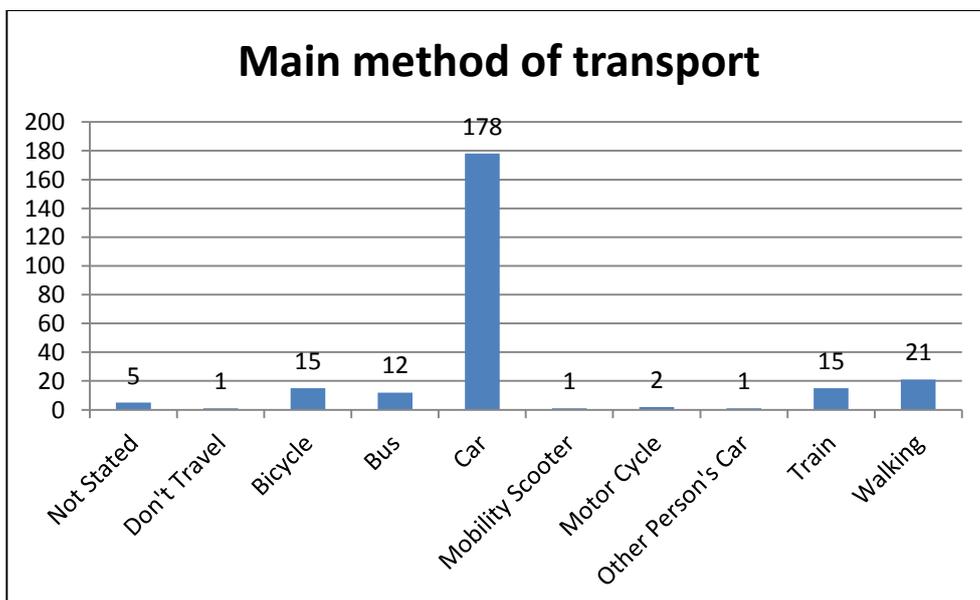


5. Local Transport

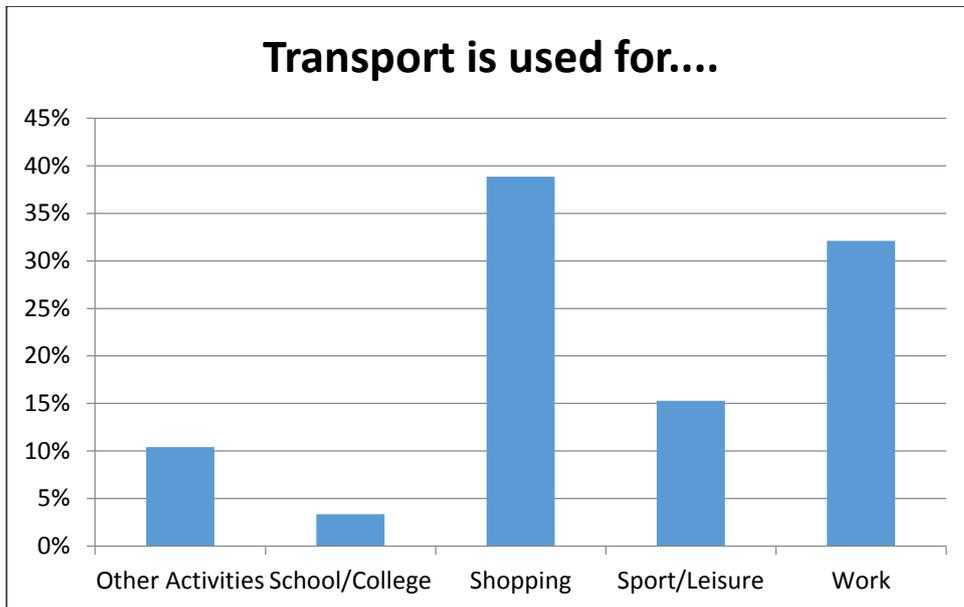
Unsurprisingly, there is high vehicle ownership within the village. In this day and age high levels of vehicle ownership may be an indicator of affluence however, this may not be the case in rural areas due to the limited public transport provision and large geographic distances. In a rural area it is often necessary for households to have more than one vehicle to enable travel to and from work, children to travel to and from school, to attend leisure activities, for shopping and to get to hospitals, dentists etc. A total of 344 vehicles are owned by respondents, equating to 1.76 vehicles per household and a total of 99 bicycles are owned by respondents, equating to 0.51 bicycles per household.



The vast majority of people use cars as their primary method of transport. Given the high level of vehicle ownership, many respondents do not use public transport.



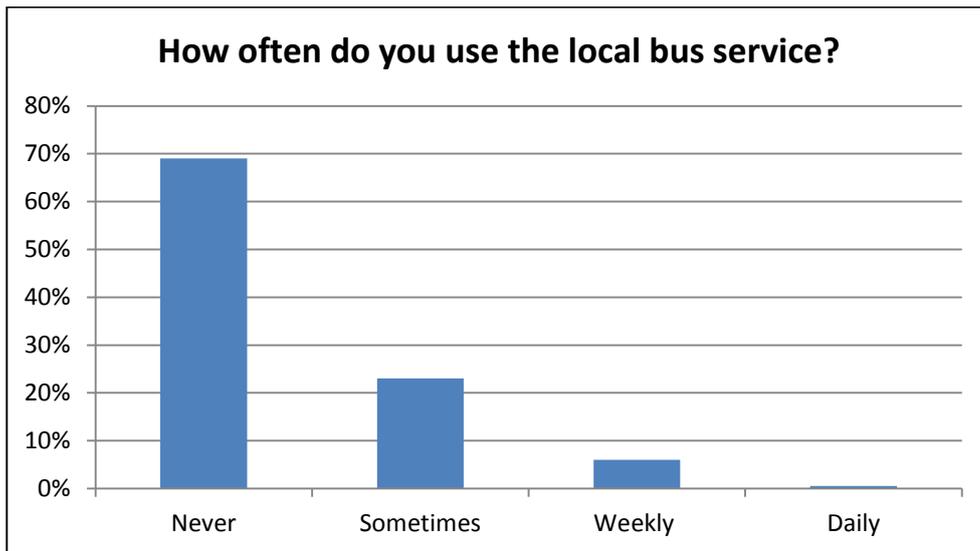
Nearly 11% of respondents state walking is their primary method of transport, nearly 8% use the bicycle or train as their primary method of transport, just over 6% use the bus, other responses are detailed in the previous graph.



Almost 39% of respondents use their primary method of transport for shopping which may reflect the lack of a shop in the village. This is followed closely by just over 32% for travelling to and from work, other responses are detailed above.

At the time of writing, the village has one scheduled bus service, The Norfolk Green number 46, which runs to and from King's Lynn. The responses indicate that the service is inconvenient for most people travelling to or from the village. Additionally, West Norfolk Community Transport (WNCT) operate door to door transport using mini-buses with low steps and wheelchair lifts which can be booked up to a week in advance. The service is a membership scheme aimed at people with mobility problems including the elderly, frail, disabled and people with poor access to public transport. This service transports people from rural locations into King's Lynn, Swaffham, Fakenham and Downham Market.

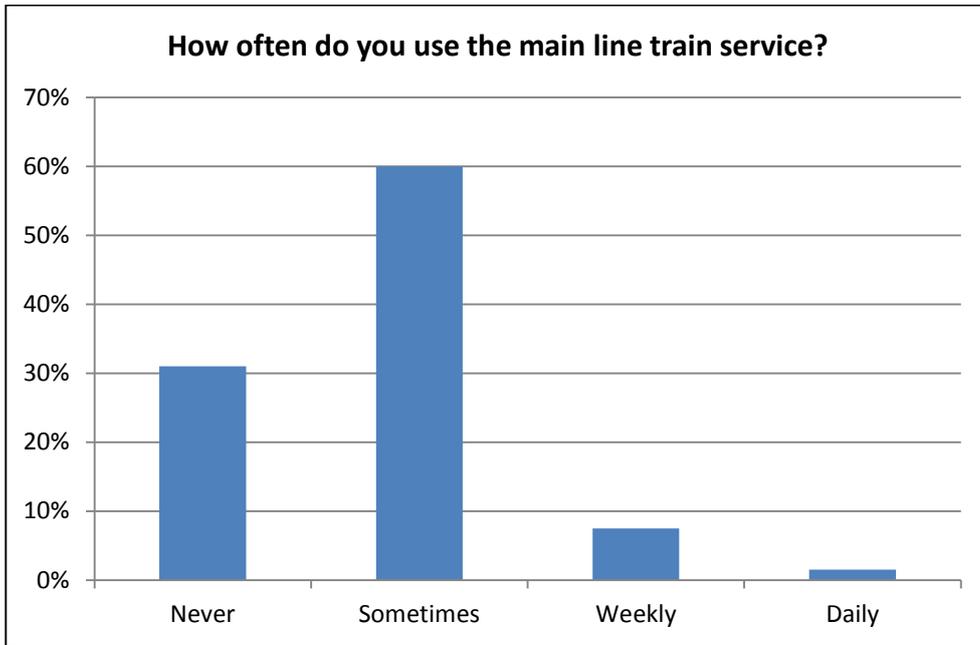
Nearly 69% of respondents stated that they never use the bus, just over 23% use it sometimes, approximately 6% weekly and approximately 0.5% use it on a daily basis. Several respondents included comments about the inadequate service between King's Lynn and a non-existent service to/from Downham Market. Specific comments related to the lack of buses and inadequate frequency. Some respondents would use the buses if the service were more frequent, specifically to and from King's Lynn.



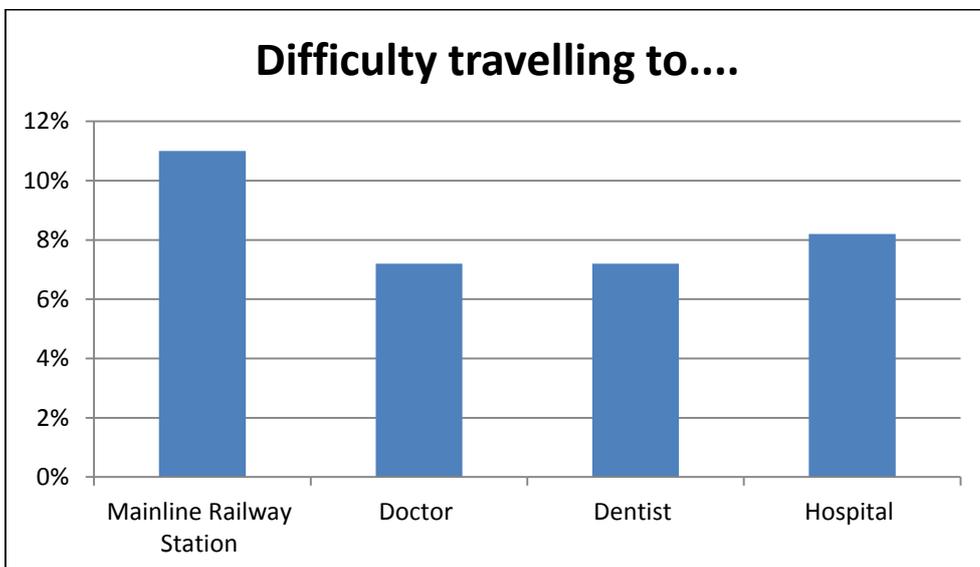
Whilst the local bus service is perceived to be reliable and affordable, the poor timetabling/frequency of service and routes are a concern to users and potentially a barrier to new users. Additional comments suggested the provision of community transport facilities for all over 70 years of age.



The north east end of the village is less than a mile from Watlington station, which is on a main line route with trains to and from King's Lynn, Cambridge and London. The franchise is currently operated by First Capital Connect.



Nearly 31% of respondents stated that they never use the train, just over 60% use it sometimes, approximately 7.5 % weekly and under 1.5% on a daily basis. Train punctuality and cost are not issues for the majority of respondents, however the frequency of service is a concern. Amongst the highlighted requirements are trains every 30 minutes to/from Cambridge rather than the current hourly frequency. Other concerns highlighted by a small minority included the reliability of the self-service ticket machine at Watlington and seat availability during the rush hour. One item of concern is the limited car parking at the station. By far the biggest issue recorded is the lack of a footpath between the village and the station. This is also reflected in other questions concerning provision of pavements and footpaths.

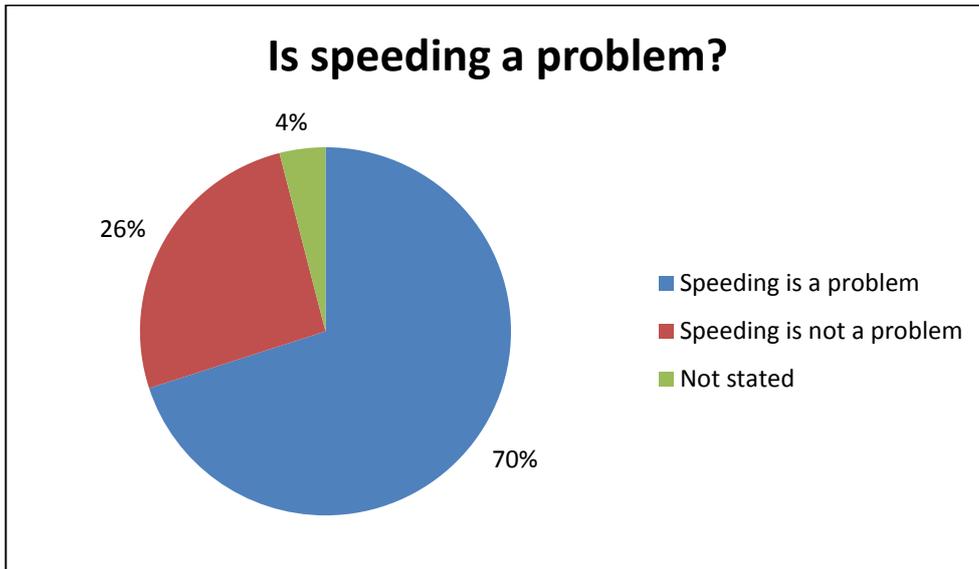


As most in the village people use their cars for shopping and at a time of escalating fuel prices, ways of minimising costs, such as car sharing should be looked at. A total of 26 respondents indicated that they are willing to support a car sharing scheme.

11% of the total respondents state that they had difficulty travelling to the mainline railway station, possibly due to a lack of bus service, 8.2% have difficulty travelling to Hospital and 7.2% have difficulty travelling to both doctor and dentist.

54% of the total respondents state that there are pedestrian safety issues within the village and the surrounding areas. Lack of pavements and footpaths in and around the village, specifically between the village and Watlington Station. Lack of footpaths in Mill Road and Stow Road were also areas of great concern. An additional issue was the lack of street lights between the village and Watlington Station. Speeding in Park Crescent was recognised and it is suggested that this is related to an increase in traffic flow at the beginning of and at the end of a school day, the remaining proportion of respondents did not consider pedestrian safety to be a problem.





The vast majority of respondents requested that traffic calming methods were employed, these included;

- Speed limit reduction, specifically in Park Crescent, reducing the speed limit from 30 mph to 20 mph
- Speed bumps
- The inclusion of traffic calming measures such as "flashing 30mph signs"
- More Police and/or speed camera presence

70% of respondents feel that speeding is an issue in the village; vehicles are travelling too fast, not only cars, but HGV's and farm machinery also. 26% stated that speeding is not a problem and 4% did not respond.



Just fewer than 83% of respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or did not comment about the amount of road signs within the village, the suggested improvements included;

- Adjustments to the positioning of speed signs

Conflicts of interest between vehicles and pedestrians is an unfortunate feature of present day life, it is nowhere more troublesome than in villages that have evolved to suit a more leisurely relaxed life style.



68% of respondents felt that there are no concerns regarding parking however, 26% felt there are problems, which relate to specific areas.

Many householders provided comments linked to two specific problem areas. Parking in Church Road, between The Cock Inn and The old Post Office, and at the junction of Church Road and Stow Road where parking causes blind spots for drivers as well as causing them to be on the wrong side of the road approaching the junction. In Church Road where properties have no off road parking, hazards are created due to the narrowness of the road. There are also problems for residents in Park Crescent, these tend to happen at school start and finish times when parents drop off and pick up children. Respondents also commented on the way vehicles are parked on pavements creating problems for both drivers and pedestrians, causing poor visibility and access, blocked driveways and damage to verges.

Almost all respondents indicated that there are parking problems in Church Road and suggested double yellow lines at certain points. In Park Crescent, the suggestion was to control or prohibit vehicles parking on the pavement. Many people feel that the traffic problems in Magdalen are the result of vehicles travelling too fast.

57% of respondents indicated that there are concerns with certain types of vehicles. HGV's and agricultural vehicles travelling through the village cause problems due to size and speed issues. Young drivers and delivery vehicles cause concern due to the speeds reached when passing through the village. Another issue highlighted was the use of mobile telephones whilst driving.



6. Services/Facilities/Amenities

Respondents advised that they use the village services as expressed in the table below; this is expressed in numbers and does not include the "not stated" responses. Additionally, the Chip Shop has been omitted as it has not been open since the questionnaire was compiled, additionally, households at the southern end of the Parish tend to use the much closer Heron public house.

	Regularly	Weekly	Occasionally	Never
Church	10	3	70	112
Chip Shop				
Mobile Library	7	n/a	19	87
Play Area/Field	1	4	47	125
Allotments	2	0	3	190
Blacksmiths	4	2	92	97
Veg Stall	3	3	63	126
Village Hall	15	5	94	81
Footpath/Bridleway	30	17	67	81
Pub	6	5	62	122

Less than 1% of the total respondents considered that the current amenities are sufficient. The proposed ranges were too diverse to be fully detailed in this report, and therefore are considered not sustainable within the village. However, there were two overriding categories that stood out, these being a Village Shop and/or Post Office and a reopened chip shop. There were several suggestions for a community run shop open for a few hours daily, many of these calling for some combination of these. There were several requests for some form of takeaway food outlet and/or food at the pub, the latter being cited as reason for not using it. Other suggestions included Garden Club, Parent & Toddlers, Drama, Astronomy, Historical, monthly dances and Children's and Youth Clubs. As seen from the above table, across the spectrum almost 60% on average do not use any of the current amenities thereby not providing encouragement for those who would like more to be on offer. Unfortunately only 9 respondents said they would be prepared to assist in deciding how any additional facilities might be provided.

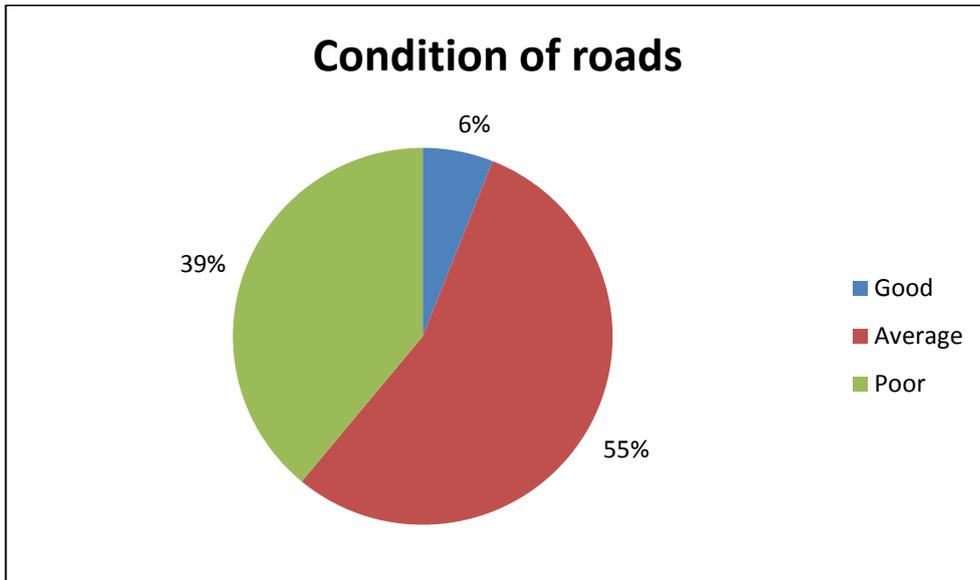
When crime occurs it can be devastating and fear of crime can seriously affect the quality of life, however crime rates in the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough are lower than the national average. Locally, there is generally a positive picture in

respect of crime and vandalism. Around 10% of respondents feel threatened by crime and/or vandalism. Whilst it might be anticipated that the older residents may feel most vulnerable, it is in fact felt most in the 45-55 age group. 30% have previously been a victim mainly of petty crime with some vandalism; nearly all of this was reported.

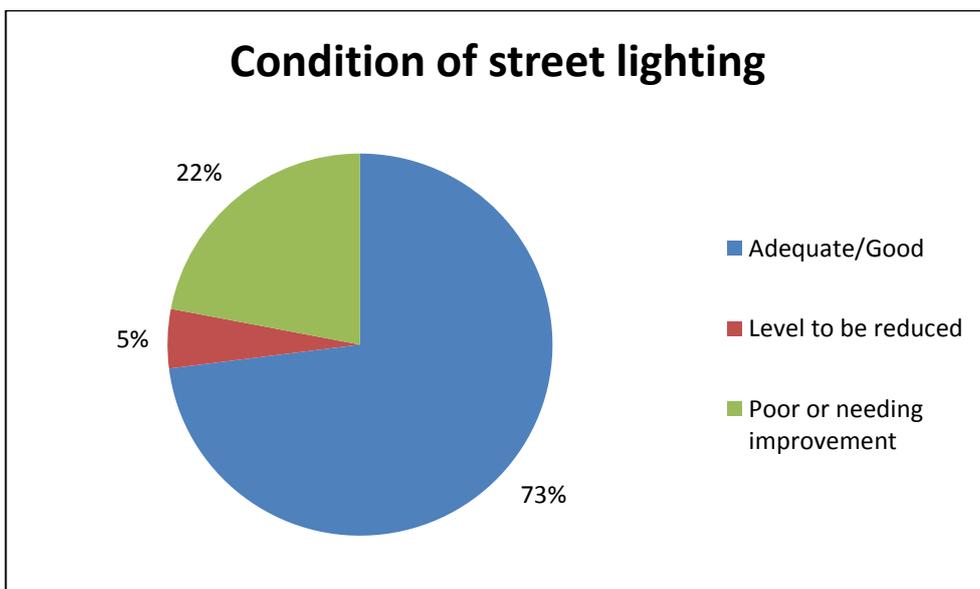
Recent reports have referred to a general increase in thefts of heating oil in the wider area, whilst in Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen statistics show that from January 2013 to January 2014 inclusive, five crimes were reported to the Police. These were, one Burglary in a building other than a dwelling, one Theft, one Criminal damage and two Assaults (figures provided by The Terrington Neighbourhood Safety Neighbourhood Action Plan). However some respondents felt a need to have an increased police visibility within the village via a combination of vehicle patrols and beat policing. It is understood that very few, if any, road accidents have occurred locally, furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been only one recent minor incident and no significant road traffic collisions since 2006.

Although there are no mains gas facilities, all respondents but two have mains electricity or water and 27 are without mains sewage service. 24 households reported problems of storm water build up/back flooding and 1 of blockages. 97 respondents (approximately 50%, mainly owned, but some rented) would consider connecting to mains gas if it were made available, being prepared to pay around £500-£600 on average. This is spread across all age groups, increasing from 45yrs upwards. 138 use oil for heating etc., of whom 39 belong to bulk oil buying schemes.

Whilst 68% of respondents considered the recycling facilities are adequate, 25% did not, the balance either being unaware of any such facilities or not responding. The greatest dissatisfaction is in the 46-55yr age group. There is a high demand for glass recycling, as well as other plastics, with less numerous calls for wood, books and clothing. The general views where expressed, were for these to be sited at the Village Hall. Half the residents consider there is adequate provision of dog waste bins, whilst around one third think not, the balance not saying. The most frequent suggestions for additional bins relate to the river bank for its full length down to and including Vine Hill, Low Road, Burnt Lane, Mill Road, Prophets Alley/Lode steps and around the School/Hall/Playing Field area. There were many comments regarding dog owners who did not clean up after their animals.

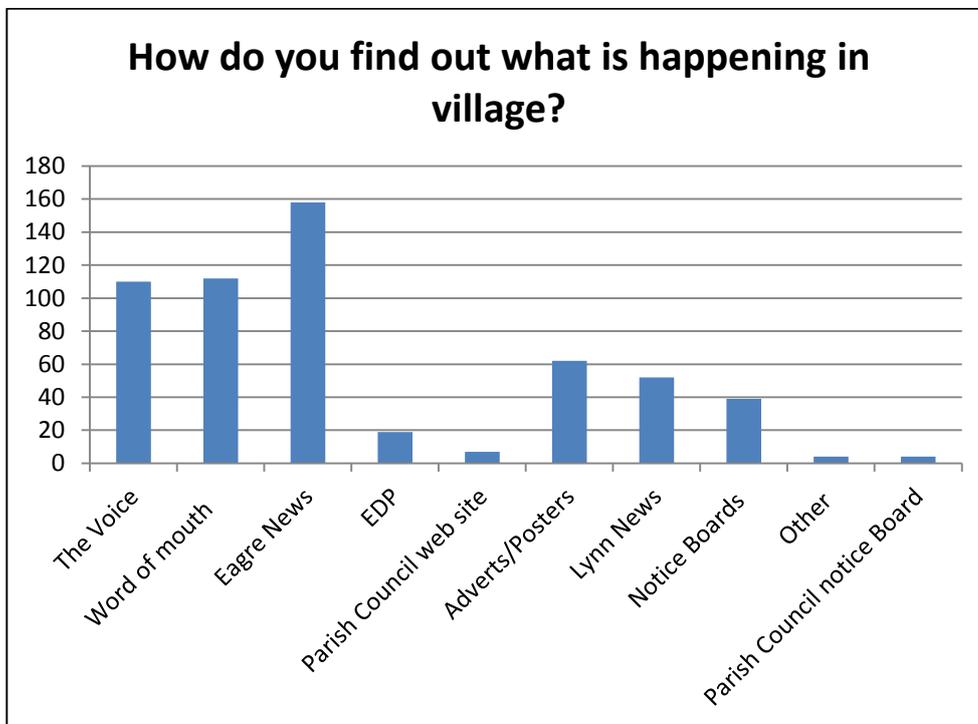


The condition of the roads in the Parish caused considerable anguish, with only 6% considering them to be in good condition, 55% average and 39% poor. Half took the trouble to give detailed examples. Briefly, virtually every road was included as far as Low road and Vine Hill. Main concerns were the quantity of potholes, the time taken to patch them, the inadequacy of such patches, uneven surfaces and several problems of flooding, particularly the long term problem outside Number 4 Stow Road, which (at the time of writing) has not been cured despite the works carried out a few years ago. 73% of respondents considered the street lighting to be adequate or good. Surprisingly just over 5% would like to see the level reduced or even none at all. 22% considered it to be either poor or needing improvement. Areas for improvement include Mill Road, Stow Road and several asking for better lighting on the road to the station in Watlington.



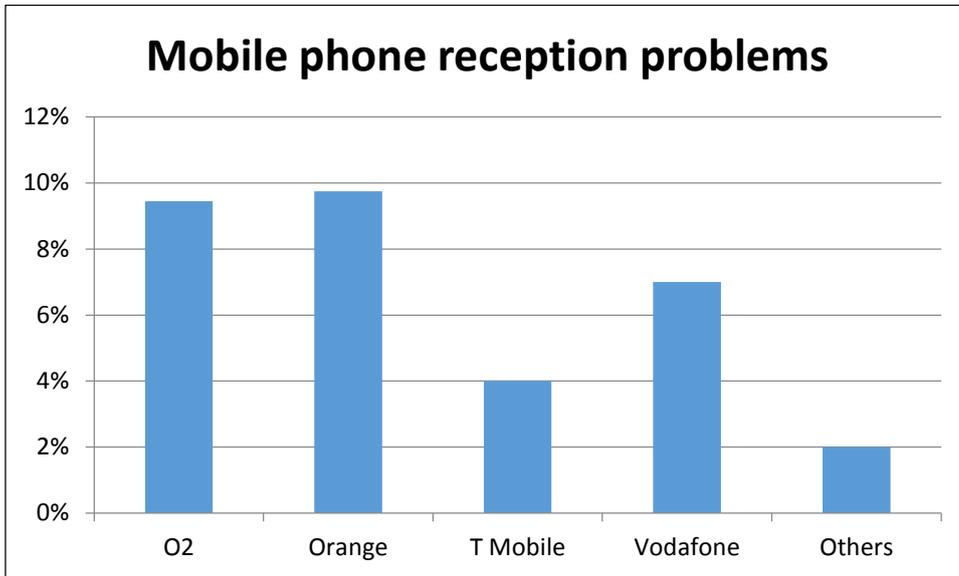
7. Communications

Responses indicated that The Eagle News is the most popular source of information followed by word of mouth and the Village Voice. Adverts/Posters, The Lynn News and Notice Boards followed. However, The EDP, The Parish Council Web Site, The Parish Council Notice Board and others were considered to be non informative. Also included in the "Other" bar were respondents that gleaned information from various web-sites. Improved access to the internet and an increased knowledge of IT will enable better access in the future to informative local web-sites. As notice boards and posters are being used by residents, these are used to reinforce "word of mouth" communication, it is important that all displayed information is kept up to date.



Almost 81% of respondents never have problems with the quality of digital television reception. The remainder said they frequently have problems. It is not known whether this is signal or equipment related.

Almost 34% of respondents have problems with mobile phone reception within the village; this may reflect the lack of mobile phone masts locally. The service providers that have reception issues are detailed in the following chart.



The internet has changed the way people go about their daily lives. Today the internet is used to carry out a wide range of established every day activities, such as reading newspapers or magazines, sending and receiving e-mails, internet shopping and seeking employment.

In Great Britain, 83% of households (According to the Office for National Statistics 2013) had internet access. 82% of respondents use the internet, this compares very well to the national average detailed above. 96% of respondents use the internet connected via broadband. 89% of respondents rated the level of broadband service as average or poor and 1% of respondents advised that they were unable to receive a broadband service.

Until high speed internet capabilities are installed within the village, it is unlikely that we will receive the Broadband speeds and reliability enjoyed in urban areas. Finally, 38% of respondents stated that they were not aware of internet facilities at the Village Hall.



8. Housing- Affordable or not and Land Use

The geography of the area presents some particular challenges, coupled with a complex demographic profile, planning for the future is somewhat testing.

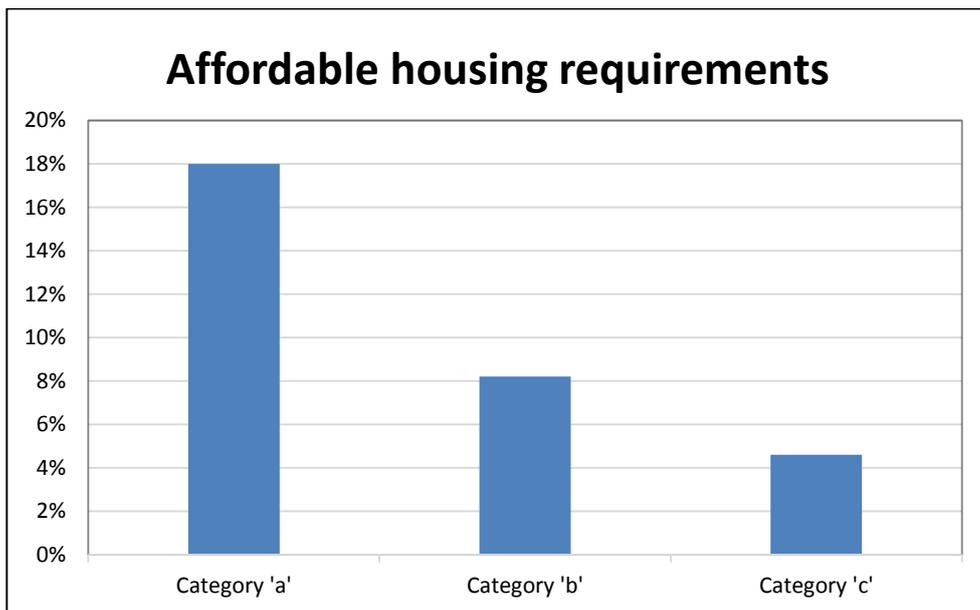
With respect to affordable housing, it is considered that it is specifically to accommodate:

(a) Children of villagers who are living with their parents because they cannot afford otherwise.

(b) Children of villagers who are living away from the village because they cannot afford otherwise.

(c) Local workers who cannot afford local housing and have to live away.

Regarding the need for the various categories, the responses are indicated in the table below.



18% of respondents indicate that there is a significant affordable housing requirement for children of villagers who are living with their parents because they cannot afford otherwise. 8.2% indicate a requirement for children of villagers who are living away from the village because they cannot afford otherwise and finally, 4.6% indicate a requirement for local workers who cannot afford local housing and have to live away.

Additionally, a number of respondents said that these priorities applied to their own households, as detailed below, 83 households did not respond, 6 respondents were unsure of the requirements and 9 stated that there was not a need for affordable housing.

As to where such additional housing should be built, 61 households expressed an opinion. 17 expressed negative opinions, some strongly:

"As far away from existing houses as possible - Somewhere else - London - Kings Lynn".

Most positive suggestions were of a general location, e.g. Mill Road, Stow Road, Lynn Road, the allotments or of the 'not on Green Field Site' nature, but to infill on land within the Parish boundary. Several suggestions were to use the former Environment agency site, however, it is understood that the site is now sold and in private ownership. It is important that there is an understanding of the increased demand for accommodation which includes the future housing needs of local people in the village and people coming to work in the local area. Equally important is the requirement to ensure younger people and families remain in and help sustain the local community and economy.

"A Village Design Statement is prepared by local people. It sets out how the community would like the village to look and develop in the future. It is accepted by the Borough as "material consideration" in planning matters and is the only planning advice that is entirely community based. It includes density and design of housing, size and placing of developments and suitability of additions such as domestic wind turbines, solar panels, etc."

60% of the respondents thought that the village should have a Design Statement, 25% believing not and 15% did not respond to this. 26 households offered to assist in creating such a Statement.

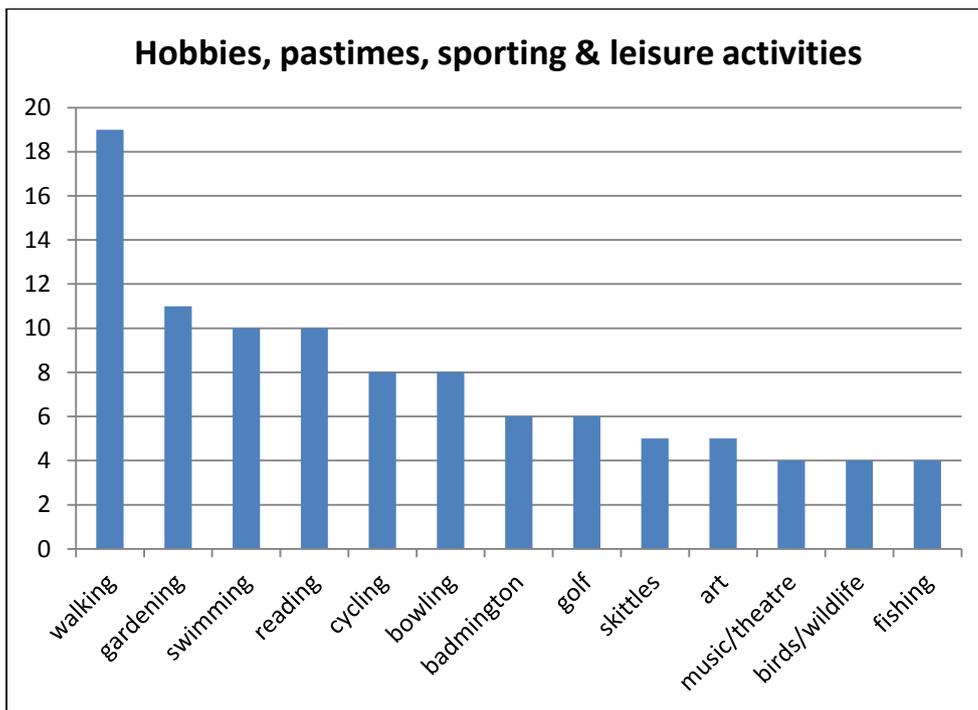
72% of the respondents were aware that the allotments are run by the Parish Council and 20% were not. Only one respondent did not know their location, and one other thought they should be sold to finance a community garden. 24% thought the allotments were fine as they are, with 8% saying they would use them if sub-divided into vegetable plots. The remainder either did not know or thought the question was not relevant to them.

9. Hobbies, Pastimes, Sporting & Leisure Activities

Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen appears to be a very active village, there are many activities taking place within the village, including, Archery, Art, Badminton, Bingo, Coffee Morning and Internet Café, Church Activities, Film Club, Karate, Line Dancing, Nine Pin Skittles, Short Mat Bowls, plus various Adult Groups and Child groups.

There were 46 different sports and leisure activities in which respondents said they took part. There were 152 individual responses indicating that many people took part in more than one activity. These activities ranged from A for archery to Y for yoga, taking in dancing, horse riding, photography, sailing, and tennis on the way.

The most popular activities were walking, gardening, swimming, reading, cycling, bowling, badminton, golf, skittles, art, music/theatre, birds/wildlife and fishing.



Additionally a diverse range of other hobbies, pastimes and sporting activities were enjoyed by respondents, these were archery, bingo, caravanning, clock mending, computers, crafts, cricket, dancing, film, greyhound racing, historic aircraft, historic buildings, horse riding, keep fit, local history, motor sport, photography, quiz nights, radio/TV, running, sailing, spinning, squash, star gazing, tennis and yoga.

Most households that responded with one or more resident pensioner make good use of the village hall facilities, whilst those activities not available in the village, such as swimming, music and theatre, museums, golf, badminton and fishing take place not too far away and are reported as easily accessible if you have your own transport. This may not be a problem for many residents at this time, but with rising fuel prices and transport costs access may become more problematic in the future. Across the whole village demographic 29% declined to respond, one commentating that *"nothing takes place in Magdalen!"*

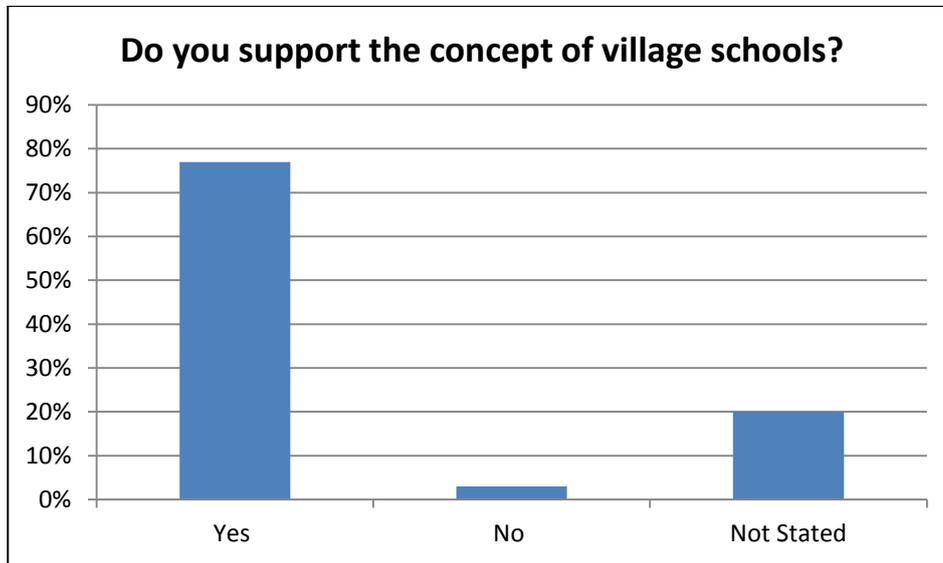
Interestingly out of 85 households with one or more pensioner, 22.5% did not respond. As can be imagined, when the younger age groups are taken into account (households without one or more pensioner), a much wider range of activities comes into play. The most popular activities are art/crafts, badminton, bowling, cinema, cycling, dogs, fishing, football, gardening, golf, horse riding, keep fit, reading, swimming and walking. Other activities included archery, astronomy, bingo, birds/wildlife, boating, camping and caravanning, cooking, cricket, dancing, DIY, eating out, internet, martial arts, motor cycles, motorsport, museums, music/theatre, netball, photography, quizzes, running, shooting, singing, skittles, snooker/ pool, squash, tennis and travel.

Aero modelling, amateur radio, animals, bell ringing, church, clock mending, darts, driving, flying, greyhound racing, historic aircraft, historic buildings/history, kite flying, model engineering, opera, shopping, spinning, steam traction, the pub and youth work all received one mention. Approximately 20% of respondents indicated that they were interested in supporting additional local leisure and sporting activities. This may be due to the wide range of activities already undertaken by people in the village. The most popular suggestions for additional activities were archery, bowling green, fishing club, food at the pub, pilates, swimming, tennis courts, water sports (on the relief channel) and yoga. Other suggestions included a book club, boules, cricket, cycle paths, evening classes, exercise for the over sixties, fencing, football for boys, gardening, golf, gymnastics, motorcycle club, netball club, shooting, squash court, table tennis, video gamers club, youth club and anything that would bring the village together. One respondent was open to suggestions, and one said that they could not afford more.

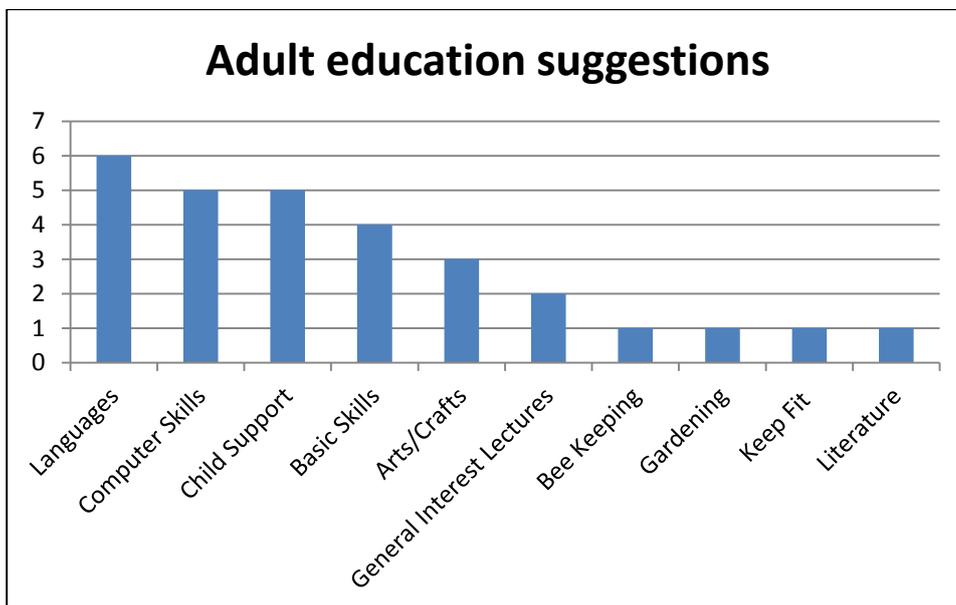
However, it is noted that some of the requested activities already take place within the village!

10. Education

We all remember our days at school and understand that education plays a very important part in the life of both children and adults within the community. Nearly 77% of respondents supported the concept of village schools, 3% did not and 20% did not state a preference.

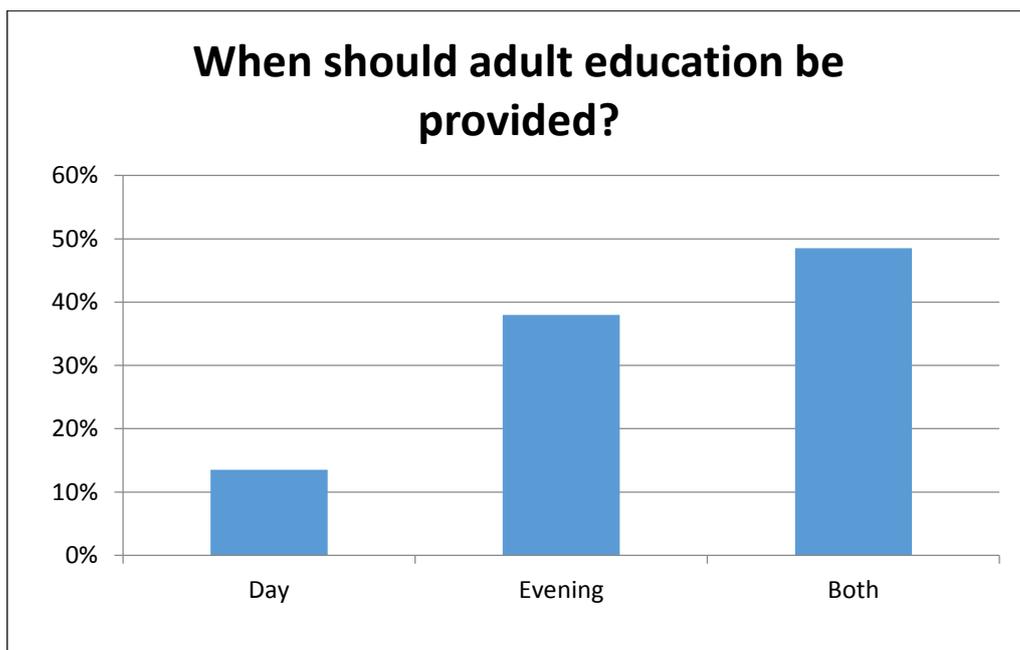


Out of 169 respondents 23% considered that there is adequate pre-school provision in the village, 5.5% did not and 71.5% did not know. Both positive and negative responses were, as would be expected, from those with direct experience, many of those in the "don't know" category coming from the older demographic. Out of 145 respondents 51% would support an adult education provision held in the school or village hall 48.3% would not and 0.7% did not know. There was no discernable difference by age demographic in these responses.

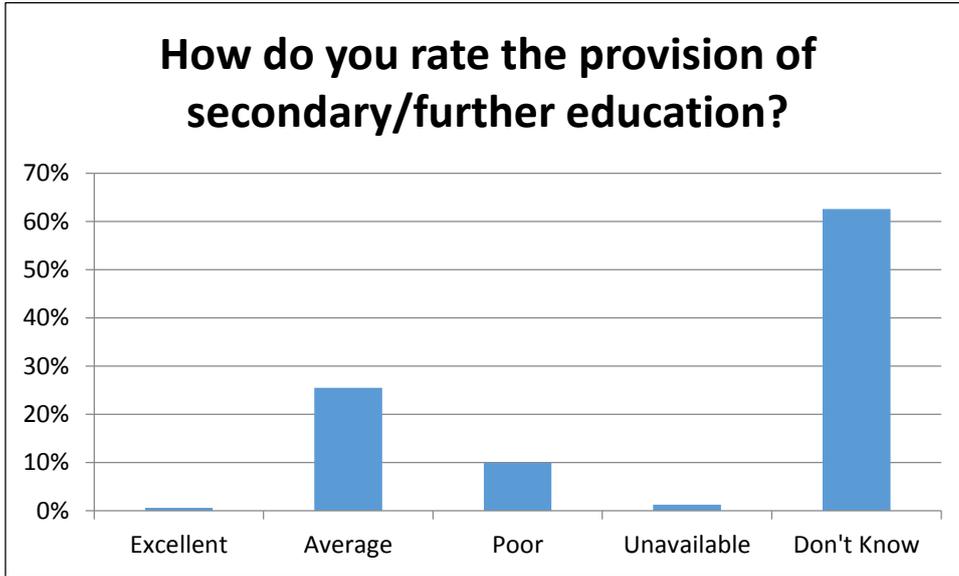




15% of respondents suggested that they would like to see Adult Education services provided, with languages being the most popular followed by computer skills, childcare/support, basic skills, art/crafts, general interest lectures, beekeeping, gardening, keep fit, and literature. 33% of respondents supported the need for adult education. From these 13.5% had a preference for the activity to occur in the daytime, 38% in the evening, and 48.5% for both daytime and evening.



81% of respondents rated the provision of secondary and further education, including apprenticeship schemes. Of these just under 1% rated it as Excellent, 25% as Average, 10% as Poor, just over 1% as unavailable and 63% as Don't Know.

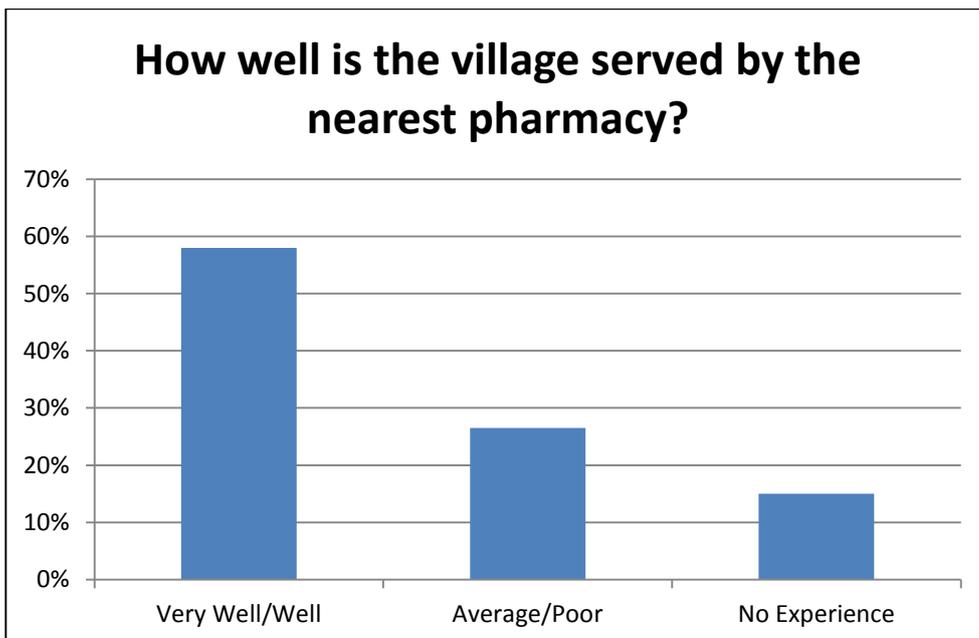
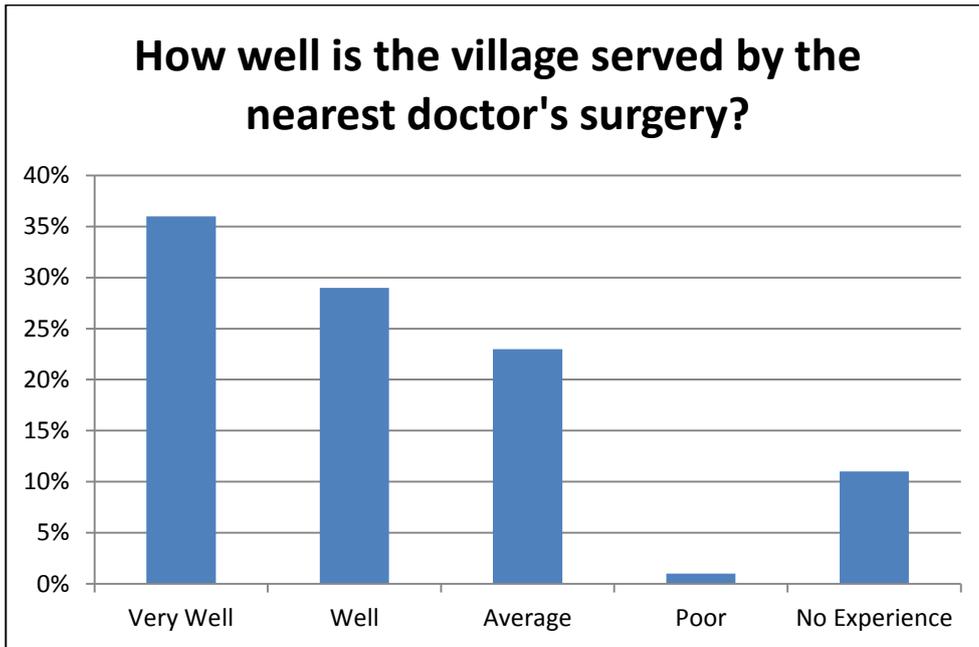


Demographic indications show that most don't know responses come from older villagers, with no children at home, whilst the unavailable score is considered to reflect no direct family experience of secondary and further education (including apprenticeship schemes).



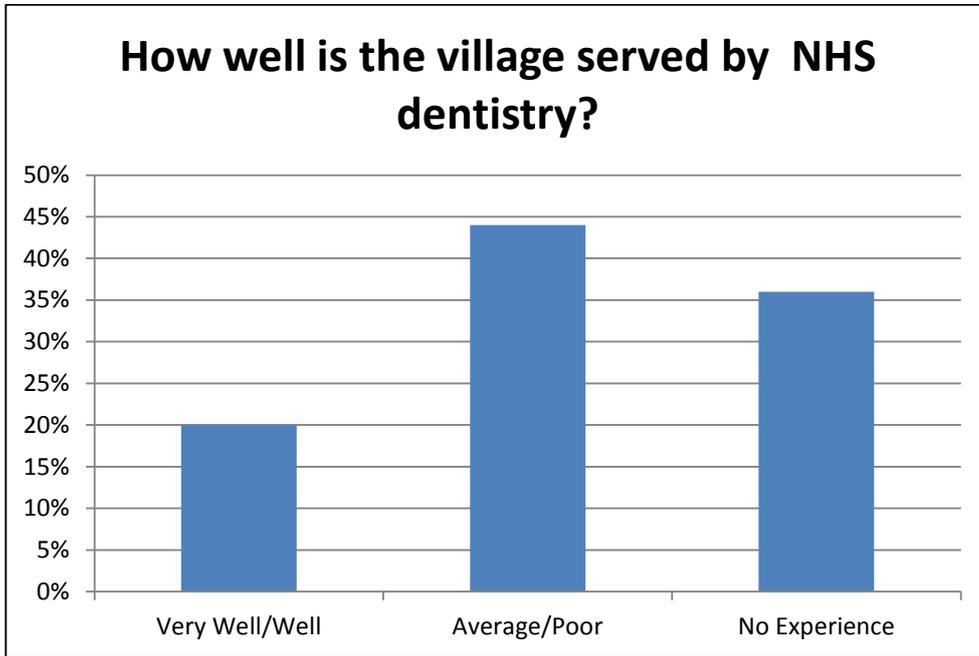
11. Health & Public Services

Respondents were asked how well they felt they were served by the various services. The majority clearly had no experience of several of the areas as they had not had a requirement for those services (e.g. Nursing/Caring, or Pre-school etc.). Over 35% of the respondents indicated that they were Very Well served by the nearest doctor's surgery, with a further 28% being Well served, (63% overall). 23% indicated an Average service and less than 1% Poor. 11% had No Experience.

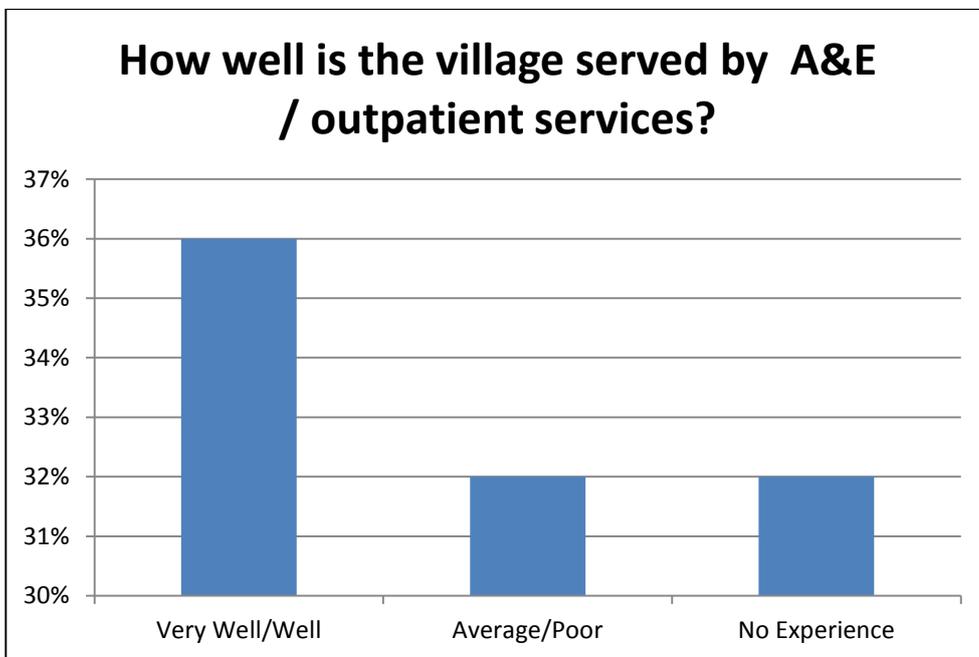


Similarly for the Pharmacy 58% feel Very Well/Well served, 26% Average/Poor and 15% had no experience.

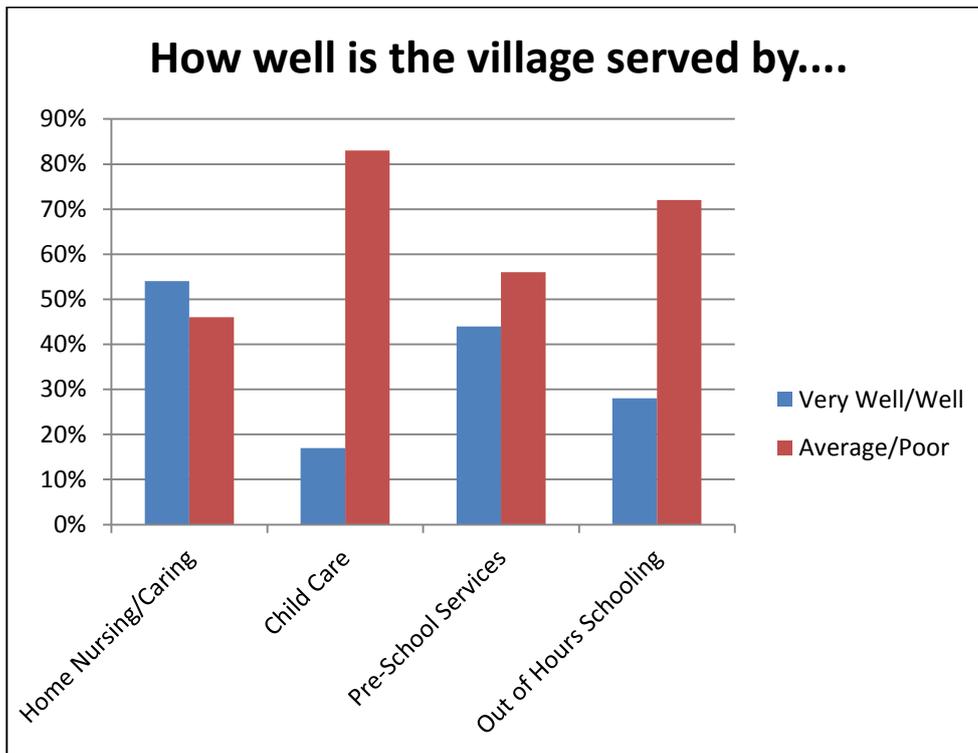
The position was similar but basically reversed with NHS dentistry. With only 20% indicating being Very Well or Well served, 44% indicating Average or Poor service and a considerable 36% having no experience of NHS dentists, mainly due it is believed as a result of the historic difficulties of becoming registered.



Accident/Emergency or Out-patients services were almost equally split with 36% indicating being Very Well/Well served, 32% indicating Average or Poor service and 32% having no experience.



For Home Nursing/Caring, Child Care, Pre-school and Out of Hours schooling, the vast majority averaging 82% had no need or experience of these services. Of those who did, the responses are displayed overleaf.



Various comments were offered. The very clear trend of these related to the increasing difficulty of arranging both urgent and non-urgent appointments at the doctor's surgery, their opening hours, contact by phone, the problems of seeing a named doctor and access without a car. Some related to waiting times and improvements at the Pharmacy. Parking at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was also criticised. A few commented on the lack of Nursery & full time Pre-school provisions and the need for a mobile Post Office.

Comments included:

"Better appointment system required at Watlington Surgery, very difficult to make non urgent appointments"

"Hospital parking is awful"

"Not always able to get Doctors appointment when required"

"Watlington pharmacy excellent - all others in King's Lynn"

"Pharmacy waiting time for prescriptions is far too long"

"We have to go to Downham Market or King's Lynn for accident & emergency and Vet services so why ask"

In summary it is concluded that whilst a good proportion of the residents are generally satisfied with the Health and related services, there is clear room for

improvement mainly in the Surgery appointment system, for NHS dentistry, home nursing/caring and pre-school/nursery provision.

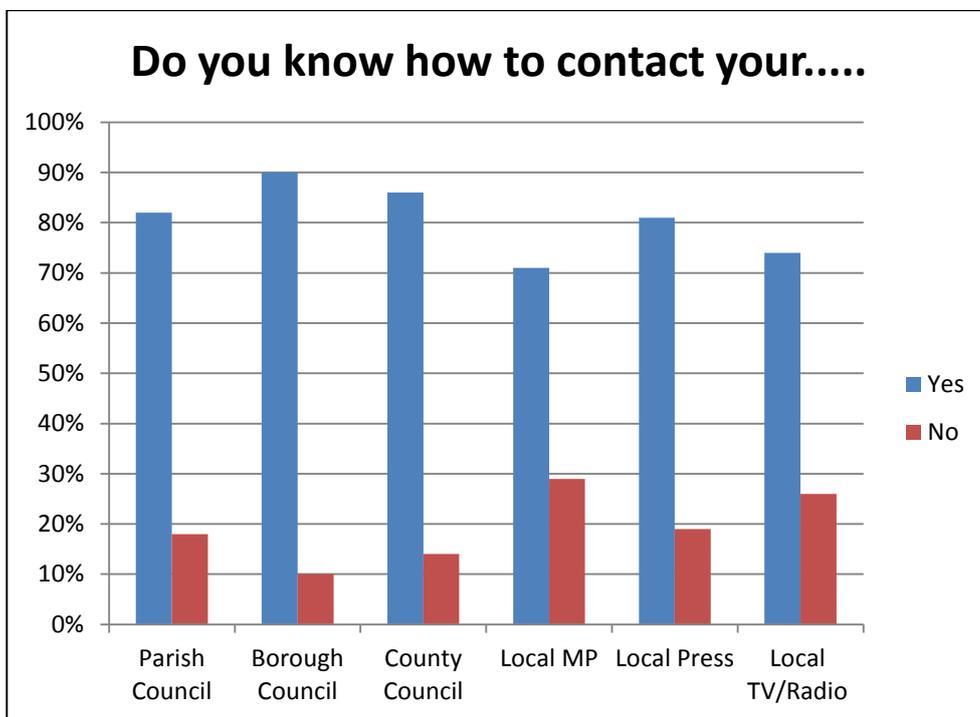
As a comparison our animals are 24% Very Well/Well served by Veterinary services, with 29% indicating Average/Poorly service, and almost half (47%) having no need or experience. For these services only 10% had experienced difficulty in communication, 76% no difficulty, leaving 14% without experience.



12. General

Respondents were asked if they knew how to contact various organisations. Again there was an amazing response as 99% of returned questionnaires had answered the question.

10% did not know how to contact the Borough Council, 14% did not know how to contact the County Council and 18% did not know how to contact the Parish Council. A greater number, 19%, were not sure how to contact the local Press, 26% were not sure how to contact the local radio/TV stations and 29%, were not sure how to contact the local MP. Various comments suggested that both the Parish Council and the Member of Parliament need to raise their profiles.



When asked are there any other points on which you would like to comment, many comments were entered, these included;

"For a village of our size I think we are well provided for. We just need more support for what we have, there is so much apathy"

"Road between Magdalen and Stow Bridge not gritted in winter"

"Survey not very relevant as live on outskirts (Stowbridge)"

"Allotments should be vegetable plots"

"Why is everything separate - need to combine to be stronger"

"Don't want Magdalen to grow as much as Watlington - want Shop & PO and Police sub-station"

"Better communications needed and initiatives to increase village participation"

"More police presence needed"

"Barking dogs need controlling"

"I'm glad a survey has been taken, I only hope other people fill it out too"

In summary it is concluded that whilst a good proportion of the residents are generally satisfied with life in the village, there are a number of issues that require action and improvement.



13. Junior Questionnaire-Primary School ages

Alongside the household survey additional questionnaires were distributed for younger members of the community (juniors aged 8-11 years and youths aged 12-17 years). These were returned by a total of 28 young people. Where it was appropriate, their responses have been incorporated within the document. Overall the responses from both junior and youth groups was informative and interesting, producing an opening framework which can be built onto in the future. For the first time the views of the younger people have been taken on board in a clear and concise way. It is hoped that this invaluable information is used when planning for the future.

These survey responses provided some additional information about what it is like to be growing up in the village; the opportunities for them to enjoy spare time in the village and what they think about the facilities provided for them here.

In the junior section there were seven responses from boys, they all participated in various activities in their spare time. Two of the boys attended cubs and the remainder were involved in various sporting activities, however only one activity took place within the village. It was also highlighted that there were no opportunities to use public transport for the activities held in other villages.

By far the most popular request for additional activities, with five requests, was football and one request for a youth club. Five boys use the playing field.

There were seven responses from girls, they all participated in various activities in their spare time and they were involved in significantly more varied activities than the boys, 11 in total. These included swimming and Karate.

Karate was the only activity that took place within the village, being held in the Village Hall. It was also highlighted that there were no opportunities to use public transport for the activities held in other villages. Popular requests for additional activities from the girls included dance, outdoor field games and fencing. Four of the girls use the playing field, however, there were concerns regarding the condition of the swings and also the accumulation of litter and rubbish left in this area.

14. Youth Questionnaire-Secondary School/College ages

In the youth section there were six responses from boys, four of which attend secondary school and two are in further education. They all participated in various activities in their spare time, basketball and Air Cadets were the most popular activities, again none of these were available in the village.

However, public transport was used by four of the respondents to allow participation in these activities. The most popular requests for additional activities, other than a local football team or basketball team, were a shop or a takeaway food outlet. Longer term concerns included a lack of village facilities and long term career worries.

In the youth section there were eight responses from girls, six of which attend secondary school, one sixth form and one is in further education. They all participated in various activities in their spare time and similar to the junior responses, they were involved in significantly more varied activities than the boys.

From the various activities listed, swimming was the most popular. In addition to various sports activities, Air Cadets, drama, photography and street dance were the most popular, with only one activity available in the village.

Public transport was used by three of the respondents to allow participation in these activities. Worryingly, it was highlighted by both the boys and the girls, that the journey to and from the railway station, day or night, is hazardous due to the lack of a footpath and street lighting.

The most popular requests for additional activities included, roller skating, tennis, swimming and a youth club.

15. Conclusion & Recommendations

This unique report is a snapshot of the views and aspirations of the community of Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen; however a number of responses emphasised the somewhat isolated feeling of the residents at the Stowbridge end of the Parish and felt that it was not easy for the village to function as "one cohesive community". This report has identified and measured community opinions, these results can then be used to influence the decision making processes that affect this Parish now and in the future. 305 questionnaires were delivered and 192 collected by volunteers; a 62% response rate gave confidence that the questionnaire responses were a fair sample of the Parish as a whole. Now the project is complete with the publication of this report, but this is only the start of a continual process intended to shape the future of our community.

Having completed the task of compiling and distributing the report, the Parish Plan Committee will disband, however individuals may become involved in other activities and action or focus groups moving forward.

The actions set out in this Report are based on the views of the parishioners. Some key actions concern the quality of services provided to the Parish and although the Parish Council already deals with some of these issues, a new fresh approach may be required and the report provides valuable supporting information for this. Others are actions the community can largely undertake themselves, with initial guidance, plus support and funding. The plan proposes voluntary action groups to tackle these, such as a speed/parking action group, a facilities and services action group, a roads/footpath action group, a Design Statement action group and a leisure/education action group. Indeed many volunteers will be required to tackle this work, either to participate or to lead and bring their skills to obtain results.

Without community involvement and participation the goals will not be reached. Encouragingly many have already stepped forward and volunteered to assist in a number of activities. These requests and offers have already been acknowledged and will be followed up, but more volunteers are still needed. It is recommended that The Parish Council oversees taking the plan forward, setting priorities, targets and following up on the delivery. They will carry out some tasks and bring together action groups to carry out others. Obtaining what respondents want is not as simple and easy as presenting reasonable justification, we are all aware that Local Authority budgets are being constantly challenged and reduced; we must also

remember that our country is still exposed to significant economic difficulties. Where there are common priorities, it may be effective to work in partnership with our neighbouring Parishes in order to combine resources and, hopefully, generate more influence. Persistence is the name of the game, successful outcomes will require a great deal of time and effort to build confidence and generate momentum.

Let us work together; to achieve what we've been told is wanted.



16. Action Plan

	Action Point	Action Owner	Priority	Timescale
1	Review all speed limits throughout the village to see where speed reductions would be beneficial and facilitate implementation where possible.	Parish Council plus proposed speed/parking action group.	High	Within 6 months
2	Investigate the provision of traffic calming measures such as "flashing 30mph signs" and speed bumps within the village.	Parish Council plus proposed speed/parking action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
3	Seek an increase in the regularity of speed checks at key points around the village.	Parish Council plus proposed speed/parking action group.	High	Within 6 months
4	Encourage greater use of enforcement actions where there is inappropriate parking creating problems for both drivers and pedestrians.	Parish Council plus proposed speed/parking action group.	Low	Within 12 months
5	Encourage all interested parties (e.g. School, parents and residents) to get involved to improve parking, dropping off and picking up at the School in Park Crescent.	Parish Council plus proposed speed/parking action group.	Medium	Within 9 months

	Action Point	Action Owner	Priority	Timescale
6	Carry out a study of parking issues in Church Road, between The Cock Inn and The Old Post Office and at the junction of Church Road and Stow Road.	Parish Council plus proposed speed/parking action group.	High	Within 6 months
7	Encourage increased police visibility within the village via a combination of vehicle patrols and beat policing. Promote existence of PCSO services including providing contact details.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
8	Investigate the possibility of improving local bus services to nearby villages, including possibility of diverting the service for commuters to and from Watlington Station.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	High	Within 6 months
9	Provide more information for train transport options, times, routes and destinations.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Low	Within 12 months
10	Address issue of road safety concerns, with improvements to pavements and footpaths.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	High	Within 6 months

	Action Point	Action Owner	Priority	Timescale
11	Investigate the possibility of provision of a footpath and street lighting from the village to Watlington railway station.	Parish Council plus roads/footpath action group.	Very High	Immediately
12	Investigate the possibility of establishing a community run Shop/Post Office open for a few hours daily.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
13	Investigate the possibility of establishing some form of takeaway, food outlet and/or food at the pub.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Low	Within 12 months
14	Liaise with relevant service providers to cure storm water build up, back flooding and blockages.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
15	Liaise with relevant service providers to consider connection to mains gas.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Low	Within 12 months
16	Review recycling amenities and locations.	Parish Council plus proposed facilities and services action group.	Medium	Within 9 months

	Action Point	Action Owner	Priority	Timescale
17	Review dog waste bins locations and options for the provision of additional bins and consider a communication plan reminding dog owners of their responsibilities.	Parish Council plus roads/footpath action group.	Low	Within 12 months
18	Review all roads in the Parish with respect to condition, quantity of potholes, the inadequacy of repairs, uneven surfaces, problems of flooding and facilitate improvement.	Parish Council plus roads/footpath action group.	Low	Within 12 months
19	Assess the effectiveness of street lighting within the village and suggest change accordingly.	Parish Council plus roads/footpath action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
20	Liaise with relevant service providers to investigate improvements to mobile phone reception within the village.	Parish Council plus others to be identified.	Medium	Within 9 months
21	Promote the creation of a Village Design Statement.	Parish Council plus Design Statement action group.	Low	Within 12 months

	Action Point	Action Owner	Priority	Timescale
22	Further affordable housing development for local people should be provided within the parish, subject to suitable areas being identified.	Parish Council plus Design Statement action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
23	Review the options for future use of the allotments.	Parish Council	Low	Within 12 months
24	Investigate the provision of local leisure and sporting activities	Parish Council plus leisure/education action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
25	Investigate the provision of part time adult education.	Parish Council plus leisure/education action group.	Medium	Within 9 months
26	Investigate the provision of a local dentist.	Parish Council	High	Within 6 months

This report was compiled by the Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen Parish Plan Committee using information from returned questionnaires.

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It is also available for viewing on The Parish Council Web Site: <http://wiggenhallstmarymagdalen.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/category/parish-plan/>