

Ewhurst and Ellens Green Neighbourhood Plan Survey 2015

Report of Results of the Ewhurst and Ellens Green Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey

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Ewhurst and Ellens Green Neighbourhood Plan Survey 2015

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1. BACKGROUND

A survey of the population for the Ewhurst and Ellens Green Parish took place over the summer of 2015.

The purpose of the survey was to inform the development and content of a Neighbourhood Plan to guide the use of land and buildings in the Parish so that it can:

- Take account of all impacts of development
- Allow the Parish communities to have their say in shaping planning policy and designating sites for development
- Specify local social, economic and environmental priorities for action
- Provide a mechanism for mediating interests in the plan making process
- Protect the natural and built heritage of the Parish.

To do this the Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group devised a survey for all residents to get their views on the Parish as it is currently and how they would like it to be in the future.

2. THE SURVEY

The survey questionnaire was devised to both collate information from residents about their current views on, and use of, Parish facilities and what they thought about specific areas of potential planning policy. In addition they were asked to consider a Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan and contribute their ideas for improvements to the Parish.

There are 923 households in the Parish and 2 questionnaire survey forms were delivered to each home door to door as well as further copies being made available from local collection points. This was to encourage multiple household members to fill in the survey, to capture the full range of views of residents. The survey forms also pointed to the possibility to fill in the survey on line via the Parish Council web site.

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A deadline of 7th September was in the end extended to 21st September to maximise the number of responses.

3. SURVEY RESPONDENTS

2,480 people live in the Parish in 923 households. When the survey closed, 452 responses had been received from 330 households with individuals in households responding via hard copy (339) and on line (113). This represents a 35.7% return from households in the Parish.

Location of Respondents

381 (84%) from Ewhurst (GU6 used as a proxy)

20 (4.4%) from Ellens Green (RH12 used as proxy)

51 (11.2%) no postcode provided

Gender Breakdown of respondents

Men 182 (40.2%)

Women 202 (44.6%)

No personal or gender details provided 68 (15%)

Age and Gender mix in households who responded.

The survey asked respondents to say how many people were in their household and of what age and sex. Their responses are shown below, indicating that the households who responded included approximately 40% of the Parish population.

	Under 18	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	70+	
Male	52	38	14	58	80	93	122	
Female	75	38	13	74	86	129	120	
TOTAL	127	76	27	132	166	222	242	992

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These results represent a reasonable basis for developing Neighbourhood Plan policy for further consultation based on Parishioners' views.

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4. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Vision Statement for the Neighbourhood Plan

The survey responses showed that there was overwhelming agreement with the Vision Statement developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which was:

“That Ewhurst and Ellens Green will accommodate change that retains and improves its rich biodiversity and rural setting and sustains its community - its people, its facilities and its heritage”.

Of the 436 who answered 407 (93.7%) agreed with it and 29 (6.65%) disagreed. 40 respondents did however make further comments and suggestions.

Many of these comments and suggestions related to qualifying and removing reference to change in the future or the extent to which change would be managed rather than accommodated. Others wished to rule out some kinds of development or specifically add facilities that should be protected.

Some of these comments suggest that a fuller understanding of the Neighbourhood Plan role in relation to decisions on development is needed within the Parish overall. It is not possible for some of these changes to be included in the vision since it would suggest that the Parish Council rather than the District will use the Neighbourhood Plan to make decisions on the management of future development or seeks to remove the need to balance the type and impact of development with its benefits when making development management decisions.

Most of the other comments can be addressed via policy development in the neighbourhood plan-making process regarding protection and retention of existing assets in the Neighbourhood Area.

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4.2 Community Facilities and Amenities

Survey respondents were asked about their use of the community facilities in the Parish. All the responses (446 of 452) are shown in Table 1. The kind of facilities available, how accessible they are in terms of opening hours and whether membership is required are obviously all factors for levels of use by respondents. As a result they do not straightforwardly represent the value that users put on them. They do however provide useful information for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to consider when devising future Neighbourhood Plan policy and other work they are doing on the condition and detail of the facilities on offer.

The survey results for the regularity of use of current facilities showed the *least* used facilities as those concerned with play, some sports (bowls) and gardening (allotments).

This partly reflects the age profile of the Parish, the restricted nature of public access to the facilities (allotments) or their relevance to those without children (play areas). In contrast, facilities associated with the outdoors overall were amongst the most used, although (unsurprisingly given the weather driven nature of their use) on a less regular basis.

The best used were facilities like public footpaths and bridleways, the Hurtwood, the Bull's Head pub, and significant frequent use of the Hazelbank Stores by almost all respondents - only 14 said they "rarely" or "never" used it.

For community buildings and leisure activity, the Village Hall, the Recreation Ground, the Parish Church and Village Hall car park were the most popular, with over half of respondents making use of them "often" or "sometimes."

Respondents also added what they considered to be important community facilities or services which had not been included in the list of facilities. These were:

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- Bare Beauty
- Chiropodists
- CountryWatch
- Cridfords Garage
- Eden Spa
- Hairdressers
- Neighbourhood watch
- Parish Website
- Tennis Courts
- The Old Rectory
- The Vets
- Toddler groups at Baptist Church and Wilson Room

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Table 1 : Use of Community Facilities in the Parish by respondents

Community Facility	Level of Use (%)			
	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Allotments	5.43	2.07	2.58	89.92
Baptist Church	4.12	13.92	14.95	67.01
Bowls Club	5.37	2.3	6.91	85.42
Bull's Head Pub	14.08	49.88	28.4	7.64
Bus Service	14.59	34.21	25.6	25.6
Cricket Ground	8.08	12.63	16.16	63.13
Cricket Pavilion	5.12	10.49	212.79	71.61
Downhurst Road Children's Play Area	3.11	8.55	7.77	80.57
Ellens Green Memorial Hall	3.82	7.89	20.1	68.19
Ellens Green Playground	1.27	3.05	7.12	88.55
EW CARE	4.86	7.93	5.37	81.84
Ewhurst Cemetery	6.49	11.43	14.81	67.27
Ewhurst Infants' School	6.70	6.19	14.18	72.94
EYSC	7.57	25.85	18.80	47.78
Glebe Community Centre	6.05	22.67	25.44	45.84
Hazelbank Stores	76.07	20.77	2.71	0.45
Hurtwood Control Walking/cycling	46.27	27.23	8.19	18.31
Hurtwood Polo Club	8.78	32.44	36.59	22.2
Parish Church of St Peter and Paul	20.15	32.43	28.01	19.41
Public Bridleways	54.83	21.26	7.00	16.91
Public Footpaths	68.06	23.38	6.25	2.31
Recreation Ground	33.89	37.26	18.51	10.34
Sayers Croft Trust	5.03	22.86	28.89	43.22
Village Club	3.01	8.02	16.04	72.93
Village Hall	22	45.48	18.09	14.43

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Village Hall Car Park	21.03	38.14	20.54	20.29
Wilson Room	14	18.75	25.25	44.0
Windmill Inn	0.25	8.15	30.86	60.74

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4.2.1 Improving the Parish - Community Facilities

129 comments were made about facilities in the Parish. Many called for protection of what already exists.

The greatest number of comments concerned the Glebe Centre, Ellens Green and Ewhurst Village Halls, which suggested that most people felt were in need of improvement and in the case of Ewhurst, in need of expansion too (with associated car parking). Further off-street car parking was mentioned too.

Improvements to existing sports facilities were also mentioned to increase current access (tennis courts) usability (recreation ground) and value as social meeting points (A café was suggested for the recreation ground).

Sport facilities were felt not to cater for older young people so improvements to existing playgrounds and provision of a skate park were suggested.

The provision of a Post Office was classified by many comments as a community facility with over 25 comments specifically identifying this need in the Parish, with others suggesting the need for public toilets to be provided if shopping and leisure assets in the Parish were to benefit from maximum use.

A variety of comments suggested that better co-ordination or even merger of the services offered at each of the various facilities could be considered. Many also suggested that better promotion of the facilities available to both residents and businesses could potentially achieve greater use.

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4.3 Housing in the Parish

4.3.1 Current Housing Types/Tenure and Future Needs

The survey asked respondents to indicate what type, size and tenure of home they were in now and what they and other members of their household might need in the future. This was designed to establish what kind of housing demand would be needed for existing households (including emerging households) in the future to supplement the Housing Needs Survey¹ undertaken in 2013.

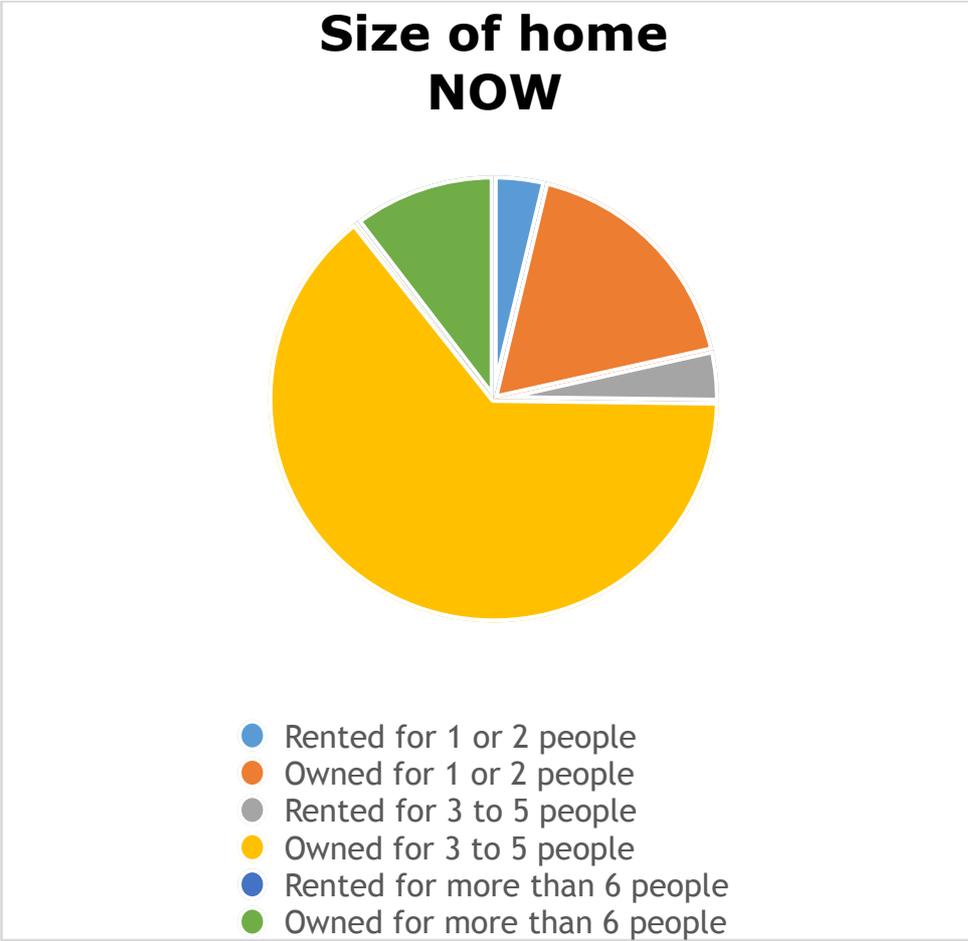
Type of Home	Now		Future	
	Owned	Rented	Owned	Rented
Flat	1	1	10	8
Maisonette	1	0	2	1
Bungalow (detached)	99	9	65	6
Bungalow (semi-detached or terraced)	3	9	15	7
Fixed mobile home	1	0	1	0
Detached house	203	6	119	6
Semi-detached house	82	6	44	9
Terraced house	14	3	7	7
Supported/sheltered housing	0	0	25	7
Care home	0	0	9	13

In terms of housing type there were no significant changes required by those who responded - bungalows and detached or semi-detached houses remained popular though flats were clearly seen as a potential future option that was acceptable to some people.

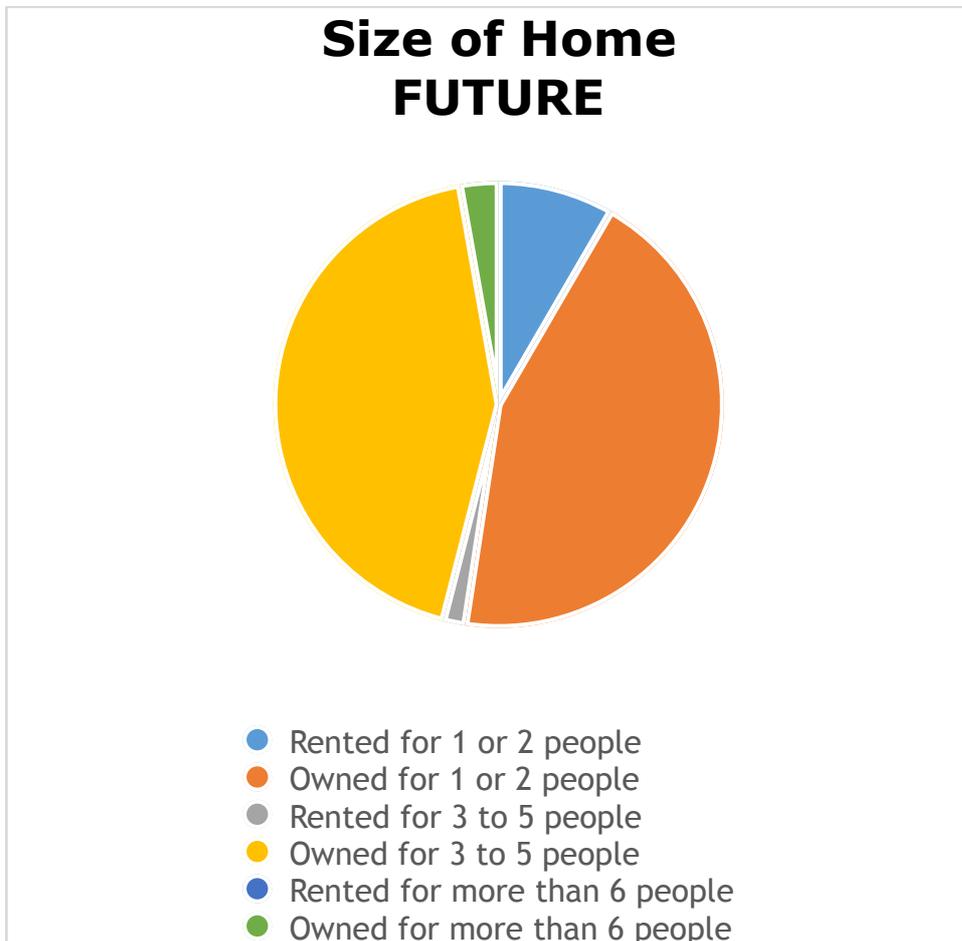
As shown in the pie charts below, the survey results show that there is a need amongst respondents in the future for both smaller homes and sheltered/care home provision in both tenures with a number wishing to downsize from larger properties.

¹ Louise Williams Surrey Community Action (2013) "Housing Needs Survey"

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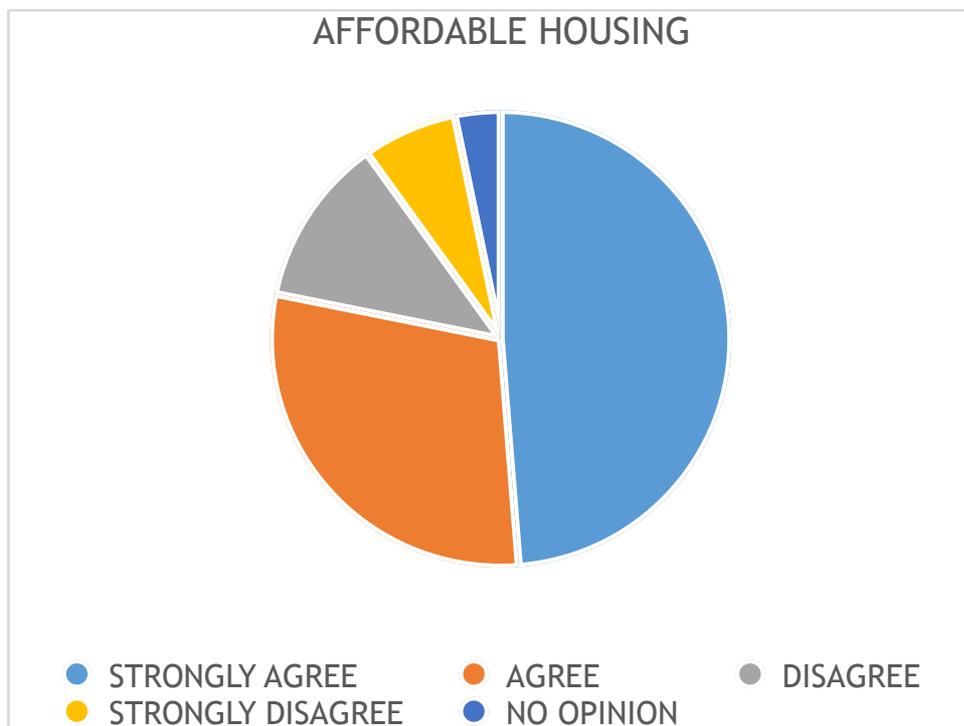
4.3.2 Affordable housing

People were asked to indicate the strength of their opinion about affordable housing. This creates some difficulty since the government definition (See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/definitions-of-general-housing-terms#social-and-affordable-housing>) for the purposes of neighbourhood and district level planning is not what most people think of as affordable.

In order to gauge local views about this respondents were asked whether all housing development in the Parish should have an element of affordable homes (defined on the survey form as being “available for sale or rent at less than full market value”). Over 78% of respondents either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that all housing

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development in the Parish should have an element of affordable homes. As the questionnaire definition of affordable housing is not the same as that used for planning purposes - it uses the word affordable to mean cheaper or less costly - it is possible that some people when responding quite simply mean housing should be cheaper to buy and rent



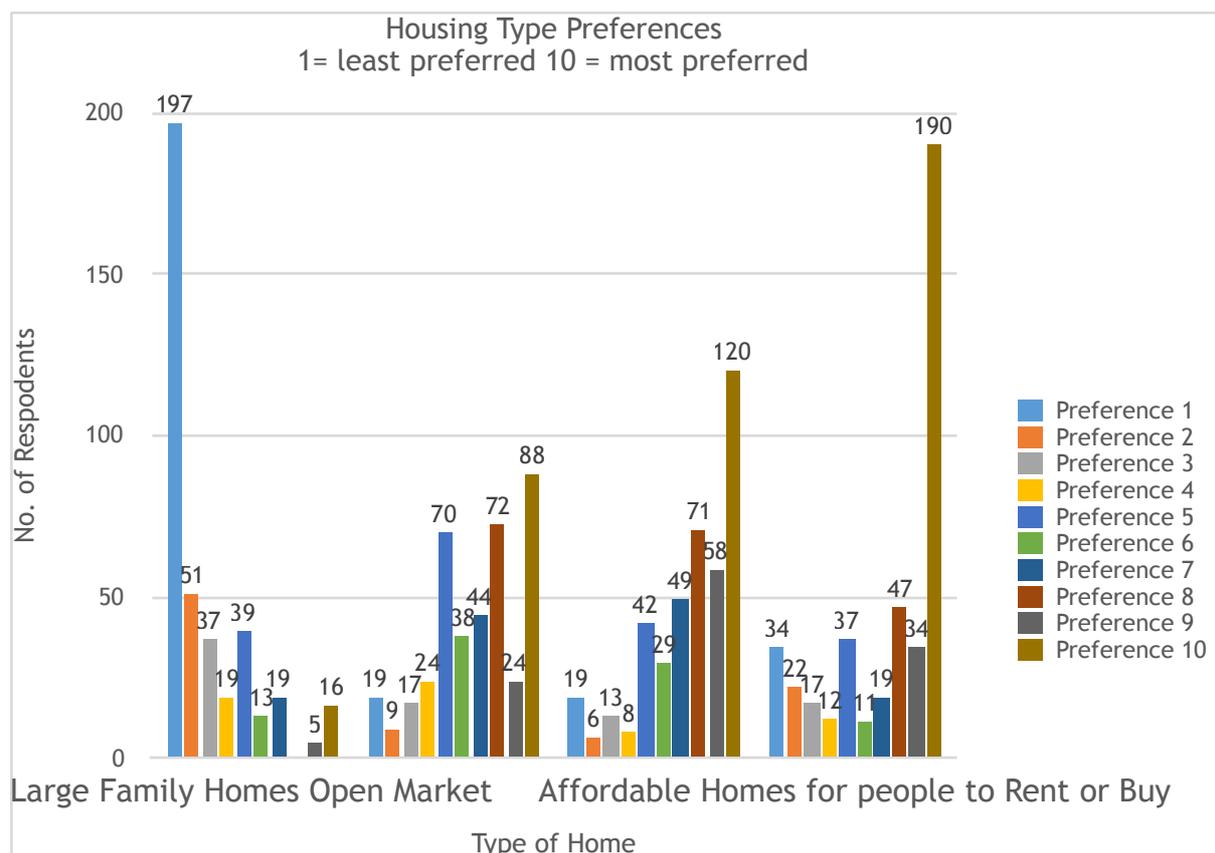
4.4.2. Opinions on Future Housing Types

When asked about preferences for housing types in the future 434 people responded with their preferences expressed from 1 (least preferred) to 10 (most preferred).

The results show that large family homes (for up to 6 people) sold on the open market were the least preferred type by 44.8% of respondents. Smaller homes (for 4 people) for sale on the open market and affordable homes for people to rent or buy were the most favoured.

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The following chart shows the preferences expressed based on numbers of respondents.



4.3.2 Improving the Parish - Housing

When asked for suggestions to improve the Parish, housing attracted 226 comments from respondents.

Responses ranged considerably from the type and design of houses to the need for homes that people can afford. Over 50 comments were made in relation to the need for homes to house the elderly and younger families including for children who were growing up in the village and would need access to such accommodation in the future. Over 60 comments focussed on their preference for smaller homes and

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development sites and 21 emphasised in expressing their views that brownfield and infill sites within the settlement boundaries should be a priority.

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4.4 Business in the Parish

When people were asked whether they thought the Neighbourhood Plan should make provision for small and start-up businesses, 86.4% said yes.

4.4.1 Improvements to the Parish - Business

When asked what specific suggestions they had to make about business in the Parish, 127 comments were made.

Most comments were generic, making the point that this would create/retain jobs and enable people to work locally which would limit the need for travel.

Some responses qualified support for business provision to focus on small scale employment space development that was not noisy or polluting and that was tailored to the needs of the self-employed/homeworkers like co-working or managed workspace in small sizes.

Some respondents chose to make suggestions about the types of businesses they felt were needed and others made comments about potential locations for new provision.

In terms of businesses people felt were needed in the Parish, the list was as follows:

- Post Office (24 comments)
- Chemist (2)
- Café/tea rooms (3)
- Hotel (1)
- Bicycle repairs (2)
- Small tradesmen - plumbers, electricians (2)
- Crafts (2)

Three sites were suggested for investigation for employment use - Hurtwood Polo Club, The Old Brickworks Site and the end of Williams Place

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4.5 Transport in the Parish

The survey asked respondents to say whether they travelled outside the Parish for some facilities or services, how they got there and if they worked, how they travelled to work.

Unsurprisingly, given the rural nature of the Parish, 98.61% of people surveyed went out of the Parish for some services and 94% of them went by car. For those who worked 89.96% went by car.

The Survey asked respondents to make specific suggestions about transport in the Parish by Mode of transport. The response rates were as follows:

	No. of Comments		No. of Comments
Roads	355	Motorcycles	48
Buses	233	Walking	191
Cycles	174	Other	52

There were some comments that were similar across all modes of transport and formed the majority of comments overall:

- Pot holes, surface and stile repairs were needed
- Speed of all vehicles needed to be limited
- Signage needed improving to warn vulnerable roads users (cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians) of dangers
- Plant/Shrub maintenance adjacent to routes was needed to maintain sight lines and keep routes free from obstruction

Some mode-specific comments were:

Buses

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- Extension of some existing routes, increased frequency and later services
- New routes needed to Dorking, Guildford and Horsham
- Location of some stops was unsafe/inconvenient for older people and those with children
- Re-consideration of the location of some bus turning points in the Parish was needed

Cycling

- Cycle races needed to be limited due to pressure of use from other roads users
- Separate track provision to enable Shere Road to be bike free for the safety of cyclists.

4.5.1 Improving the Parish - Transport

Many people did not feel that reliance on the car in the Parish was sustainable into the future.

When the survey asked respondents to say what transport improvements were needed for the future in Ewhurst and Ellens Green, traffic and transport attracted 224 comments. Many of these comments re-iterated those that were supplied for suggestions to improve each mode of travel:

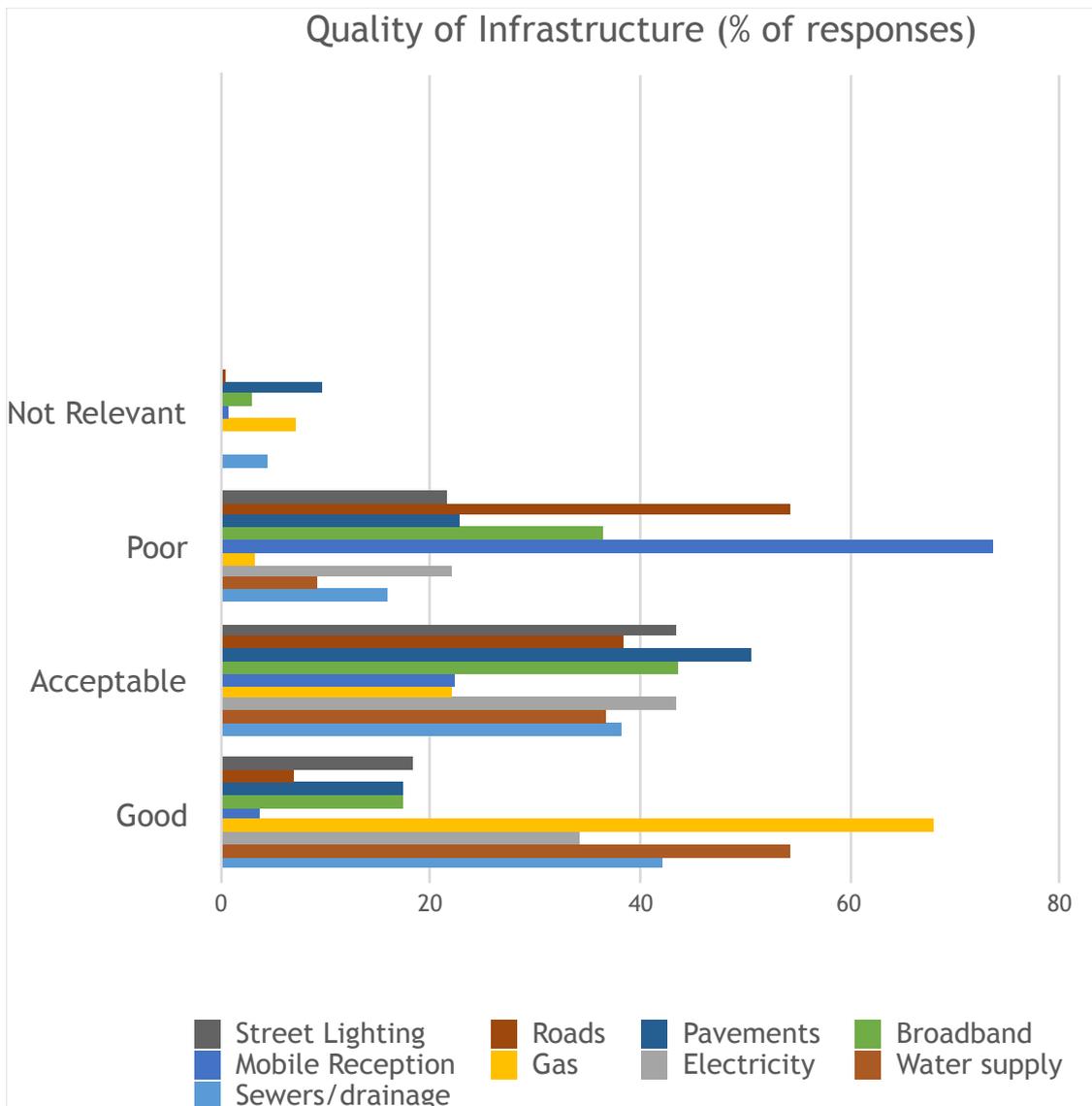
- 76 comments regarded bus service frequency, coverage and cost as in need of improvement, particularly to cater for an ageing population in the future.
- The same number felt that speed of traffic was an issue of safety for all road users and that roads needed improving, including with better maintenance and repairs.
- 35 comments suggested traffic calming and restrictions on heavy good vehicles as a way to deal with these issues.

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4.6 Infrastructure in the Parish

The survey asked respondents to grade the infrastructure services where they lived as “Good”, “Acceptable” or “Poor”

As a rural Parish some infrastructure types vary in relevance for people who responded. Those outside the main village areas may not have sewage or other utility connections, street lighting or pavements which is why some responses indicated that they were not relevant. For others the key areas of infrastructure that were regarded as poor were electricity, broadband and mobile telephone reception.



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4.6.1 Improving the Parish - Utilities and Infrastructure

When asked about suggestions for improvements to infrastructure - the 178 comments made reflected respondents' views about the adequacy of provision with over 100 comments related to improvements to broadband speed and mobile reception, with many comments making the connection between the need for this improvement and their role to support business and employment development.

Drainage and power supply stability were also mentioned in 28 comments and 6 emphasised the need for education and health infrastructure to keep pace with any development in the future.

One mention was made of improving green space infrastructure. It was suggested that the Old Brickworks should be made into a Nature Reserve in partnership with Sayers Croft.

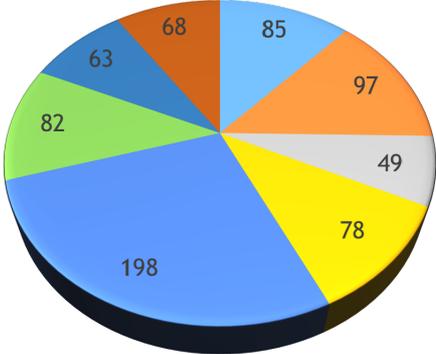
4.7 Support for Energy Production

The survey asked respondents to indicate what types of sustainable energy generation they would support from a range of types or to indicate whether they did not know or had no opinion on the subject.

The survey results showed considerable support from respondents who felt able to answer with solar types of production as the most popular, although a significant number of respondents were opposed to all kinds (13.9%) or had no opinion/did not know (15%).

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Support for Energy
Production (No. of
responses)



- Biomass
- Solar Farms
- None of the Above
- Geothermal
- Solar Panels
- Don't know/No opinion
- Shale Gas
- Wind

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8. Environment and Heritage in the Parish

When respondents were asked for their suggestions to improve the environment and heritage of the Parish, 132 comments were made.

Overwhelmingly these comments called for protection of all the current heritage and environmental assets in the Parish. Specific facilities that were mentioned were Sayers Croft, along with specific features such as views of the landscape, visibility of the night sky, hedgerows and trees.

But there was also concern to work with landowners at Pitch Hill, Shere Manor and Westland Farm to preserve current public access to their land and to consider designation of new Conservation Areas.

In addition views that were often repeated related to good maintenance of environment and heritage assets if they were to be protected into the future.

Comment on heritage and environment and new development also resulted in a re-iteration of concerns about merging with adjacent villages and the need for any new development to retain a rural feel, including careful consideration of street lighting to reduce light pollution that would inhibit views of the stars.

Noise and pollution from aircraft and fear of any extension to Gatwick's operations were also mentioned.

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4.9 Ewhurst and Ellens Green Now and in the Future

The relative volume of suggestions and comments for improvements to the Parish covered in previous sections to some extent may reflect the priorities of respondents for improvements in the Parish.

In addition however, the survey asked respondents to comment on Ewhurst and Ellens Green now and how it should be in the future. This question attracted both concerns for the future and additional suggestions for improvements.

Of the 188 comments made, the majority related to the concern that what they most loved about the Parish would be lost in the future - its rural feel, beauty, character and village scale which was felt to engender the friendly community life of the villages.

A significant number of comments also referred to a concern that Cranleigh and Ewhurst could “merge” and as a result lose their distinctiveness as separate settlements.

Others found the issue of housing affordability as a very difficult thing to address. Some felt that homes needed to be affordable in perpetuity (not just for initial buyers) and that it was not sustainable to assume that all the children of all those who currently live in the Parish to be accommodated in the future.

Whilst some wanted to preserve the Parish from all development and maintain the status quo, many however accepted the need for development of housing - particularly for younger people/families - to even out the age spread in the Parish and to enable older people to downsize as they age.

Some illustrated these points with reference to the proposed development of the Polo Club site which was cited as a proposal that would not meet local needs and would exacerbate problems of parking and traffic in the Parish.

The scale and type of any new development was particularly focussed upon - with most wanting no great increase in numbers of homes and wanting small scale developments, not large or “mass” development as

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some described it. Others referred to the lack of local need (rather than market demand) for large “high end” dwellings.

A background to this was the fear of the impact of new development on existing infrastructure like increased traffic, noise, and pollution and pressure on health and education services. It was felt that there was a need for new infrastructure to be in place - schools, transport of all types and health facilities - to support any new development either before or as part of new development taking place.

In relation to proposed improvements to Ewhurst and Ellens Green some made specific suggestions about development sites and suggestions for new/additional facilities. Those mentioned were:

- Consider development of part of the recreation ground
- Consider expansion of the built area of Ellens Green Village and provide more facilities for residents
- Remove the Porsche garage and use the site for housing
- New shops - post office, hairdressers, pub, cafe
- New services - to support the elderly and encourage cross-generation contact
- New public benches and improved planting of green spaces
- Speed reduction and traffic calming
- Improved maintenance of the public realm, roads and parking

It is true to say however that many other comments were protective in nature with the need to retain green spaces for their contribution to wildlife and biodiversity being mentioned in particular.

As is common with most open questions about improving places, some respondents also raised a number of specific complaints about people’s behaviour - pet control around livestock, cycling competitions, equestrians and “newcomers” who were felt by some to provide a limited contribution to the life of the community.

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5. CONCLUSIONS

The survey results provide a very helpful contribution to the work of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the Working Groups which have been established to take forward the development of the Neighbourhood plan by:

- Providing suggestions in relation to sites in the Parish for further investigation
- Providing detailed suggestions and ideas for the location of improvements to transport, enhancements to community facilities
- Providing overall views and attitudes towards types of development and land uses in the Parish. These can help guide further community consultation and involvement work on the Neighbourhood Plan as it develops where views are not clear cut and priorities require further detailed investigation.