

Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire

Feedback Report

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1. Background

2. In January 2014 the Neighbourhood Plan Group on behalf of Gnosall Parish Council undertook an extensive questionnaire survey as part of the evidence gathering process working towards the production of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish area.

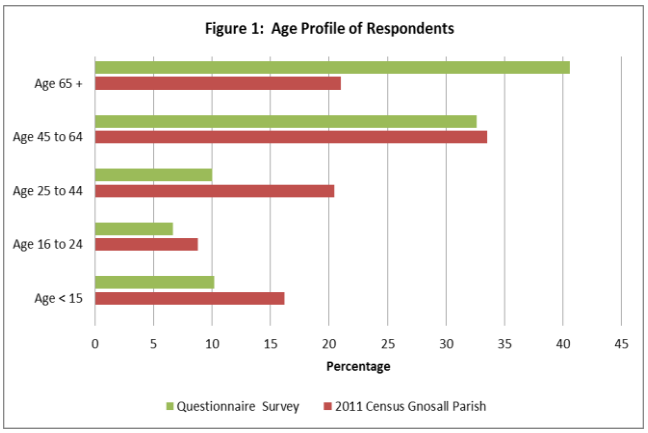
3. The survey questionnaire was distributed to 2,600 households in the Parish. The response rate was good with 20% of questionnaires returned from households representing 24% of the population. The quality of information provided was also good with the substantial majority of questionnaires fully completed and an extensive range of information provided to 'open' questions.



4. Response Rate and Age Profile of Respondents

5. 515 questionnaires in total were completed with 356 stating the return was made on behalf of a family (household) and 156 made as individual returns.

6. Figure 1 below shows the age profile of respondents to the questionnaire survey compared to that of the population of the whole Parish taken at the 2011 Census.

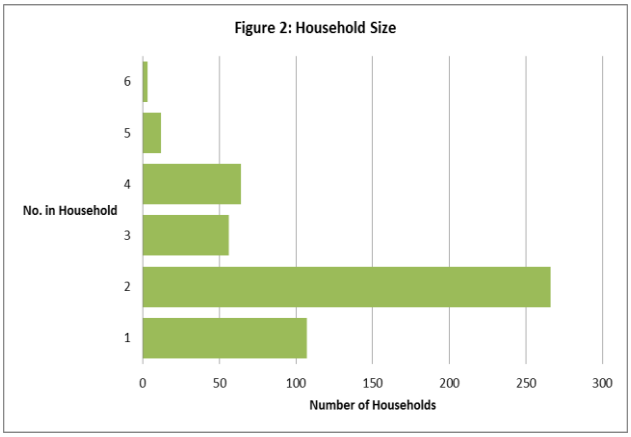


7. This shows that the response rate was better in the over 65 age group and less good in the younger age profiles with the 45-64 age proportion of respondents almost exactly reflecting that of the whole Parish population.



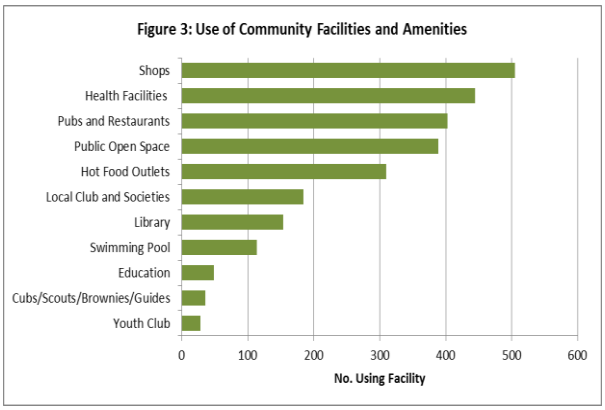
8. There are of course a number of explanations why the response rate of older age groups was better and could be a combination of having more time, more interest and perhaps more awareness of community and planning issues. Whatever the explanation it doesn't appear to undermine the value of the information received particularly if the assumption is taken that the all residents who were interested in the process have responded.

9. Figure 2 below shows the distribution of respondents in terms of household size.



10. The response rate for businesses was low (with only 3 completed questionnaires) and given the important feedback that has been received in relation to employment opportunities and the mixed response to seeing land released in the Parish for employment uses it may be necessary to undertake further consultation with potential employers, local businesses and commercial interests.







11. **Community Facilities and Amenities**

12. The questionnaire survey results indicated a healthy use of local facilities and amenities as Figure 3 shows below.

13. A wide range of other facilities and services were also reported as being used including the petrol station, Post Office, children's centre, village hall, estate agents, car wash and garden centre. Many other facilities and services were reported some of which the provision has a clear spatial context (ie based in a building) and others less specific such as 'walks for health'. The range of facilities and amenities reported as used is indicative of the use of community buildings and open space in the village for a number of different purposes.

14. Facilities used for dancing and badminton in Moreton were also reported.

15. In terms of the general level of feeling of adequacy of the listed facilities and amenities in the survey questionnaire (see figure 3 above) there was a strong sentiment that these were in most cases 'good'.

16. The exceptions to this were health facilities were 36.8% reported these as 'excellent' and a further 47.3% as 'good' providing a stronger message

of general satisfaction of 84.1% combining the 'excellent' and 'good' ratings. The satisfaction with public open space provision was similarly high with 83.7% reporting this as 'excellent' or 'good' and a further 13.1% describing the situation as 'average'.



17. Of those facilities and amenities slightly less well thought of although 8.9% reported the provision of shops as 'excellent' 33.6% rated it as 'average' and 9.1% as 'poor' or 'inadequate'. There was also a mixed message in the response to the provision of the youth club(s) where although 61.1% reported this as 'excellent' or 'good' correspondingly 32.4% felt it was only 'average' and 6.6% 'poor'.



18. Transport Issues

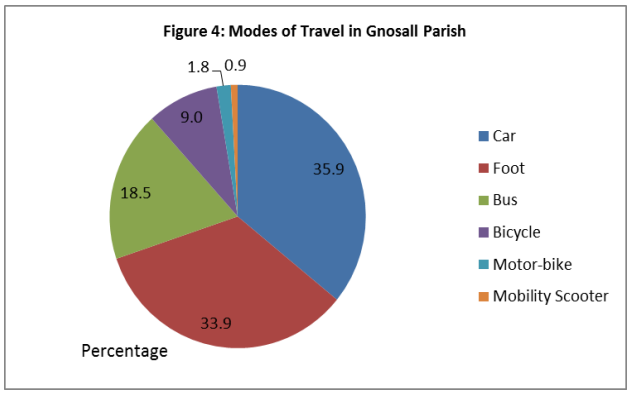
19. To avoid over-complication and length the questionnaire sought response to five simple questions about transport habits, parking and traffic management in the Parish.

20. Figure 4 shows the response to the question about modes of travel in Gnosall.



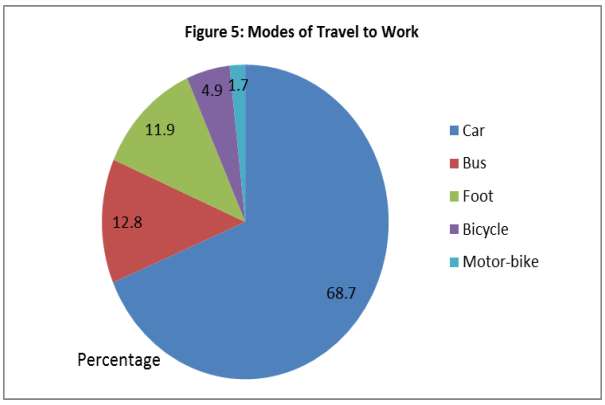
21. The respondent had the opportunity to state all modes that they used and for simplicity the use of each mode was not distinguished in terms of

journey length or intensity of use. Not surprisingly car transport was the most significant mode, with walking highly prevalent and a high rate of bus usage also reported.



22. It is interesting to note comparisons with the results of the latest published National Travel survey from 2012 (although the data is not directly comparable because the question is different) [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012]. The NTS reports 66% of journeys made as a car driver or passenger, 22% on foot, 6% by bus, 3% by rail, 2% by bicycle and 2% by other modes.

23. Figure 5 shows modes used by respondents in travelling to work from or within Gnosall parish. Again not surprisingly car transport was the most significant mode accounting for more than five times the rate of walking and bus travel. Cycling accounted for just under 5% of modes used to travel to work.





24. It is interesting to note comparisons with the results of national 2011 Census [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766_299766.pdf] even though the data is not directly comparable because the 2011 Census categorises modes slightly differently and also includes within the dataset 5% of the population recorded as working from home. Nationally in the 2011 Census 16% of travel to work journeys are recorded as by public transport and 14% walking or cycling.

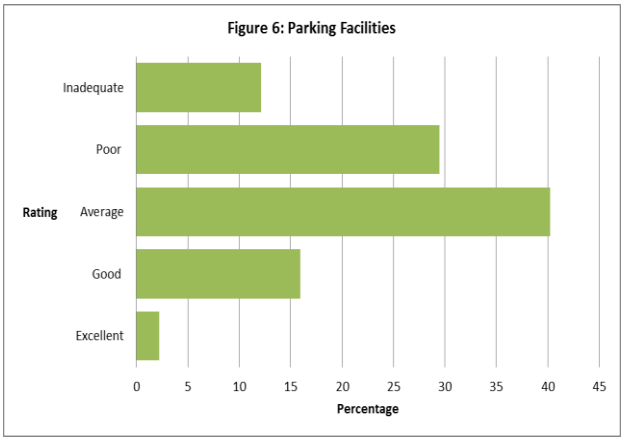


25. Given in terms of public transport that Gnosall has no direct rail services by comparison bus use at 12.8% seems quite good and the proportion walking and cycling 15.8% combined is also quite high. It should be noted that nationally the effect of London and the other major cities where access to public transport is much easier and more viable boosts the average usage and that on that basis the Gnosall survey results are arguably more surprising in the circumstances.

26. Almost 73% of travel to work across the West Midlands region (2011 Census) is by car/van/taxi and motor-bike compared to the survey result for Gnosall Parish of 70.4% (by car and motor-bike). It will be a challenge for the new Neighbourhood Plan to make provisions that genuinely can contribute to greater accessibility to meet people's needs across a whole range of activities and allow for less reliance on the private car. There does seem to be a good latent use of public transport, walking and cycling in the Parish to build upon.

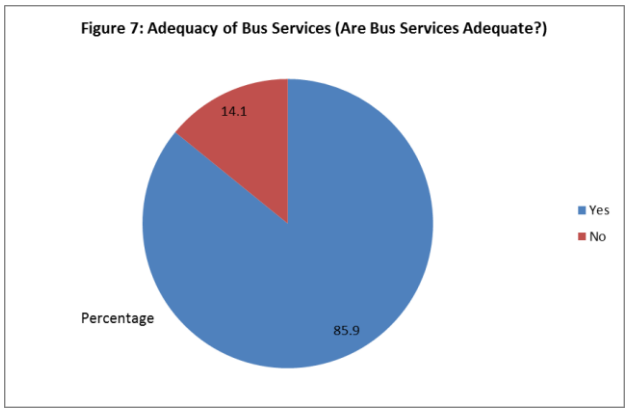
27. One area of transport infrastructure that does seem to be more of a concern in the village is provision of parking. This is shown in Figure 6 below. The survey sought a non-area specific response to parking issues although it seems reasonable to assume in interpreting the results that these relate to concerns in the centre of Gnosall village particularly. Just 18% of respondents indicated that parking provision was 'good' or 'excellent'.





28. As figure 7 shows the majority of respondents indicated that bus services were adequate. In qualitative responses made by the 14.1% who felt bus services were not adequate a range of issues were raised. In broad terms these mainly related to concerns over unreliability, high cost of fares, overcrowding and lack of services in the late evening and at weekends.

29. One issue that appeared to be of particular concern was uncertainty of service and though unprompted by the questionnaire a number of respondents suggested the need for real-time service information. Possibly a service they are familiar with and find effective in urban areas in the wider region.

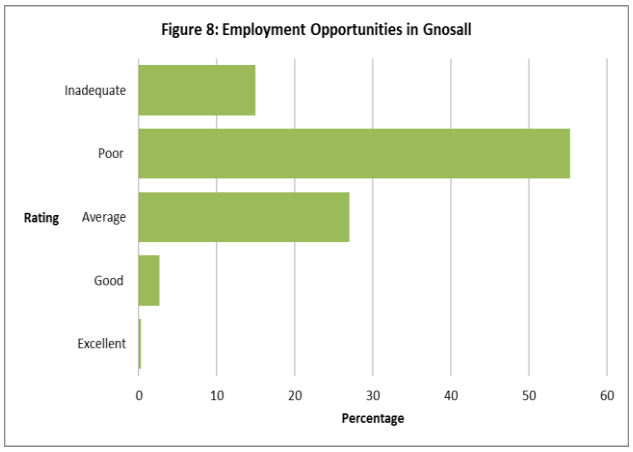




30. Employment and Employment Land Issues

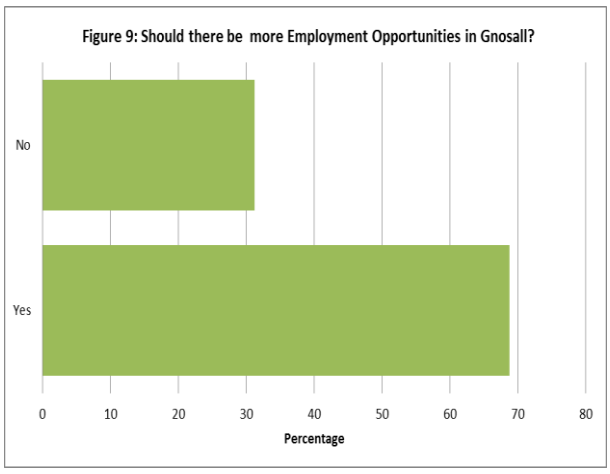
31. As figure 8 shows arguably the strongest message from the questionnaire survey concerns the lack of employment opportunities in the village. A significant majority of respondents consider employment opportunities are 'inadequate' or 'poor'. As figure 9 shows 68.7% of people responding feel that there should be more employment opportunities.

32. The data has not been cross-tabulated against the age profile and given that the age profile is skewed to older age groups compared to the general population (see figure 1) the message from those in working age groups arguably even stronger than these figures suggest.



33. This appears one of the biggest challenges for the Neighbourhood Plan as the appetite for employment land release as a resolution is less clear (figure 10 below).

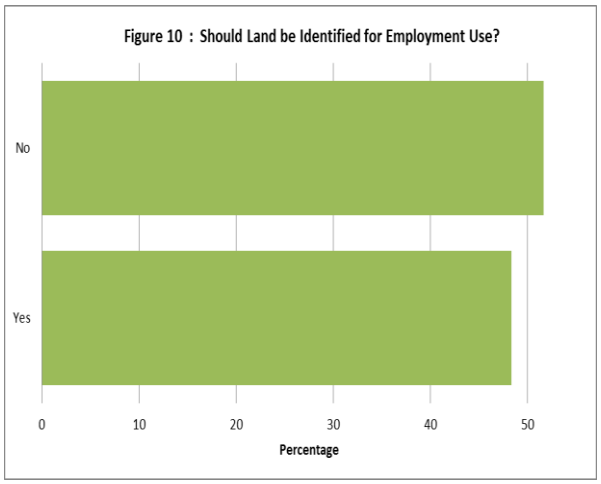
34. The perception of lack of employment opportunity is though a cause for concern and difficult for the Plan process to ignore. It will need an innovative and creative approach in the confines of what is essentially a spatial land-use based Plan.



35. Is it acceptable for those in the village seeking local employment not to be able to find opportunities and just accept that they must out commute? Is it acceptable that any settlement should grow in terms of housing provision without any employment provision even if it is accepted that employment opportunities may be for specific skills and jobs that will not necessarily anyway meet local needs? Is it accepted that if there is employment provision in the sub-region that no significant employment provision needs to be made in the village? What if anything can the Neighbourhood Plan do to support home-working and should this trend be encouraged?



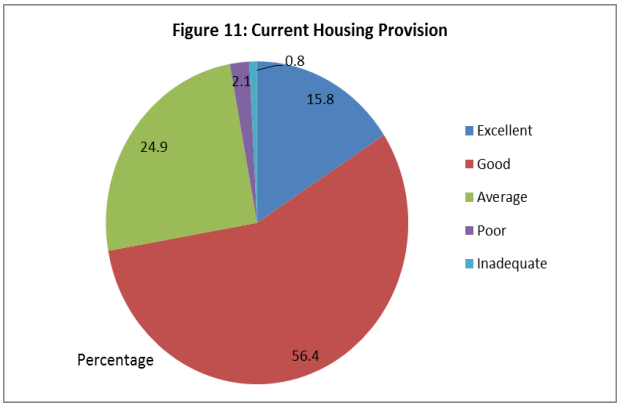
36. Some suggestions were made in the survey responses of land to be allocated for employment use.



37. Housing and Housing Land Issues



38. To avoid over-complication and length the questionnaire sought response to four simple questions about housing in the Parish. Figure 11 shows the results of a general question about the current housing provision. The majority held view of 56.4% responded that this was 'good'. The survey does not distinguish though whether this is a response that reflected peoples view of their own housing circumstances in the Parish or was a more general reflection of a positive response to the range of housing types and tenures available.



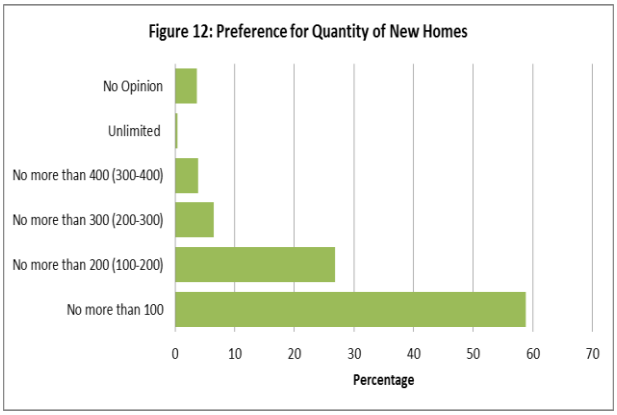
39. Figure 12 shows the responses to the question of the preferred quantity of new dwellings in the Parish to 2031. In some respects this is a constrained question because to be in general conformity with the provisions of the Adopted Plan for Stafford Borough to 2031 some provision for housing has to be made in the village.



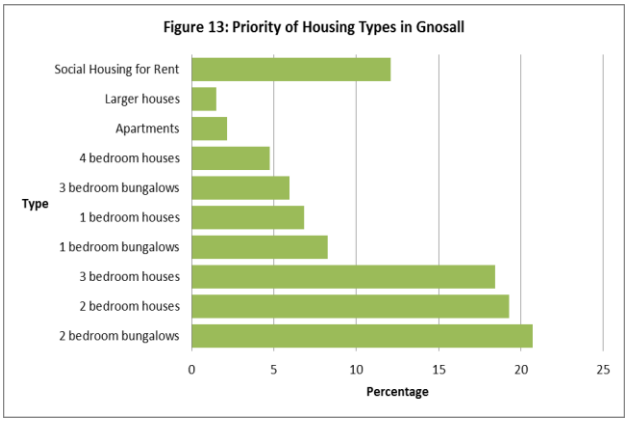




40. The survey revealed a majority view (59%) for no more than 100 new homes. Support drops to 27% for more than 200 houses and into low single percentage figures above that. It should be noted that significant additional housing is already in the process of being provided through 75 additional houses consented at Lowfield Lane, 24 at Knightley Way (under-construction) and a further 55 houses in Knightley Way currently the subject of a live planning appeal, the result of which won't be known until later in the year. It also likely that small numbers of additional 'windfall' housing provision will continue to come forward in the plan period, for example through small infill plots and barn conversions.



41. In terms of the provision that should be made for dwelling types there was a general preference towards two bedroomed bungalows and two and three bedroomed houses with little aspiration for apartments or larger houses (see figure 13).



42. An extensive range of suggestions were made in the survey responses of land that may be acceptable to be allocated for residential use if

required.



43. Telecommunications

44. The survey responses provided overwhelming support for specific improvements in telecommunication services with 93.1% supporting provision of high speed broadband services, 88% supporting better signal coverage for mobile phones.

45. There was little support though for other forms of new communication technology.

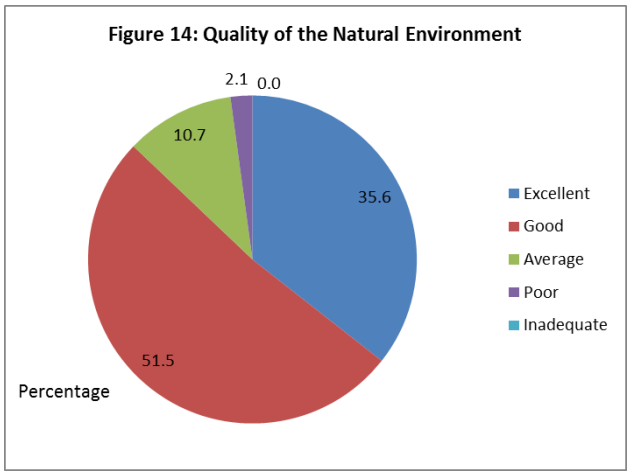
46. Tourism

47. The survey revealed a fairly even split to attitudes towards developing further tourism opportunities in the Parish with 53.7% in favour and 46.3% against. There was a more positive response to improving the accommodation offer in the Parish with 61.9% wishing to see more places to stay. In terms of types of accommodation 65.4% favoured expanding the bed and breakfast offer although there was some limited support for a hotel and a caravan and camping offer in the Parish.

48. Public Open Space and Outdoor Recreation

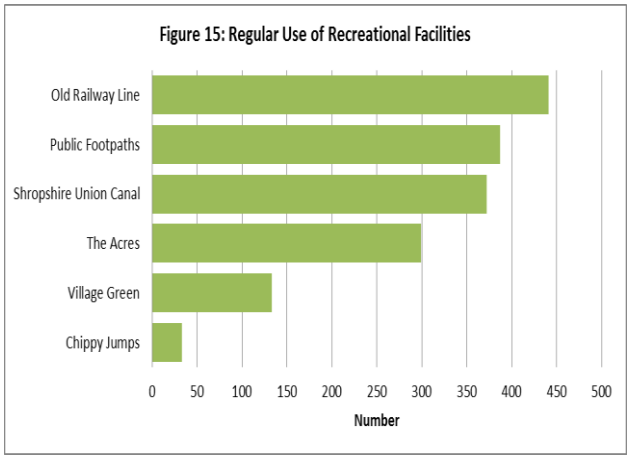


49. The survey responses gave a positive impression of the natural environment in the Parish. Those responding that the quality was poor accounted for only 2.1% (figure 14).





50. It is clear from the responses that there is active use of outdoor recreation across a range of local provision. More specific provision such as the 'Chippy Jumps' were unsurprisingly less popular but the combined responses suggest the frequent use and importance of outdoor facilities for general recreational and walking in particular.



51. Section 106 Agreements and Community Benefits for the Parish

52. An overwhelming majority of the survey respondents, 97.7%, agree that future legal agreements related to developments in Gnosall Parish should be prioritised towards the local area and 98.3% thought that the Borough Council should in the future consult the Parish when drafting legal agreements.

53. If those in support of the involvement of the Parish in legal agreements, 94.7% thought that the Parish council should deal driectly with developers to achieve benefits for the community from new development.

54. Further Work and Evidence



55. Further analysis is required to address some of the qualitative responses in the questionnaire survey and this be subject of an addendum update report.



56. In some areas, particularly in relation to the issue of employment and employment land provision the survey responses suggests a need for further investigation, evidence appraisal and analysis. In other areas such as housing issues and particularly preferences for housing types and tenure the survey responses suggest a need for further analysis of other available data.

57. This report represents one part of the evidence gathering in the prepartion of a Neighbourhood Plan for Gnosall Parish.

58. To keep the Plan moving forward at pace it may be pragmatic to address these issues through the production of a Draft Consultation Draft Plan that will be accompanied by a substansive evidence base report.