



Woodnewton Parish Plan



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Health

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Summary





The purpose of the Parish Plan

In 1989 the then Parish Council prepared a Parish Plan which was used to guide their actions when responding to consultations from District and County Councils. In 2000 a Government White Paper focused again on Parish Plans and grants were made available for the preparation and production of plans. In 2004 there were many consultative documents sent to the Parish Council and on the issue of development a public meeting was held. Much interest was shown and was of great benefit to the Parish Council when making their responses. This led to the suggestion that the opportunity to prepare a new Parish Plan should be taken. The Parish Council agreed that should it be possible to form a steering group they would be happy to support. The aim was to give the people of Woodnewton the opportunity to have input into the evolution of their own village with the objective being to influence local and regional policy decisions through a substantial survey of views.

How we did it

The Steering Group was formed in January 2006 and grant aid was given to the group known as Woodnewton Appraisal Group (WAG) to prepare and produce a report. A substantial amount of feedback from the 'Village Have Your Say Day' in June 2006 helped to focus on the issues that concerned the majority of people. WAG produced a questionnaire based on these issues and therefore specifically for the needs and aspirations of Woodnewton. The questionnaires were distributed to all houses in the village. There was a general household questionnaire and an individual one for all members of the household aged 11 and over. For the under 11's there was a special questionnaire. In total more than 80% of the households responded which gave a response rate of almost 70% of the population of the village. This response level means that the report is based on data of very reasonable accuracy. The recommendations on how to deal with the issues contained in the report flow from the feedback at the 'Have Your Say Day' and the questionnaire. These recommendations form the Village

Action Plan. The plan is not set in stone and it will be reviewed, modified and adapted as required.

Who has produced the plan?

Although the Steering Group have overseen the development of the plan and have contributed substantial amounts of voluntary time and effort to the project, the vital contributors were those that attended the 'Have Your Say Day' and completed the questionnaires. They aired their views, expressed opinions and made suggestions on the issues affecting Woodnewton. Without their involvement in our community there would be no plan.

What happens now?

This plan contains a number of recommendations that the community want implemented. The Parish Plan represents an agreement between the community and the Parish Council as to how we would like Woodnewton to develop in the future. The Parish Plan is not a guarantee of immediate action on all areas affected by policy decisions at central, regional, county and district level. What the Plan will do is provide those bodies with a very clear view of the needs and expectations of our community.

Will the Plan have an effect?

If all or even some of the recommendations contained in the Plan are achieved then clearly the village will be a better place to live. It will be necessary to prioritise the recommendations because some issues will require more urgent action. A high priority though does not necessarily mean rapid action as some will need considerable input of resources and co-operation from other authorities.

The ongoing success of this Parish Plan project can only be assured if the whole community is involved.

Introduction



Acknowledgments and Thanks

The people of Woodnewton for their enthusiastic participation in the 'Have Your Say Day' and the Questionnaire survey

Woodnewton Appraisal Group

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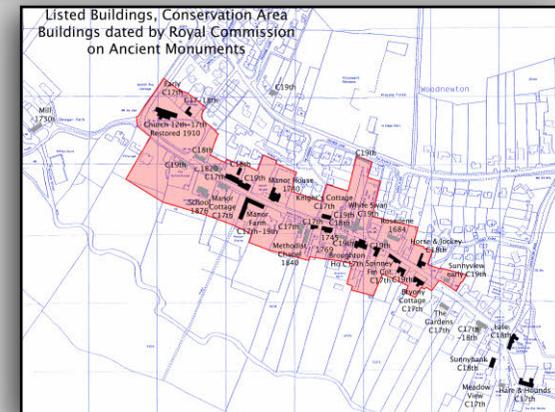


Like most rural villages in middle England, Woodnewton has a long history, starting with a mention in the Domesday Book as Niewtone with a population of about 70. At this time it was part of an estate owned by the Sheriff of Huntingdon. Over the centuries until 1620 the village changed ownership as a result of being bequeathed with various titles and changing hands through marriage. In 1620 the Manor came through marriage to Sir Francis Fane who later became the Earl of Westmorland.

In 1735 a wooden bridge was built to cross the Willow Brook and in 1778 the Earl enclosed the parish under the Enclosures Act. In 1840 the Wesleyan Chapel was built (now a Pottery and Gallery), followed in 1876 by the village School (demolished in 2006). In 1886 the current brick bridge was built over the Willow Brook, and in 1894 the Parish Council was founded. Allotments were created in 1919.

Housing development started in the 1950's with Sycamore Close, with Orchard lane, St Mary's Close, Wades Close, The Paddock and Lindsey Close all following over the next thirty years. In 1997 the last major development finished with the completion of Pridmore Close. In the years to 2007 there has been a small amount of in-filling and rebuilding.

A large majority of respondents valued the heritage and environment of Woodnewton and would be very concerned by any major threats which may change the slowly evolving nature of the village.



Recommendations

Strong efforts will be made to protect and conserve the values and heritage of the village.

Any major development in and around the village would be unpopular and resisted.

Encourage the compilation of a historical record of the village using recent research and other records.



The majority of questionnaire responses indicate that the attractive environment and properties within the village are what brings people here. It is these qualities that lead people to remain in Woodnewton for some considerable time. The responses indicate a very stable community with 70% of the population having been resident for at least 6 years. In addition, 20% of the population have lived in Woodnewton for over 25 years.

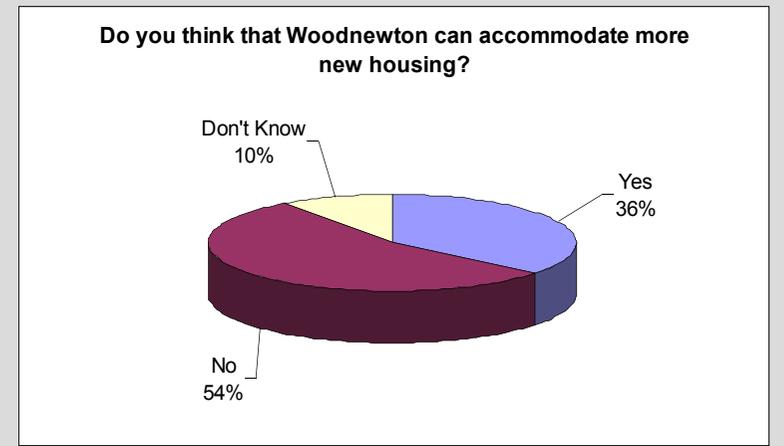
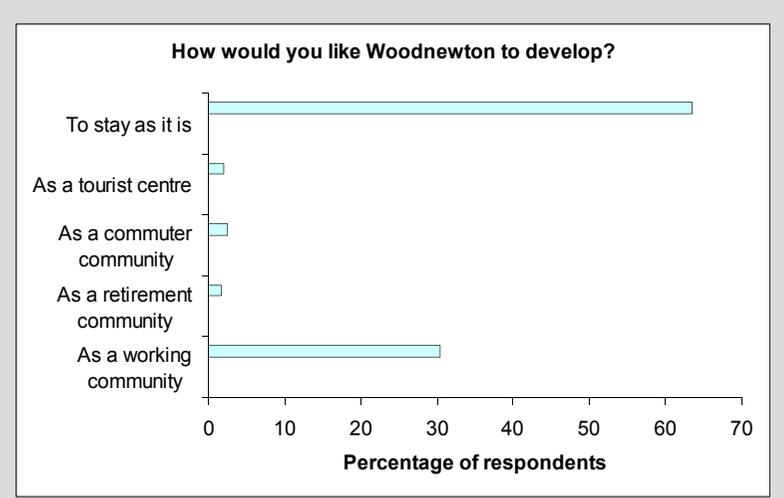
Focusing on the built environment, Woodnewton is typical of many villages, in having a wide variety of dwellings, but they are overwhelmingly detached properties. A large proportion of the main street falls within a conservation area.

The large majority of people living in the village feel that their present accommodation suits their needs. Equally, there are very few families where

someone is looking for alternative accommodation.

A clear majority of responses are opposed to any further housing development in Woodnewton. In addition, a similar majority believe that further housing would spoil the environment in and around Woodnewton. Those respondents who believe that Woodnewton could accommodate more housing are equally split between homes for young people, small family homes and affordable housing.

Overall, the questionnaire results present a view that the housing now available in Woodnewton is adequate in quantity and type to meet the needs of the majority of residents for some years to come.



Recommendations		
That the quality and mix of dwellings now available in Woodnewton is sufficient for short/medium term needs.	Further large scale housing development in or around the village is not required for local needs and could not be supported by local services, transport and employment opportunities.	If housing was imposed on the village it should be small scale development of affordable homes for young people and small families.

Education



Since the closure of Woodnewton School in 1990 all education has taken place outside the Village.

Nassington/Yarwell pre-school and Oundle Community pre-school provide education for the 3 to 5 year age range. Of those responding about half of children in this age range attend one of these facilities. There are also private pre-school groups and mother/toddler groups run in the Village at the Village Hall. Most of the children in the age range receive some form of pre-school education.

Northamptonshire Education Department currently operates a three-tier system in the Woodnewton area.

Primary Education (5-9 years) is available at Nassington and Kings Cliffe Middle (9-13 years) at Oundle and Kings Cliffe.

Secondary schooling (13-18 years) is at Prince William School, Oundle.

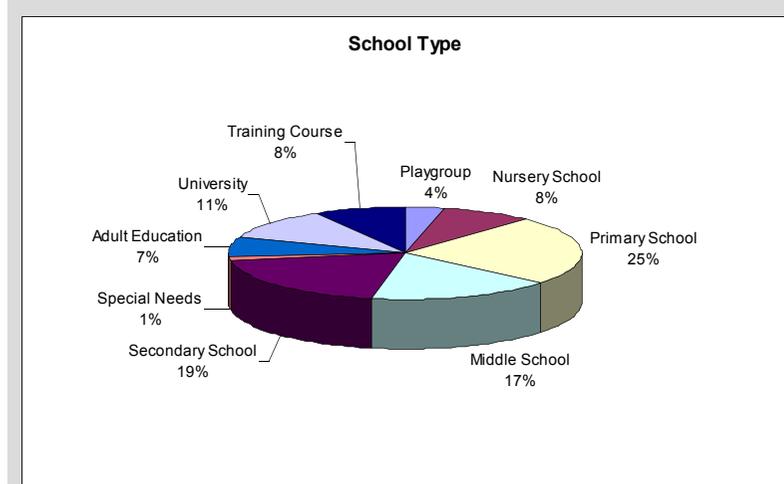
Whilst some parents take their children to school, school buses are provided by the education authority.

Public Schools in Oundle and Stamford provide Junior and Secondary Education.

The survey shows 20 children in Primary education, 14 in Middle school and 16 in Secondary School. No further information was sought.

Further Education (16+) is available at Peterborough College and also in Corby and Northampton.

A range of day/evening courses are run in local schools and village halls. There is no such provision in Woodnewton at present. The local pottery offers lessons on a Tuesday. A handful of villagers attend Adult Education classes, a small number are on Training courses and a few are at University.



Recommendations

Parish Council to encourage local provision of pre-school groups such as Mother / toddlers.

Parish Council to promote access to educational holiday activities within the Village.

Adult education providers to be encouraged to use the Village Hall facility.

Employment



Woodnewton does not present any significant opportunities for employment.

Responses indicate that there are at least 29 small businesses of which two thirds employ between 1 and 3 staff. Small businesses accounted for 20% of those in employment.

Most businesses provide unspecified services with Financial/Professional services, Agriculture/Horticulture and Retail accounting for the rest. Only one business is linked with Tourism, this being a recently opened 'Bed and Breakfast' establishment.

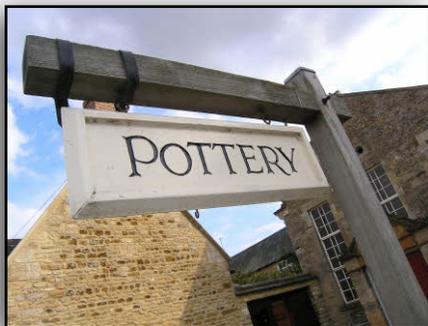
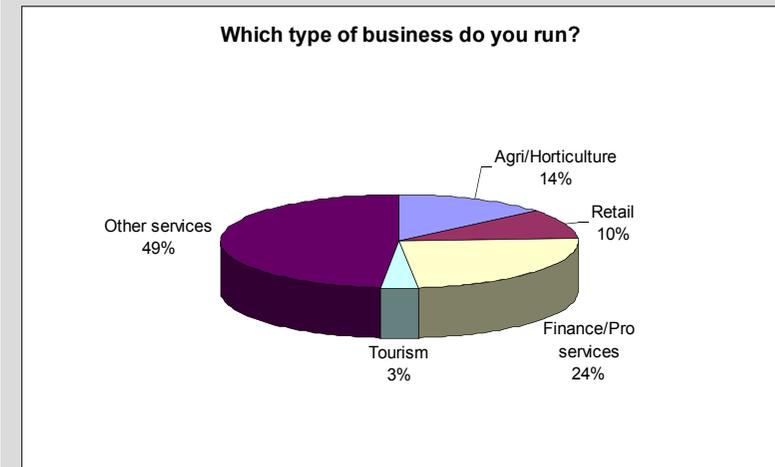
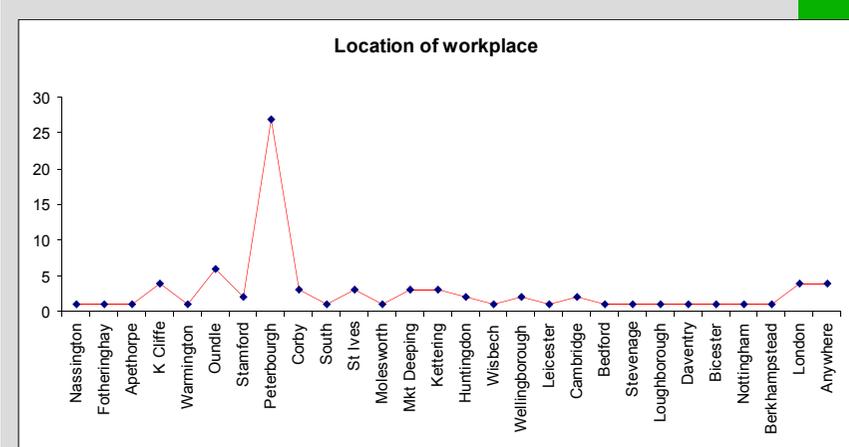
Of those working outside the Village most work within 30 miles of Woodnewton. The majority work in Peterborough and its environs whilst a small number travel up to 50 miles and a few commute to London

Most people travel to work by car or motorcycle. Of the small numbers who do use public transport, those who travel by train would no doubt access this by car.

Broadband facilities were introduced to the village in 2004 after lobbying by Villagers supported by the Parish Council. This is seen as a major factor in enabling small businesses and home working.

Although the largest single group of people who responded to the questionnaire were in the 25-60 age range, the number of retirees and not answered outnumbered those in employment.

The overall response indicates that support for and against any growth in small businesses and tourism is balanced at 50:50.



Recommendations

A business directory to be produced to promote local businesses.

Support and encouragement of the Parish Council to be given to technological advances which serve to promote homeworking and small businesses.

Publicise existing social transport schemes to allow young and disabled people access to employment opportunities.



The Doctors' Surgeries at Oundle and Wansford provide health care for more than 95% of the Woodnewton population. The Wansford practice also has a surgery in Kings Cliffe. A number of services are attached to these practices including Pharmacies, Nurses, District Nurses and Midwives.

A range of Clinics are also available. These include child and family guidance, chiropody, physiotherapy dietetics and counselling.

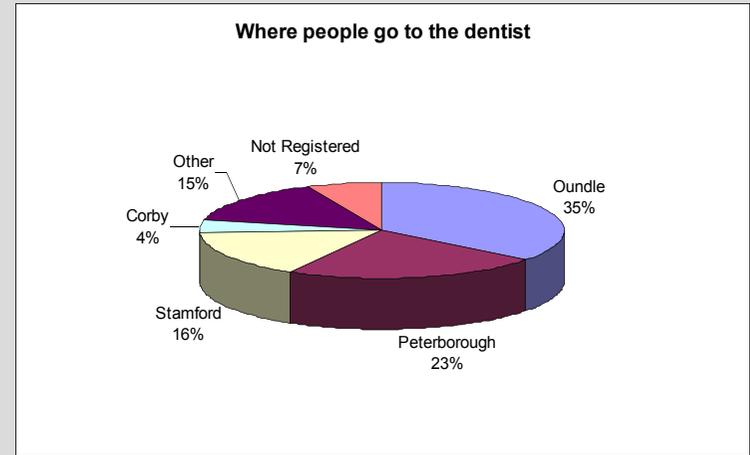
There is an NHS walk-in Centre in the Rivergate Centre in Peterborough. This is open from 7am to 10pm. Out of hours services for the Doctors Surgery are provided by Rivergate Centre. The nearest 24hr A&E is at Peterborough District Hospital.

Access to Dental Services is more varied. Until 2006 there was NHS provision in Oundle. This practice now provides private care only, nevertheless a large number of villagers are patients.

Dental Service provision must now be sought further away from Woodnewton. Peterborough and Stamford are the closest locations for NHS dental care and a reasonable proportion of Villagers are registered at one or other of these locations.

A number of people are registered at practices elsewhere perhaps reflecting registration at premises near to work locations. This may also be because there are waiting lists for registration at dental practices in Stamford and Peterborough. There is a walk-in Dental Practice in Peterborough. It must be noted that a significant number of people are not registered.

The majority of people have indicated that they do not have problems accessing Health Care (Hospitals, Doctors, Chemists, Dentists etc). There was though a significant proportion of people who reported that they often had problems attending health care facilities despite the availability of community transport schemes.



Recommendations

Parish Council to liaise with local Health Service providers to ensure awareness of services.

Parish Council to press for better locally based provision of health service provision, in particular Dental Services.

Parish Council to require Community Transport providers to actively promote their schemes to ensure knowledge of availability and enable better access to services.

Recreation and Leisure



The Village Hall was erected in 1991, after fundraising, and is run by a Committee who are responsible for the hiring and upkeep. They produce a Village Newsletter and are supported in this by the Parish Council. The Parish Council also provide allotments for which demand has increased to such an extent that there is now a waiting list.

The children's playground was installed at around the same time as the Hall was built, again after local fundraising. There is an area for younger children, which is fenced off. Recent fundraising will provide new equipment for the older children. Most people feel that the playground facilities are good/reasonable.

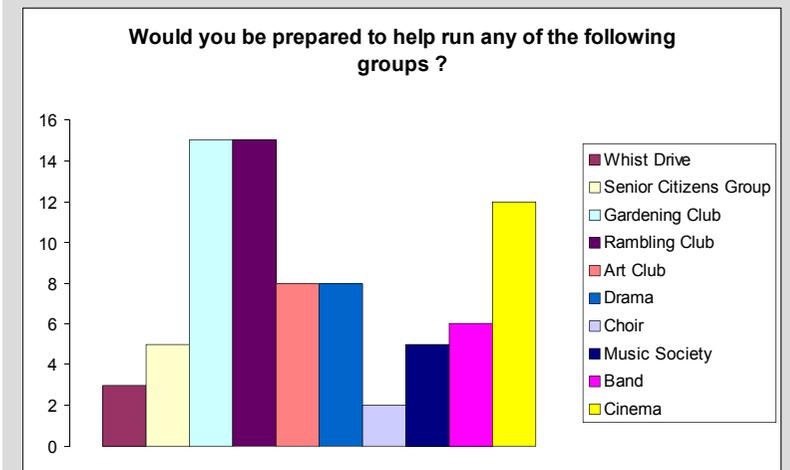
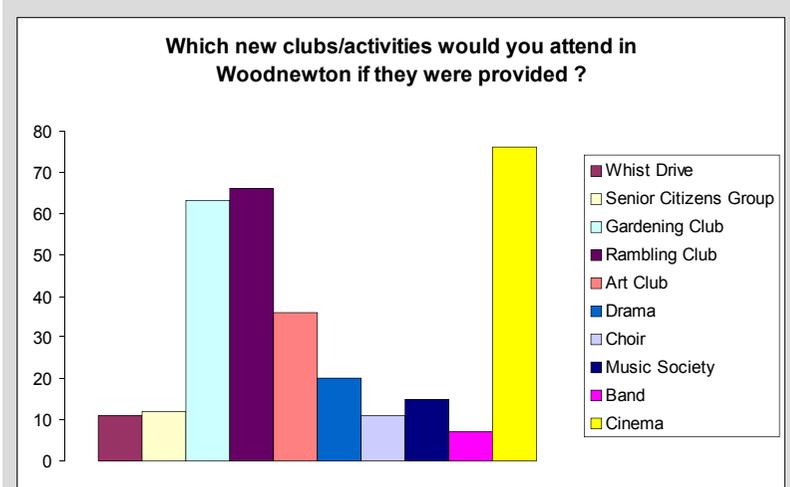
Within the village, the local public house has boules and darts teams; films are occasionally shown in the Village Hall and recently a ladies rounders group has started. In addition, many respondents are aware of aerobics and playgroup activities which take place in the Village Hall. Nevertheless, most people access leisure and recreation facilities outside the village. Of those who indicated that they did not participate in sports activities most

said that their interests were not catered for or that they did not want to participate. Indications from the questionnaire are that people would like to see a Gardening club and a Ramblers club set up, as well as regular films shown. For these, there are enough people willing to help organise them. Suggestions were also made for other possible activities and how provision could be improved.

Whilst many did not have a view on social facilities those who did felt that provision was poor, particularly for the 0 to 16 age group and the over 60's.

A separate Questionnaire for the under 10's got a reasonable level of response. Most activities for this age group were outside the village. There was a clear response to provide more for the 11 to 16 year olds either by extension of the playing field facilities or by provision of clubs/activities in the Village Hall.

It is apparent that better provision of activities and social events for the under 16's and the over 60's would contribute to the social structure of the village.



Recommendations

Parish Council to encourage and support improvements in Social Provision in the Village.

Village Social Committee to be set up to actively develop social activities with particular reference for Young people and the over 60's.

Analysis of the children's questionnaire to be undertaken and feedback to be provided via the village newsletter and Parish Council.

Shopping



No distinction was made in the questionnaire as to the type of shopping so the responses cover all needs.

Most Villagers shop in Oundle and/or Peterborough. A few people shop in Stamford, local Farmers Markets and less still making use of the shops in Nassington and Kings Cliffe. A small number indicated that they use the Internet to shop.

Other than the areas already identified there were a variety of other shopping areas which roughly correlated with work locations or routes home.

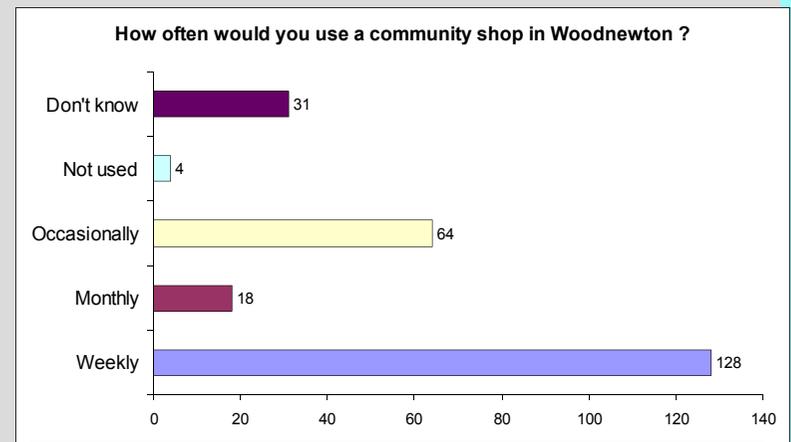
The village is currently supplied by a number of mobile services which include:

- Library – every third Wednesday
- Baker – From Kings Cliffe, delivers telephone orders.
- Nelsons Butchers, (includes some grocery) (Wednesday and Friday morning)

Fishmonger – (Thursday morning)

Very few people use these services regularly and the overwhelming majority do not use them at any time. The typical response was that the service came 'at the wrong time' or that people were 'unaware of the service'. In addition, whilst slightly over half of the responses suggested that people would use a Community shop on at least a weekly basis the remainder consisted of low use, no use or don't know. A few people are able to offer help with accounts, filling shelves and fetching supplies and a few offered to do counter work. However the numbers able to help were very low.

The existing shopping and working patterns and the low use of the shops in the nearby villages make it doubtful whether a Community shop would be economically viable. Indeed it could have a detrimental impact on existing services.



Recommendations

Information on the availability of mobile services and local shops/farm shops to be given to all villagers.

Consider a feasibility study into the provision of a Community shop and the impact on current services.

Information on transport provision for shopping to be provided in order to ensure access for all to local services.

Crime Prevention/Occurrence



Woodnewton does not suffer from significant levels of crime, but just over two thirds of those questioned do have concerns about crime and antisocial behaviour in the village.

Burglary was the biggest concern. Nearly a third of people felt that vandalism is a problem. Fear of assault and drug related crime is less evident.

The questionnaire reveals a desire for a greater police presence in the village and a need to provide more activities for young people as well as a need for better consultation between the police and local people.

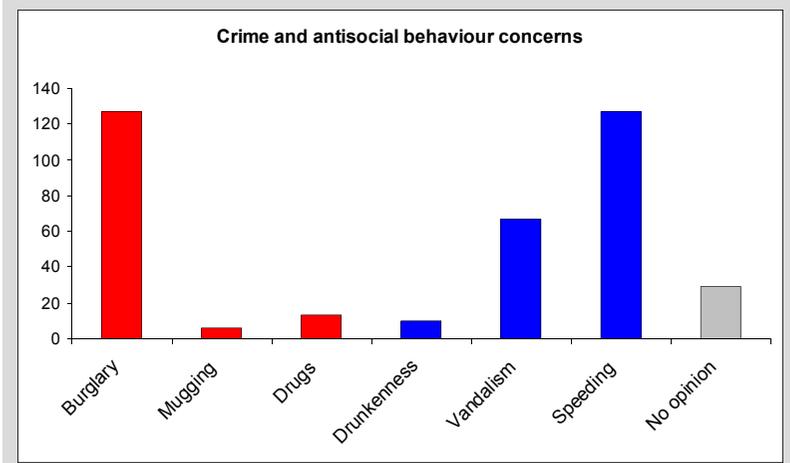
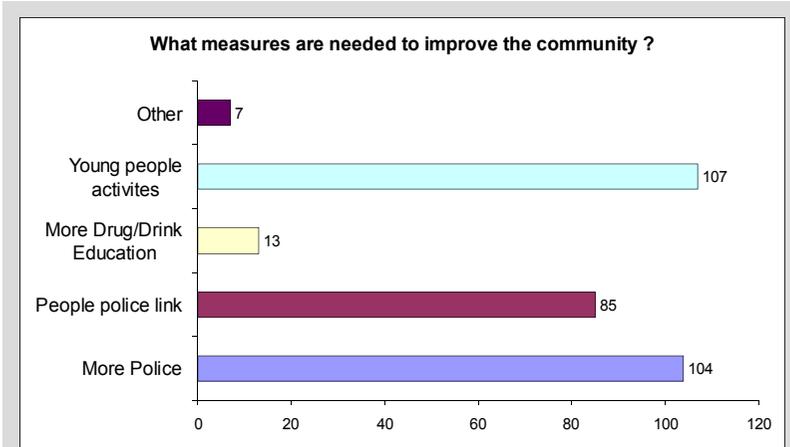
In the last twelve months, the period of preparation of this report, crime figures show that the most common type of crime suffered was vandalism

Whilst crime affects few people it is clear from comments that anti-social

behaviour is a concern for a great number of people in the village. Traffic, speeding and parking issues were the main concerns. Other issues were drunkenness, dog fouling and litter.

The Crime and Disorder Act of 1988 made it a statutory responsibility for Councils to create a Community Safety Strategy. Parish Council also have a responsibility to do all that they can to prevent crime and disorder in their area.

There is a neighbourhood watch scheme in the village. The survey shows that there are a significant number of villagers who are not yet members of the scheme but who would like to join.



Recommendations		
Develop and build participation in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.	Parish Council to work with the police to improve communications and to seek ways to improve the visible policing of the Village.	The Parish Council to make provision for complaints to be heard and to be referred to the appropriate authorities for action.

Traffic and transport



Woodnewton is located about 5 miles from the nearest major roads, the A47 and the A605, along country lanes.

Most traffic through the village is local or associated with nearby villages.

From Oundle the road enters the village over a narrow bridge and at the junction of Nassington Road and Main Street there is a 'triangle' known as 'Hill Tree'. The road is very narrow at this point and large vehicles and buses tend to travel in the centre of the road. Speeding adds to the hazard.

Main Street varies in width, narrowing in the conservation area. Of necessity cars are parked on the road in this area and do serve to slow traffic but there is still concern for excessive speed.

The tight bend at the Church is also very hazardous. The Church wall has been damaged, on numerous occasions, by traffic at this point.

Approaching Orchard Lane from the Church end of Main Street there is a blind bend. Fast approaching traffic from Apethorpe is a concern. At this point the speed limit is 60 mph, the 30 mph sign having been moved several years ago. This is also the point of access to the cemetery.

Orchard Lane is wider than Main Street. There are several residential areas, sheltered housing, the

Village Hall, Play Area and Allotments that all have access onto Orchard Lane. Most properties have parking for cars but on road parking is still an issue, in particular near the access to the Village Hall and play area. This reduces visibility and is dangerous for those using the facilities, in particular, children.

Where Orchard Lane meets Nassington Road the junction is virtually blind and traffic is often approaching at speed from Nassington, in spite of the speed limit.

Excessive speed of traffic causes concern to people in the village. The level of concern was very varied. This is reflected in the fact 25% of respondents felt that no speed control measures were necessary. In contrast, the most commonly suggested measures were traffic calming and extension of the 30mph limit. Whilst speeding was one issue raised, parking on the roads, verges and pavements were others.

Most people use their cars for all their transport needs. Few people use the bus/taxi or voluntary car scheme. It was clear that even non-users felt that there could be improvements in both routing and time-tabling of buses.

A small number of people do have difficulty getting out of the Village.



Recommendations

Professional opinion on traffic movement and parking around the village and a report with recommendations for improvement to be presented to the Parish Council.

Information to be given to residents on transport provision for Woodnewton.

Comparison of provision of transport services needs to be undertaken and recommendations to be presented to the Parish Council.

Participate in Community Speed Watch Project.
Repositioning of 30 mph signs to be considered to better advise of speed within village limits.

Parish Administration



As the first tier of Local Government, Parish Councils deal with local community matters and are non-political. Woodnewton Parish Council is one of 9000 in England, and has a number of statutory powers and wide ranging powers at its disposal intended for the benefit of the local community.

Parish Councils receive the majority of their funding from an annual charge called the Precept which is levied on local electors via the Council Tax.

Woodnewton has seven Councillors and a salaried Clerk. Councillors do not receive payment for their duties. The Council meets on the second Monday of every month except December. Every meeting is open to the public, with time allocated for public participation. The Parish Council responsibilities include street lighting, the Churchyard and Cemetery

Northamptonshire County Council and East Northamptonshire District Council are the other tiers of Local Government providing services including highways maintenance, footpaths and bridleways, libraries and education, refuse collection

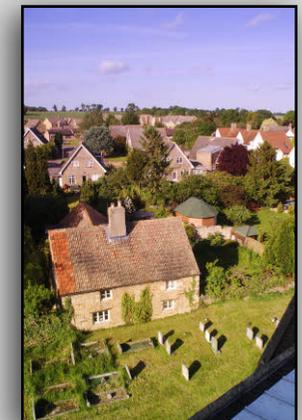
and recycling and other environmental services.

The majority of people consider the Environmental Services provided by the District and County Councils, (Refuse Collection, Road Sweeping and Clearing drains), to be reasonable. This was also the case for the Highways Services (Roads, Pavements, Verges and Street Lighting).

The questionnaire results indicate that the majority feel that Parish Councillors are fully aware of local concerns and feelings but over a third of people felt that District and County Councillors were not so well informed.

It is clear that the Parish Council and East Northamptonshire Council need to improve publicity about their decisions and activities. Most people do not attend the Annual Parish Meeting.

The village newsletter is received by nearly all residents and is the main information point for village events. There was much comment about content and style and many suggestions for ways to further develop it.



Recommendations

Summary to be produced to inform people of different responsibilities of County, District and Parish Council.

Parish Council to liaise with District and County Councillors to seek to improve understanding of the needs and views of people in Woodnewton.

Village Hall committee to set up a Newsletter Editorial Team to be responsible for the production and further development of the Newsletter.

Places of Worship



St Mary's Church is the only place of worship in Woodnewton since the closure of the Methodist Chapel several years ago.

The Church has a 16th century tower with pillars from the late 12th and early 14th century. The porch was remodelled in 1662 and the north aisle was destroyed in the same century.

St Mary's Woodnewton is linked with St Mary's and All Saints, Nassington and St. Mary Magdalene in Yarwell. At present there is no Vicar for these churches due to the recent retirement of the incumbent Vicar.

Numbers attending Church services have fallen although the Harvest festival service and the Carol service are attended by many in the Village.

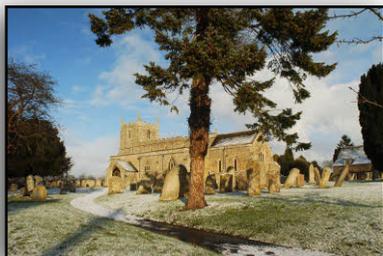
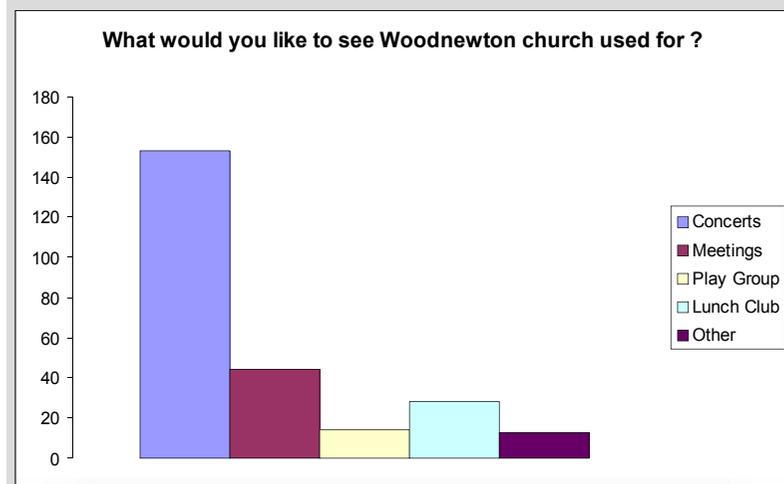
The Parochial Church Council (PCC) are looking at ways to ensure that St Mary's remains at the centre of village life. It is hoped to make the church available for meetings and the

questionnaire responses showed reasonable support for this with nearly everyone supporting the idea of having concerts in the Church.

The Churchyard has been recognised as a wildlife haven with several rare plants .

The PCC produce an information sheet which is delivered to people moving into the village. The sheet provides information about service providers and activities within the village and local area.

Many commented on the need to keep St Mary's alive as it would be a real loss to this small Community.



Recommendations

PCC to be encouraged to ensure that St Mary's continues to play a central role in Village life.

The PCC to consider the findings of the questionnaire and to look at how the views expressed could be implemented.

PCC to join with other groups to consider the social / welfare needs of the Village.

Natural Environment



With the Willow Brook winding its way for 2½ miles through the centre of the parish, Woodnewton sits in an area of natural beauty covering 573 hectares. The main part of the village stands on Northamptonshire Ironstone. Further up the hill beyond the playing field, this changes to Lincolnshire Limestone. The highest point in the parish is 64m above sea level.

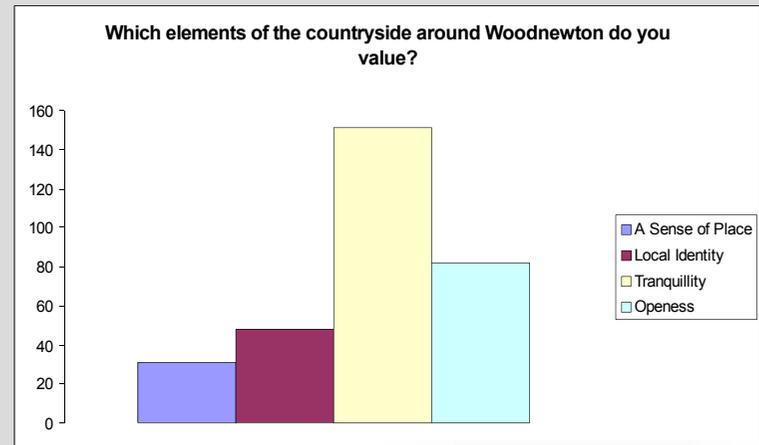
The majority of respondents ranked tranquility and openness as the elements of Woodnewton and its surroundings that they valued most. This was reflected by the nearly 90% that considered the quality of the village environment as very important to them.

To maintain the environment for future generations is vital. Villagers are willing to help by taking part in clean up days and litter picking. There was also a great interest in recycling and community composting schemes. While the village is covered by the

ENDC recycling collection and there are 'green waste' bins available there maybe scope for the village to act as a community in increasing this activity.

As might be imagined litter and dog mess were concerns raised by a number of residents. Main areas of littering included the roadside verges leading away from the village, and around the children's play area. There is some provision of litter bins but siting and emptying are issues which need to be reviewed. A regular complaint was the state of the streets after the refuse collection on Tuesdays.

Dog mess is a problem on all the main dog walking routes. The eastern end of the village and the track alongside the playing field seem to suffer most. There is no provision of dog mess bins. There are no problems with stray dogs.



Recommendations

To set up a twice yearly clean up day.

Encourage a wider view of the whole parish when considering any proposals that may alter vistas, or reduce bio diversity.

Investigate opportunities for community composting schemes and increased recycling.

Footpaths And Bridleways

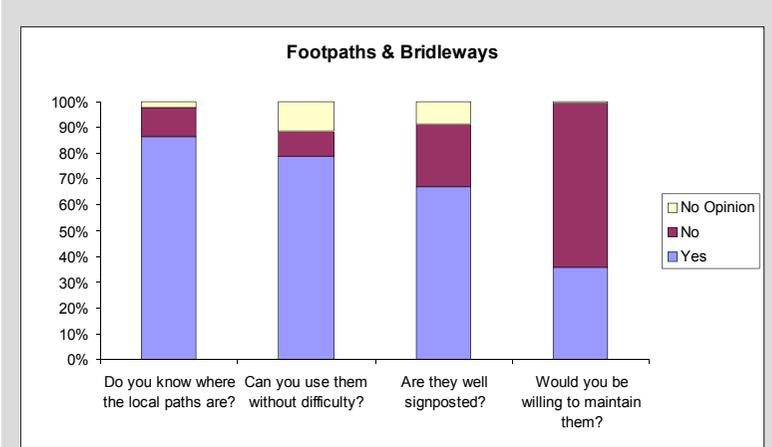


Residents have access to 4 miles of footpaths and byways but Woodnewton is unusual in that it has no bridleways within the parish boundary. This does cause some problems with local horse riders only able to access the surrounding countryside via roads. Inevitably there is some encroachment onto footpaths. This is perhaps reflected in that a number of respondents cited mud and water as difficulties when using local footpaths.

It would be very difficult and also extremely unusual for a footpath to be upgraded to bridleway status or for any new bridleways to be created. Any solution to the problem of equine access could be through the encouragement of local access permissions, negotiated on an individual basis between riders and landowners. It may be an opportunity for local landowners to assess income opportunities but that is beyond the scope of this report.

Overall satisfaction with the footpath network was high with consideration given to their accessibility, condition and signage. Other than mud and water, crops, brambles, bushes and nettles were the biggest problem to path users. Residents however showed little willingness to help maintain paths.

Over two thirds of respondents indicated a desire for more maps and leaflets. There is a wide range of maps and leaflets showing local walks and the path network, available from local information points such as Oundle Tourist Information. A very detailed map created within the village has limited circulation. This may be evidence of a lack of communication in terms of what information is available and where to find it. There are a number of permitted paths within the village envelope which link together forming a number of 'dog walking' routes. These are well used by many villagers.



Recommendations		
Investigate feasibility of having an information point in the village pub or church porch.	Publicise the role of the village path warden, and use the warden as a conduit for information and access problems.	Encourage horse riders to negotiate local access with landowners.

Summary



The heritage and environment of Woodnewton registered as very important with the greater majority of respondents. As a result any new large scale developments which may threaten the slowly evolving nature of the village are likely to be strongly resisted.

One of the main findings of the survey was inadequate communication of information of all types. This ranges from provision of local transport services such as bus timetables, information on which type and when mobile shops stop in the village as well as details on local footpaths, recycling availability, community activities and local businesses. This lack of information often results in a low take up of services provided which can ultimately lead to service reduction or withdrawal. A major part of the delivery of the recommendations contained within this report will fall to all tiers of local government to better inform residents.

Any survey of this nature will inevitably illuminate residents' concerns with speeding traffic, anti social behaviour, littering and dog mess. Woodnewton is no different, although clearly by its' nature to a much lesser extent than

other areas. A number of recommendations are made to tackle these problems.

This Parish Plan could not possibly contain analysis of and recommendations for every question asked in the survey. It focuses on the areas of most concern to residents. However the comprehensive information gathered that lies behind this report is available to any village resident and can be used to support arguments, funding applications or other surveys if needed.

Woodnewton is always evolving and this Parish Plan needs to be flexible. It is intended as a working document that will be reviewed in due course. A measure of its success will not only be the implementation of its findings but also the continued involvement of the community in its' own future which it has fostered.



