

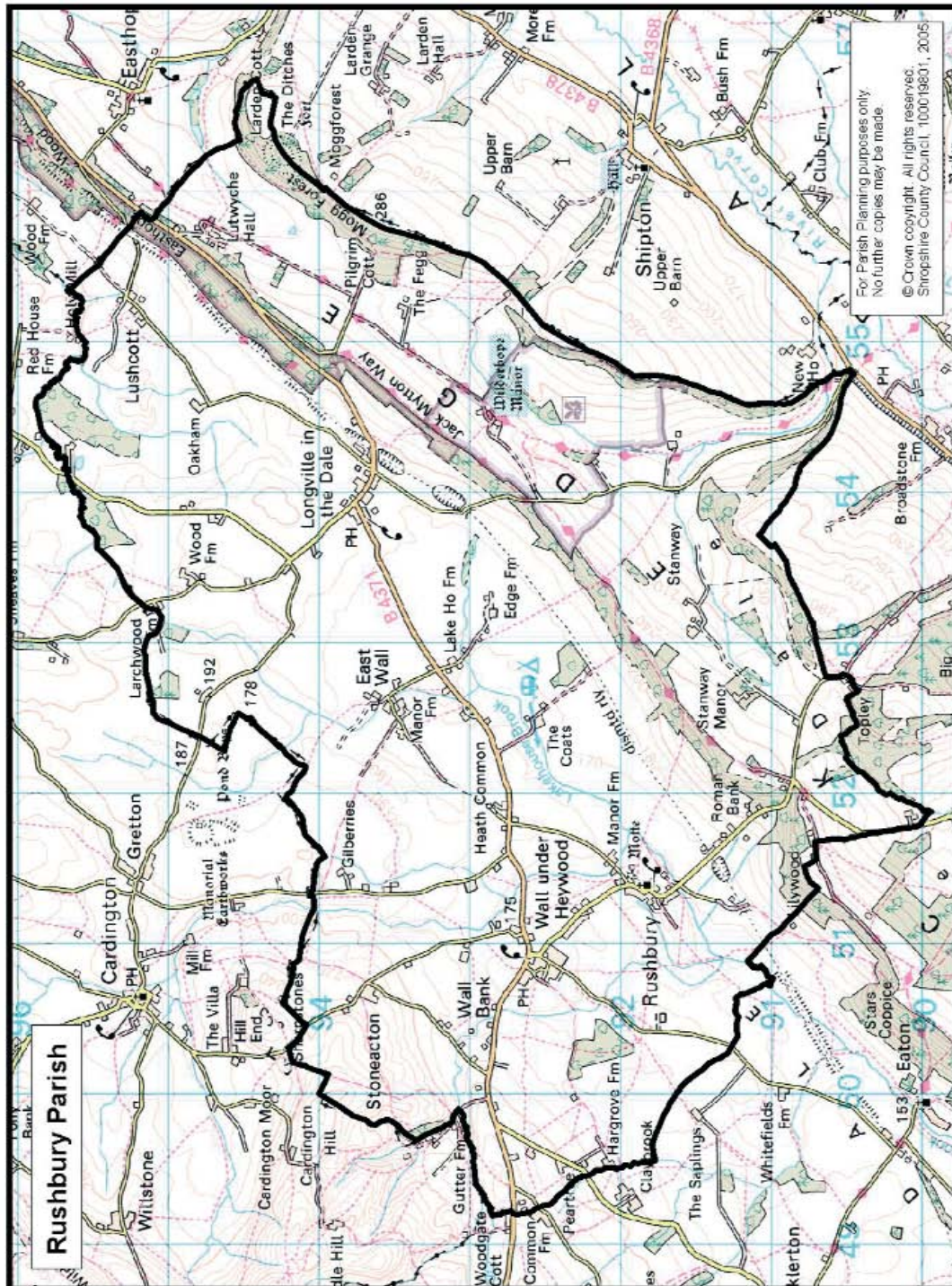
Rushbury Parish Plan



Rushbury Parish Plan

August 2005

Map of Rushbury Parish



Rushbury Parish Plan



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Appendices (available on request)

1. Questionnaire
2. Summary of Steering Group, Consultative and Open meetings
3. Questionnaire Results (limited distribution)
4. Local Environment Statements SDC
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6. Notes to Open Meeting re Parking Rushbury School

Preface

The Parish Planning process in Rushbury has extended over the whole of 2004. In January 2005 a Questionnaire was distributed to all parishioners in Rushbury over the age of 16. The foreword sums up our aspirations for the Parish Planning Process.

Parish Plans A Parish Plan for Rushbury gives us the local community an opportunity to have our say about how the Parish of Rushbury may develop over the next ten years. It is part of a national programme to involve local people in how communities develop. The Plan should be a vision of how we want the Parish to be.

The Plan can:

1. Identify things the community can achieve for itself.
2. Identify things that can be provided with the support of the local authority and its partner agencies.
3. Identify bigger issues which are more difficult to deal with but where the concern of the whole Parish is more likely to have influence than that of a few individuals.

This document provides a summary of not only the Questionnaire (which achieved a remarkable 67% response rate) but also many meetings, debates and discussions over an eighteen month period.

This document is very much to be seen as a marker stick for 2005, we anticipate ongoing change and challenge. What we recognise within Rushbury Parish is a deep sense of attachment to the local environment and an expression that some things (which are hard to define) are very important to residents and should be protected. People in Rushbury are on the whole very content, and are not looking for major change, this needs to be reflected by this document, which in turn will help local county, district and community strategies. Clearly it is intended as a "living document" we propose its adoption by the Parish Council, along with a commitment to review the Plan and Actions on an annual basis. This was confirmed in July 2005.

This work was supported by a grant from the Countryside Agency, help in particular from Caroline Oakes and Richard Loveridge representing the interfaces with local authorities, many local planning officers in a wide range of disciplines, including South Shropshire Planning Department, the County Sustainability Unit, and, in particular, Lisa Bedford of the Regeneration Unit.

Last but by no means least we would like to acknowledge the work, thought and energy of a dedicated and supportive group of volunteers from the Parish.

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Glossary and Definitions

Percentage when used in the document to describe response refers to the percentage of parishioners who responded to a specific question. Where there is deeper analysis on a particular issue the number of respondents to each particular statement or question is shown below the relevant graph.

Questionnaire the Questionnaire attached Appendix 1

Distribution List

South Shropshire Partnership - Local Stakeholders including Police, NHS, Social Services, AONB, (list)

Parishioners: All members steering group, all interested parishioners

Parish Council

District Council

MP

Virginia Clements

Village Hall Committee

Millennium Green Committee

Summary

Rushbury has undertaken a Parish Planning Process with wide consultation and a detailed and tested community Questionnaire with a 67% response rate addressing locally raised issues. This process has produced both anecdotal and statistical evidence which expresses the views and wishes of the Parish as a whole.

Specific actions have been derived from the consultation process. The process has captured a wealth of information which can be used and developed, reflected on and updated, in order to allow planning to become more attuned to local opinion than it has been in the past. Relevant comment has been forwarded directly to key stakeholders.

This document and its actions should be seen as the start of an ongoing process and constructive discussion on the future of Rushbury over the next ten years.

Main findings:

- Communication within the Parish is capable of improvement
- The style of recent development is considered inappropriate
- There is concern about the amount and location of recent development
- There are problems with the availability and timing of public transport
- There are safety concerns relating to the speed of vehicles on local roads
- The value of agriculture and other local businesses is widely recognised
- The beauty of the local environment is of great importance to the community
- There is overwhelming support for more recycling initiatives

Main recommendations;

- To investigate the viability of a Parish web-site
- To move towards the production of a village design statement
- To communicate views on future development to planners and council representatives
- To form a transport group to discuss local concerns with public transport providers
- To communicate concerns and suggestions about road safety to the relevant authorities
- To investigate specific improvements to Rushbury- Wall pedestrian passage
- To support local business development in sympathy with the local environment
- To produce a Parish Environment Action Plan
- To request facilities for the recycling of plastic and cardboard waste

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Rushbury Background

The Parish of Rushbury is a rural parish comprising of traditional farms with mixed arable and livestock farming. It incorporates the villages of Rushbury and associated hamlets of Longville in the Dale, Wall under Heywood, East Wall and numerous outlying farms.

The Parish covers an area of approx 9 square km, bisected by the B4371, key to communications and route to local services in Church Stretton (to the South) and Much Wenlock (North). The Parish has relatively few facilities, but they are all well supported, particularly the new village hall and millennium green.

The whole of Rushbury Parish lies within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a national designation given to England's best and most intrinsically beautiful landscapes. This special landscape comprises very important and often rare, either nationally or globally, environmental features. This raises concerns and challenges where development, habitat threat and altered population characteristics pose difficult balances to be achieved.

Much of the woodland within our Parish lies on the site of ancient woods which means that the ground flora is rich in its diversity. The Parish is host to a number of both biological and geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest such as the magnificent grassland at Marked Ash at the top of Roman Bank or the rocky outcrops on Slaughter House Lane. Whilst the bluebells in Wenlock Edge Wood are in plentiful supply, globally the decline in their numbers is of significant concern. Very special animal species are also to be found in the Parish, many of which are rare nationally such as dormice, water voles, otters, bats and barn owls. It isn't however just the rare or endangered that give this Parish its character, anything from a magnificent old oak tree to primroses flowering along our lanes make this Parish a very special place in which to live.

Rushbury's character also reflects the depth of its historic environment. There is firm evidence that man has inhabited the Parish for at least 3000 years. The Iron Age Fort in the Mogg Forest on the edge of our Parish is dated at around the 1st Millennium BC and gives us the first indication of mans settlement in the Parish. Evidence of Roman remains has been found under Wenlock Edge and elements of Roman masonry were reused in the building of St. Peters Church in Rushbury. The church itself is perhaps the oldest remaining building with the nave dating from early Norman times. Wilderhope Manor, to name just one of our manor houses, is Elizabethan, dated at late 16th Century and our many black and white buildings are Tudor in origin, dated between the 16th and 17th centuries. Some of Rushbury's buildings are Scheduled Ancient Monuments such as one of the pack horse bridges in Rushbury which is now sadly in need of attention.

Rushbury's landscape as we see it today is essentially manmade. It is the product of man living off the land and we have our forefathers to thank for leaving us this legacy.

Recent Studies/Census Results

Since the **2001 census** the number of households in the Parish has risen by 16 to 236 and the population of voting age has increased from 445 to 481 (July 2004). Whilst these changes are significant, the 2001 census remains a good reflector of the local population

The **population** of Rushbury Parish was 603 in 2001, a rise of 10% since 1998. Two thirds were over 30 years old, with most of those (44% of the total population) over forty-five. These figures appear very high when compared with a population in their later teens of only 5% but this is in line with the national average as is the number of residents over 65. The under fifteen population of the Parish is slightly above a national average of 20%.

To age 14	15 -19	20 – 44	45 – 64	65+
135 (23%)	30 (5%)	169 (28%)	171 (28%)	98 (16%)

Building completions since 2001 will have added approximately 45 to the population, representing a twenty percent rise in the six years 1998 -2004. This includes 12 housing association dwellings available for rent. Current valid planning permissions are progressed for a further 14 dwellings (11 in Rushbury and Wall) which will take the population to almost 700 and the overall increase since 1998 to 25%. Since it had risen by only 54% over the previous 200 years this represents a fairly significant change within the Parish over this recent, relatively short period.

Housing in the Parish is mostly owner occupied, accounting for 185 of a total of 219 households in 2001. The remaining 34 houses were rented privately (18) or from a housing association or registered social landlord (16).

Current (2004) housing policy, as communicated to all parishioners prior to eliciting responses, is that permission will only be granted for conversion of existing agricultural buildings and for affordable housing and that the use of green-field sites will only be considered for the latter. It was understood that no more housing association developments are planned at the moment.

Employment of 16 – 74 year olds covers a wide span, the main area being the service sector, that is wholesale and retail trades, hotels and catering, transport etc.(25%), followed by agriculture and forestry (17.5%) with other business activities, education and construction trades all at around 10%.

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The general **health** of the Parish is good. Only 5% of the residents consider themselves to be “not good” where their health is concerned, the lowest figure in the whole of England and Wales being 4.6%. The remaining 95% consider their health to be good (77%) or fairly good (18%).

The last major community project providing opportunity for consultation was the Millennium Green Project, this provided a household questionnaire which validated the Millennium Green Project and captured local residents concern for the local environment, it also confirmed the other issues affecting the population in 2000 were traffic, littering and youth facilities. Transport, local shopping and services remain an abiding cause for concern, as does the palpable changes associated with economic change away from the traditional farming heritage.



Rushbury Parish Planning Process

The Rushbury Plan was first suggested in March 2003 at an Open Parish Meeting, this was rapidly followed up by a series of open consultative meetings where a framework to approach the Parish Plan, application for funding and consultation on issues was progressed. Appendix 2.

In March 2004 funding was confirmed, and further open consultation continued with a series of well attended open meetings, face to face discussions at the village fete, where suggestions were recorded on flip charts, and widespread engagement with local groups such as the village school, young farmers, WI, millennium green committee, village hall committee, Parish Council and local business.

Given the small size of the Parish, and the relatively recent questionnaire in 2000 it was decided to really concentrate on the form and content of a questionnaire since this was perceived to be a "once in a decade" opportunity.

Focus sub groups were formed to take on board the wide and differing local concerns raised through the consultation process. These focussed on Communication, Transport and Safety, Policing, Environment, Housing, Youth and Sports, Business and Agriculture, Health and the elderly.

A total of 6 iterations of the Questionnaire were drafted and the near final version was professionally analysed and a pilot study performed in a representative population group in a neighbouring Parish. Following this pilot further modifications were made and the final Questionnaire (Appendix1) was distributed in January 2005.

Results (Appendix 3) were compiled professionally to ensure anonymity, these results were further analysed and assessed by the relevant sub groups and conclusions and actions proposed.

The initial draft of the Parish Plan was discussed at an open Parish meeting in April 2005 and displayed for comment in the local church and pubs, as well as being provided to anyone expressing interest.

The Plan was reviewed by Rushbury Parish Council on July 2005 and formally adopted with a motion to adopt the Plan and to review and update where necessary on at least an annual basis; also to report on progress with any proposed actions at the annual Open Parish Meeting.

Copies of the Plan have been distributed to all local agencies engaged in planning for South Shropshire and detailed responses to open questions in areas not wholly covered by the Plan have been forwarded to relevant agencies.

Rushbury Parish Plan



General Overview

Whilst the whole consultation process, including formal and informal meetings, has been critical to the Parish Plan, many of our conclusions are structured around responses to the Questionnaire, which was designed specifically to address local concerns.

The Questionnaire was distributed in January 2005 to the eligible over 15 years of age population of 460, achieving a total return of 306, or 67%. The returned questionnaires closely matched the 2001 Census results for age distribution, showing no signs of systematic bias. This gives a high validity to the conclusions which form the basis of the plan. The draft Plan was distributed for comment and discussion; comments have been incorporated from this further consultation.

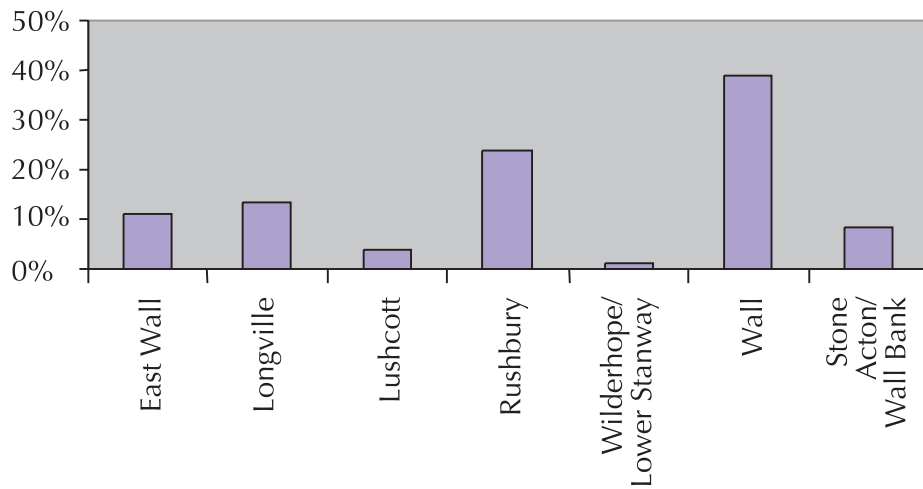
Of particular concern in consultation prior to the formulation of the Questionnaire was the view that much about Rushbury is "fine and should not be changed". Being able to represent this point of view is very important. The reasons for people to choose to live in the Parish of Rushbury; "countryside, peace and quiet and a sense of community" are pre-eminent and threats are seen as over development and urbanisation. However, people are not averse to change unless it has an adverse impact upon the local environment.

The age distribution in Rushbury Parish is similar to that of South Shropshire as a whole. The population includes some longer term residents (42% have lived in the Parish more than 20 years) but around 20% have lived in the Parish less than 5 years, 20% for 5-9 years and 20% for 10-20 years.

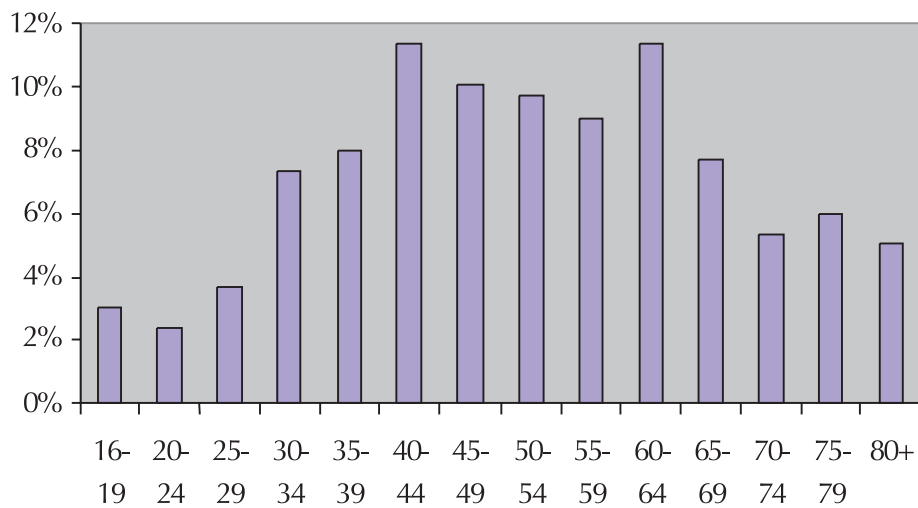
Of the 60% who describe themselves as working, a significant number commute more than 20 miles to work, matching those who actually work in the Parish. Car use is, as we would expect, particularly high, with only 1 in 20 people regularly using public transport. Public transport is clearly very important to those who use it, and to others who sense an increasing need in the future.

The following charts present a picture of those parishioners who responded to the Questionnaire, where they live, their age, and the length of time they have lived here.

Which part of the Parish do you live in or closest



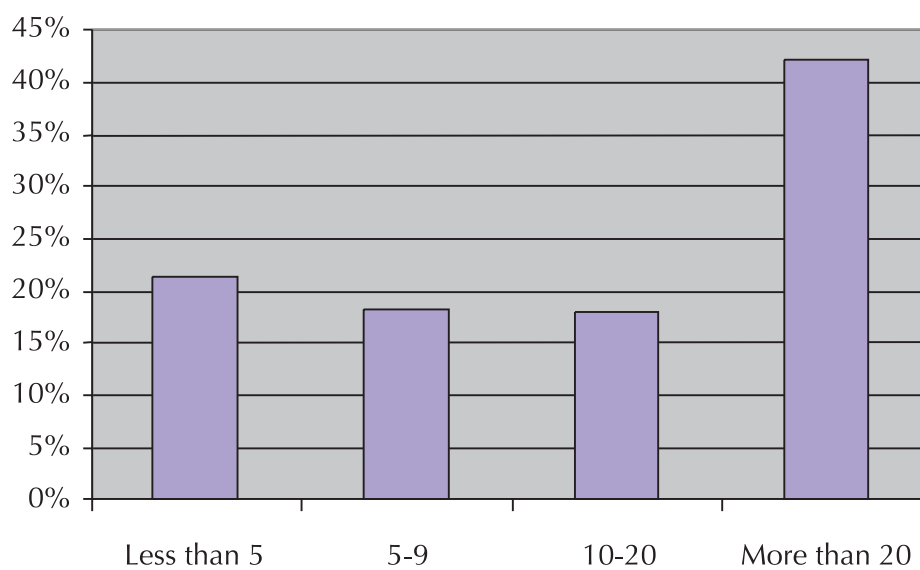
Age Group



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How Many Years in Parish

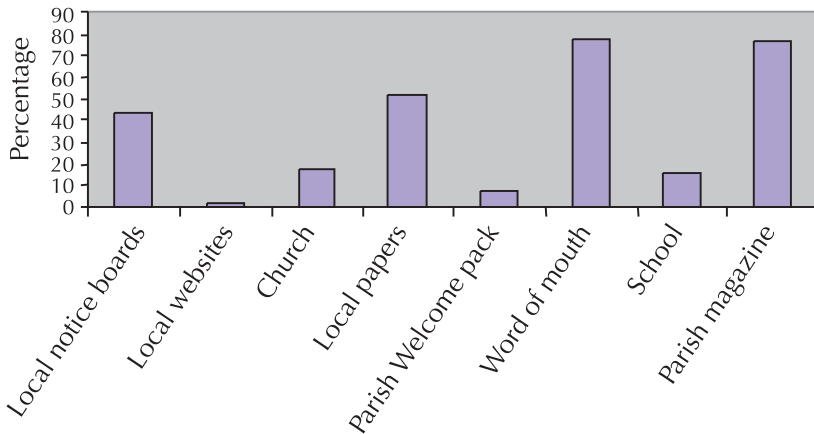


Communication

Communication within the Parish was a significant issue in the consultation process. Whilst excellent information sources are available along with current contacts these are not widely utilised (e.g. Parish Welcome Pack used by 7%). The Parish Magazine (serving the 4 local Parishes) and word of mouth are the most widely used information sources.

Local papers and notice boards were used by approximately half, with the school and church serving smaller parts of the population. Percentages are shown for respondents using each source of information:

Information Sources Used



Number = 296

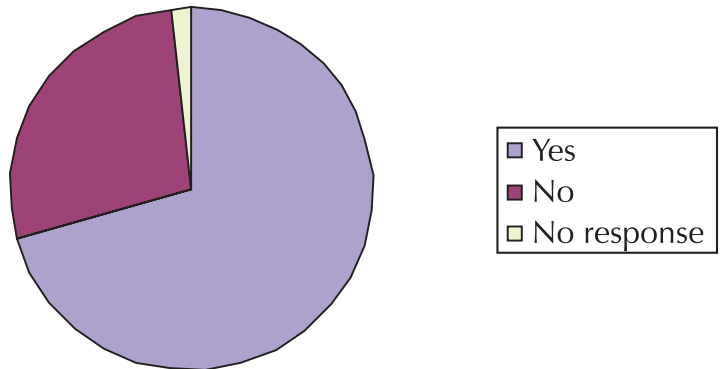
Action: C1 Parish Magazine, comments to be fed back to Editor and team, who are to be commended.

Despite the small size of the Parish, and the relatively high number of councillors 28% of people did not know how to contact a local Parish Councillor.

number = 299

Do you know how to contact a Parish Councillor

Action: C2 Parish Council to produce a contact sheet of councillors, meeting dates etc and distribute this possibly as an addition in Parish Magazine to Rushbury parishioners and post on Notice Boards



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Many practical suggestions were made about improving communication.

Longville needs a larger, weather-protected notice board.

Have occasional village nights in a local pub or village hall.

Local notice boards need updating more frequently to remove ads past their event date.

More use of a public notice board at, say, parish halls and at points regularly seen by public. What about one in local pubs?

Parish magazine should be more secular.

Action: C3 Notice Boards to be assessed and where possible improved, other avenues for promotion of (paper information) e.g. notice board in pubs to be explored.

Action: C4 A list of useful website addresses and phone numbers be collated and appended to welcome pack (includes SSDC, Ed Authority, local weather etc)

The idea of a website was favoured by the majority, although significant concerns were expressed about keeping any website current. There was a range of views on what content might be included. "Website justified if regularly and accurately maintained and its purpose is well-defined i.e. not a website just for the sake of it"

64% have access to the internet, a figure which is likely to rise as Broadband arrives, 60% of people thought Rushbury should have its own website, 27% thought it shouldn't and the remainder did not reply to this question. It should be noted that although access to internet correlates highly with the desire for a website 39 people with internet access do not think Rushbury should have a website. These people tended to be those using word of mouth for communication. Comments were received about keeping the website useful from these people. 5 people commented along the lines of: "Too few business and users to justify cost of setting up and maintaining a parish website. Put the money required for this website towards public transport for the people in the area who cannot drive". 5 others suggested a "combined Apedale website" or adding Rushbury to other local sites.

People with no current access to the web are not closed to the proposition of Rushbury having a website with 41 of them suggesting a website.

Recently, Cardington and Hope Bowdler have created websites which incorporate guides, local events and much of the Parish Magazine content.

Content information requested was as follows (bearing in mind 180 people thought Rushbury should have a website):

If Rushbury had a website, what should it provide?

As this question allowed multiple responses, the percentages do not total 100%.

	Total	Total %
Calendar of local events	213	71%
Information on local clubs & activities	204	68%
Local business information	180	60%
Tourist information	172	58%
Minutes of Parish Council meetings	155	52%

Comments on a website included:

Information from Parish welcome pack.

Items of local historical interest (7)

Local Club and social organisation contacts (5). Flicks in Sticks sched (3)

Recreational ideas (3) particularly Information on footpaths and walks (4)

Contacts for and bookings for village hall (5)

Neighbourhood watch representatives(3)

Local advertisements, for sale, jobs, wanted (4)

Local transport details. (4)

Refuse collection times (4) especially for holiday periods. (2)

Contact nos for council departments.

Dates & location of Parish Council meetings. Contact nos for councillors details

planning applications

Contact numbers for local services eg Drs, electricians, plumbers, local tradesmen etc.

Details of local schools and playgroups

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Suggestion and links pages (4)

After event comments of general interest.

Local weather forecast for next 5 days.

Local volunteers wishing to help others in the community.

Local routes for mountain bikers and walkers.

Map of the Parish.

Environmental Info inc flora fauna, agricultural info re the seasons

Emergency contact details (water, electricity, sewerage, police).

There could be a local information (personal) exchange

Car share system

Pictures from local events.

Children's section.

Local people's achievements/successes - a chance to celebrate.

Photographs of the Parish from 2000.

Action: C5 A subgroup to investigate website for Rushbury be formed

Local Services and facilities

One objective of the Parish Plan consultation was to identify “bigger issues” which are more difficult to deal with but where the concern of the whole Parish is more likely to have influence than that of a few individuals. During the Plan process open questions were utilised to allow people to comment on a number of service areas, these specific comments will be forwarded through the South Shropshire Partnership to inform those agencies responsible. The Shropshire Partnership draws together common aims, aspirations and strategies to develop Community Strategies. Partners speak and act jointly on vital issues for the county, establish and follow best practice and share information. Members include all the key agencies operating in South Shropshire, and they are committed to a philosophy of joined-up thinking. The partnerships aim to involve local communities. They harness their ideas, enthusiasm, commitment and energy. They maximise and focus resources where they will do the greatest good. Local facilities are managed with huge volunteer input and by local committees; census and survey on this scale are beyond the capacity of these organisations. All comments on local facilities will be forwarded to the bodies responsible for discussion.

Action: S1 To forward all individual comments and suggestions on local services and facilities to South Shropshire Partnership as well as copies of Rushbury Parish Plan, to provide all comments re local facilities to appropriate groups

Health and Social Services Comments

Many people (22) registered positive approval for the standards of Health and Social Service Provision for Rushbury. Clearly provision for health is provided through the local GP surgeries in Church Stretton and Much Wenlock. A very small number of respondents enquired about more local facility and some also commented on the out of hours service and surgery opening times, 8 specifically commented on difficulty in making GP appointments. The most frequent concern was access to NHS dentistry with 23 specific comments. 2 suggestions were registered for a chemist's delivery service. Transportation was a problem for 15 in reaching health facilities, but the transport, where available, was praised by 3.

Relatively few comments were made about social services but home help and support for the terminally ill were raised as issues. Childcare provision and mother and toddler groups were also mentioned.

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Education Comments

Pre school was praised specifically in Rushbury, Longville residents enquired over more local (to Longville) provision. Longer hours were also requested.

The school in Rushbury received 18 favourable comments, and clearly the community wishes to see the school remain in the Parish, specific mentions were made over parking issues (covered below) bus transport, new buildings and having a male teacher. After school clubs were also suggested.

Secondary education raised few comments other than lack of choice at 6th form.

13 people requested more adult education and specifically computer classes and provision of computing facilities in the village was mentioned. Library services were praised and some expansion was requested.

Sport and Leisure

Overall people seem very content with the local sports facilities, the provision is seen as good, however, most of the users are in informal groups and clubs and there is a “self help” approach to leisure. More communication and contacts would be welcomed.

Football, cricket and especially tennis are mentioned, with probably sufficient interest to form a tennis club, perhaps following the example of the much loved table tennis club. Mountain biking routes were suggested, and several people enquired about the possibility of an evening fitness class or yoga class in the village hall.

Services and Utilities

A Range of comments were made, summarised below:

Sewage	Concern that it is inadequate (8), Want mains
Road Drains	More required in Wall & Rushbury (2)
Refuse	Wheelie bins (large) wanted (2) Current recycle frequency adequate, Good service Want can crusher, concern over litter during collection Should include all household items Recycling of plastic (5), Recycling of foil, green waste Inadequate service (2) need for street sweeping and litter collection

Street Lights	Comments that they were wanted (2) Not wanted (7)
Police	Poor response time, inadequate policing Neighbourhood watch good
Telephone	Public vandalised (2), Broadband availability Telephone cables hanging Poor service (3)
Gas	Wanted (3)
Post	Late delivered to wrong address, Good (2)
Electricity	Frequent outages (2)
Water	Low pressure (2)

Local Facilities

Rushbury Parish has a modern village hall and a green created in 2000, these relatively new facilities provoked many comments through the consultation process and more than a hundred written comments in the Questionnaire. Many of the issues raised can be addressed by the governing committees, it is hoped that the results of the Parish Plan survey will provoke appropriate consideration and action by these bodies.

The Hall is seen as a very good facility (8) with a great many people clearly enjoying its use.

Difficulties in booking it were noted "Hall always booked by regular groups". Difficulties are to an extent generated by the relatively high use, although some parishioners felt that use was mainly by groups from outwith the Parish. The management of the hall has clearly achieved a great deal in funding the building and its use, however, several people commented on the committee and management issues. One of the key points mentioned (14) was lack of cleanliness, occasional noise and vandalism associated with drinking worried some nearby residents.

The hall was considered too big for some events and 7 people mentioned the need for a smaller meeting room for groups of up to 50 in the Parish. The acoustics also prompted enquiry about use of the church or school for certain events. Improved kitchen facilities were also suggested (4).

The Millennium Green again enjoyed positive reaction, although restriction (created by funding covenants) on permanent sports markings and goal posts clearly irritated a number of people, footpath access and its geographic position on the village margins also led to suggestions. Dog walking was seen as necessary, however unrestrained dogs and fouling were a worry.

Longville residents feel less ownership and more removed from village amenities.

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Housing

How much development do we want?

This is a key question explored through how strongly people felt about the statement that “there should be no further housing development”.

By a margin of 6% the majority of people disagree with the statement, although the strength of feeling, indicated in the first column, is greater amongst those who prefer no further development of any kind. Comments and feedback draw attention to recent expansion, particularly in Wall and Rushbury, and its negative impact upon the village environment. On the other hand, an equal number of respondents recognise the need for affordable housing for local people, with an emphasis on purchase rather than rent.

number = 268

Of the 25 specific comments received from those wanting further development 20 mentioned the needs of younger parishioners, with the greatest emphasis on affordable houses or conversions to purchase:

“More affordable houses available to buy in the Parish for people who want to get onto the property ladder.”

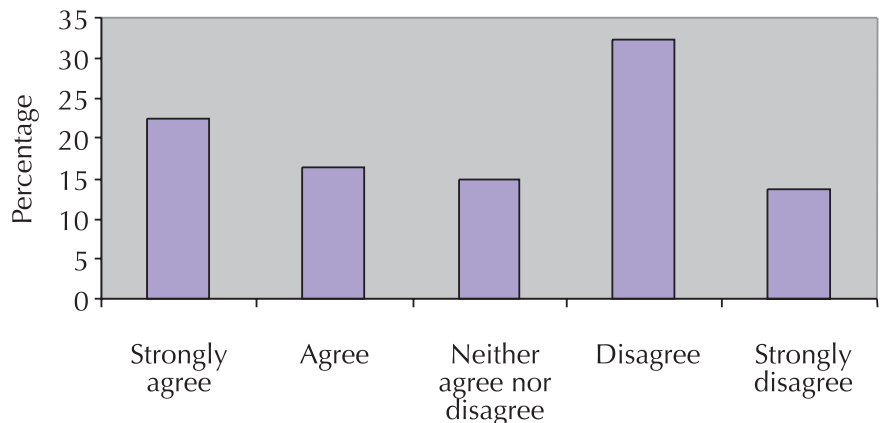
Whilst the comments below broadly encapsulate the views of another 23 respondents:

“Rushbury has expanded considerably in recent years, enough is enough. We have our share of affordable housing.”

“We are a village, not a town.”

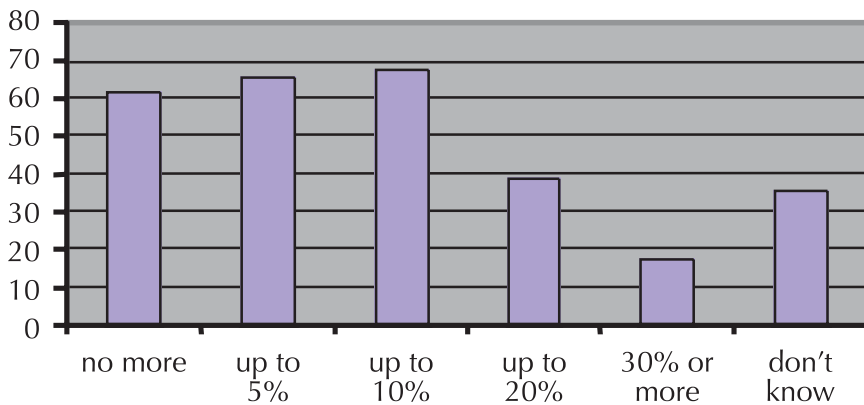
Although a small majority of people recognise the likelihood of further development, the Questionnaire went on to ask how much housing they would find acceptable. The response to this question reveals that there are severe limitations on what the Parish as a whole would consider tolerable.

There should be no further housing development



With approximately 250 dwellings in the Parish at present, what level of development would be acceptable over the next 20 years? The vast majority (81%) would only accept an increase of 10-20% more houses over this period, i.e. no more than 5 new dwellings per year.

Acceptable increase in housing over 20 years



number = 289
 When considered in more depth, the reaction to more development in the Parish shows a marked difference between Wall under Heywood and Rushbury and the smaller outlying settlements (East Wall, Longville, Lushcott, Wilderhope, Wall Bank and Stone Acton).

Most development over the past 10-15 years has been in Wall and Rushbury, with a significant increase in housing over the past 5 years. The impact of this is made clear by both the response to the Questionnaire and comments freely made in the open sections of that document and in consultation. Reference is made to both the appearance and the amount of recent development and the impact upon the environment as a whole in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

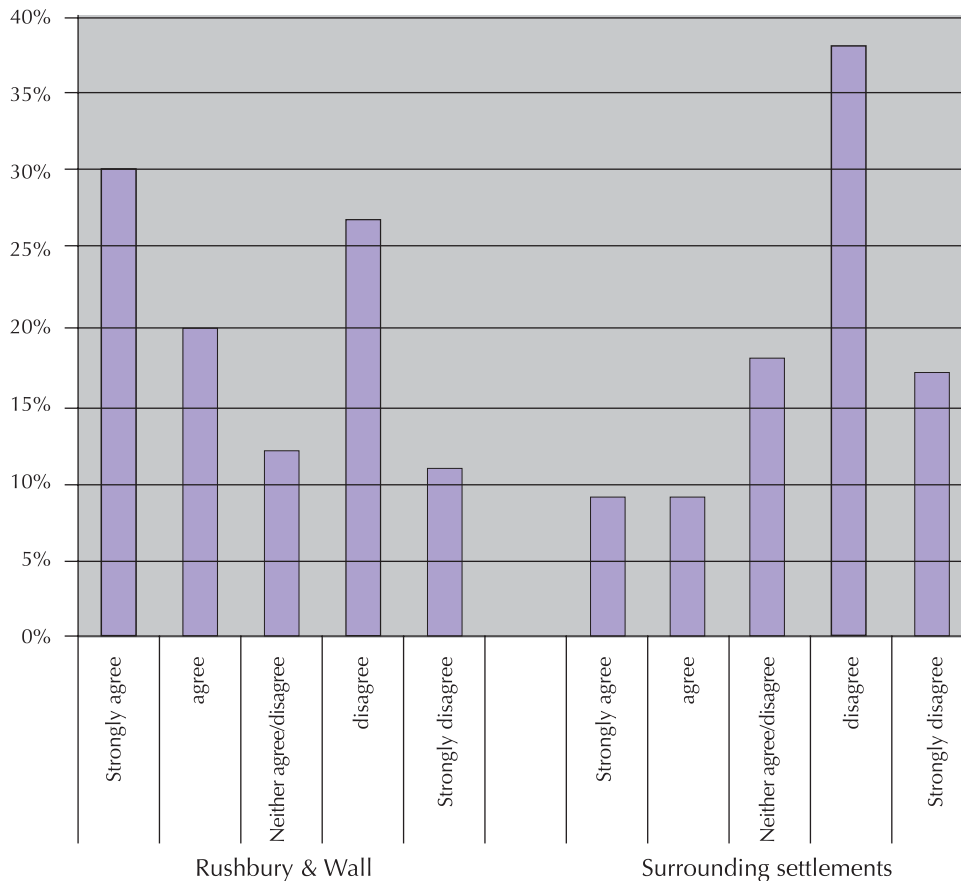
The response from Wall and Rushbury supported the statement “there should be no further development” by a margin of approximately 12%.

This contrasts with the response from the outlying hamlets and settlements where the statement does not gain support by a margin of around 50%, though few people have elected to comment on where this might be.

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There should be no further housing development



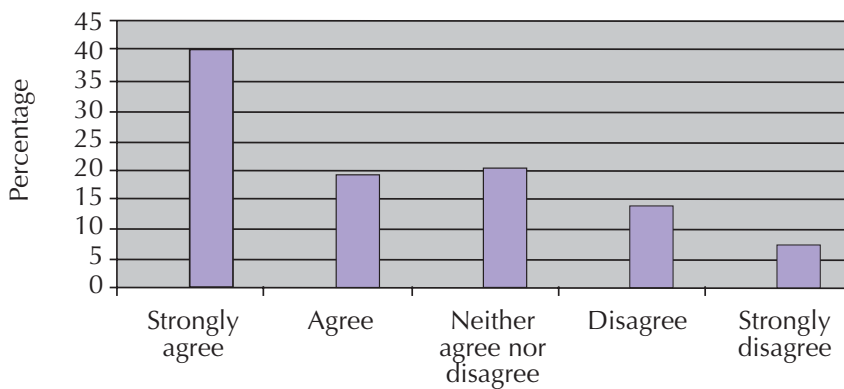
The clear message is that any argument for further expansion in the Wall and Rushbury area would only be sustainable in exceptional circumstances. It would otherwise attract a hostile reaction from existing residents. Reasons given include the visual impact of new houses and the pressures on infrastructure (roads, drains, water pressure and sewage disposal).

“Any future building work should pay proper attention to road safety issues...”

“Too much development concentrated on Wall and Rushbury. There were a further 25 unambiguous responses to the question “What problems or difficulties might Rushbury Parish face in the future?” which highlighted more development as a major problem. Almost half state bluntly, “over-development” or “too much housing”, reinforced by 9 similar statements in response to the question on what people disliked about living in Rushbury.

Remaining on the subject of location, responses to the question of green-field development also shows a considerable strength of feeling.

There should be no greenfield development



number =270

By a majority of 3 to 1, those choosing to express an opinion are against any building on green-field sites, although yet again this is more strongly felt in Wall and Rushbury.

What kind of development do we want?

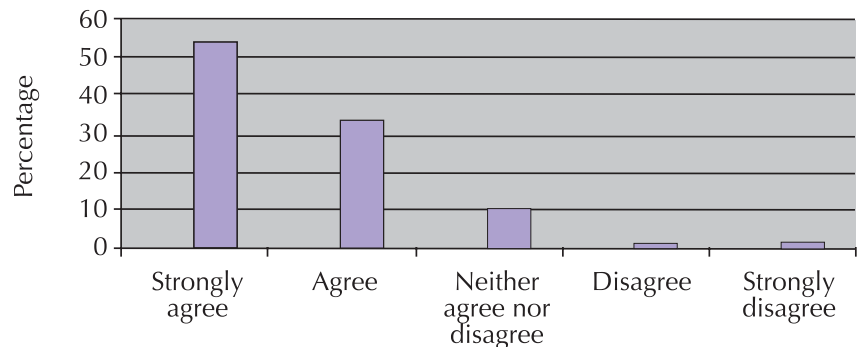
Accepting that a small majority are against any further development, faced with the reality that things cannot remain as they are indefinitely, almost 80% could contemplate 25 to 50 more dwellings over a 20 year period. Clearly there is great sensitivity surrounding this issue so what guidance can the Parish Plan offer?

On the subject of what type of houses, the strongest point emerging is that the style of future building should be given priority consideration with 88% agreeing.

number = 273

By far the largest group of unprompted comments directly about housing in the Questionnaire, 33 in all, relate to this, with others added in the crucial "what problems might Rushbury face in the future" section. It is clearly a very emotive issue.

Styles of architecture should be identified that are suitable for any future building in the parish



"Architectural style in new build is 'Pizza Hut' and inappropriate for rural setting in an AONB."

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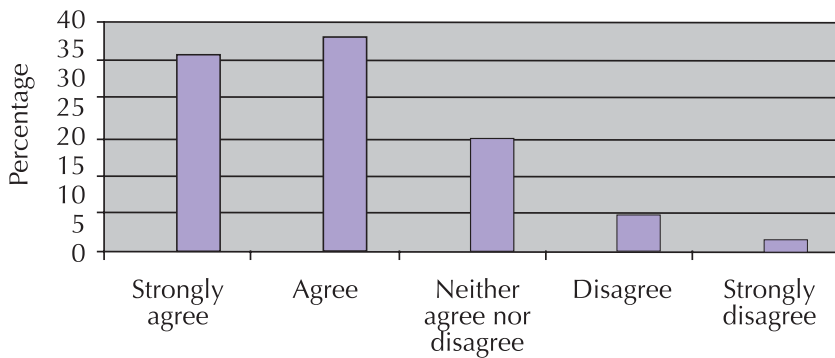
“Up to now the development has been a mess and if this is allowed to continue the character of the Parish will be ruined. More care is needed before planning is granted.”

Significantly, the number of respondents with no opinion was by far the lowest on this particular question, about half compared to other issues. It is quite evident that recent building has stirred up considerable emotion which may have hardened resistance to future development.

As a way forward, conversion of existing buildings to residential use receives majority support, possibly driven by the same emotions. This response can be taken in the context of comments upon the style of recent new building.

number =275

Conversion of existing buildings is better than new build



The lowest response and most difficult questions to interpret are about the sort of dwelling most needed. Affordable rented houses get only minority support at 41%, however 64% express support for “starter homes”- smaller houses to buy. The only other firm conclusion is that 53% favour a mix of housing type. The lack of clear response may indicate that the recent housing development for rental addresses the need revealed in the Millennium survey and there is no longer such a strong drive for affordable housing.

Summary

Style and location together send the strongest signals to representatives of the Parish and planners alike that people are not happy with recent trends and that local consultation should be a priority. People are not unsympathetic to need within the local population but in a number of ways they feel that it is not being properly met and insufficient consideration is given to the environment when initiatives are taken to meet such need.

There is evidence in a shift of opinion toward affordable housing to buy rather than rent, and concerns about the system of allocation of rental housing in use.



New affordable Housing Morgans Field

“Housing should only be provided for need of long-term local young people who want to live in the area they have grown up in NOT (sic) to encourage influx of non-locals who want to live in the countryside.”

“Any further housing developments should be in keeping with the village, not ugly red brick buildings.”

“Everyone revisiting Rushbury express their horror and dismay at the visual impact that the ‘planners’ have foisted on our AONB.”

It is very strongly felt that the impact of new development has been greatest in Wall and Rushbury causing feelings to run high on this issue. A moratorium on further development is probably overdue, to allow a period of stability in those villages whilst the most recent, comparatively substantial increase in numbers of houses is absorbed.

Action: To set up a steering group for the production of a village design statement.

Action: Local Parish and District Planners should enter into a meaningful ongoing dialogue particularly noting the results of the Parish Planning process in 2005 with respect to:

- **Level of new development**
- **Location of new development**
- **Type of new development (affordable to buy)**
- **Type of new development (conversion pref)**

Action: Parish Planners Parish Council and District Council to further analyse and consider responses in order to jointly develop strategy and consensus on future development and to jointly input into village design statement

Rushbury Parish Plan

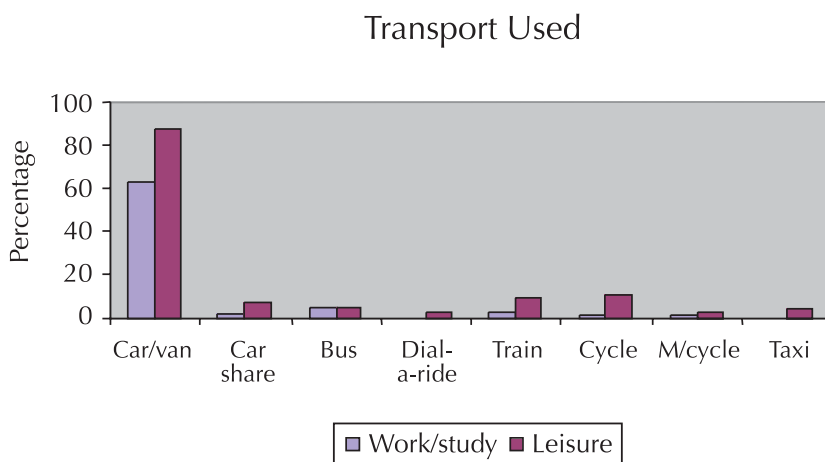


Transport & Safety

Transport

Public transport was a significant issue to those in the Parish who do not have use of a car, whereas safety was a significant issue to the majority of the respondents.

Travel, for two purposes, work and/or study, and Leisure proportion of usage is detailed below.



Number = 278

As would be expected the majority usage is the car/van although some 7% use the bus for work/study (mostly school bus) and some 6% use bus/dial-a-ride for leisure. Whilst a small proportion use public transport, for those who do the service is vital and seen as limited. The problems of transport provision are well recognised and created numerous comments which distil into three main areas:

No interlinking transport between the villages in the Parish.

“Public transport is poor between Church Stretton and Much Wenlock, and Bridgnorth and Craven Arms”

Public transport to Church Stretton is only available in the form of the school bus and therefore only available at school times or the alternative ‘Dial-a-ride’ bus. Perception is that use of this service is only encouraged for those without cars and they deter car owners from booking the service.

“Transport limited to one dial-a-ride bus on Thursdays to Stretton which you cannot use if you have other transport”

“Strongly object to Thursday bus service being cut in favour of dial-a-ride service. Bus service existed for 60 years and is tried and tested, dial-a-ride seems to be short term, more expensive and more trouble to use. Please subsidise our buses”

Lack of links and coordination between services and poor time table and public information.

“I don’t know where to find out about local buses though one passes my door”

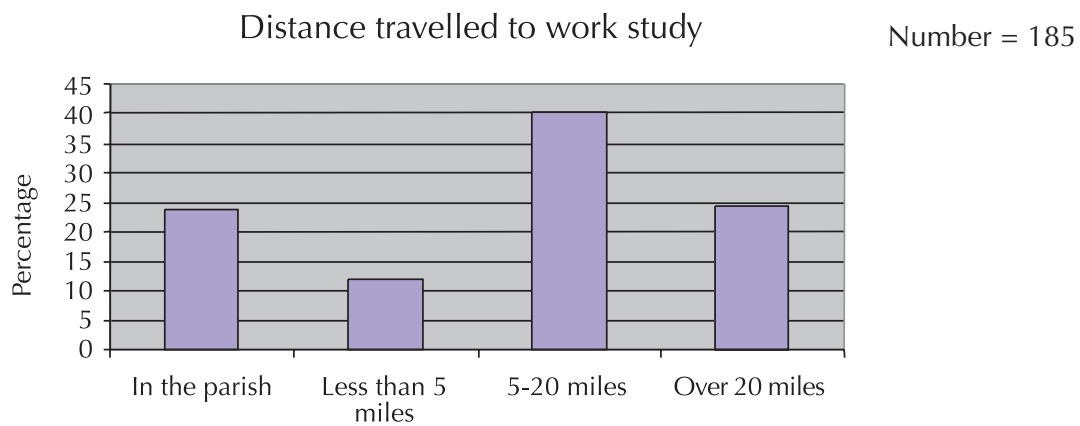
“Public transport not viable in rural areas. Survey those who need transport and provide taxi to shops etc say once a week. More convenient and cost effective”

One major area of concern in relation to public transport is the need to provide transport for health care such as travel to doctors, dentist, chemist and hospital appointments.

Action: T1 Feedback information to local transport service providers and ask them to provide better timetables and information for dissemination

Action: T2 Form local subgroup to specifically survey public transport users to further understand and represent needs.

People travel considerable distances to work or study:



Safety

The speed of traffic in the Parish was a major concern; also the provision of footpaths, mainly within Longville and between Wall and Rushbury. In consultation many people expressed anxiety about the safety of children at Morgans Field and about the parking at Rushbury School. The formal Questionnaire was used to substantiate the depth of feeling in the Parish as a whole to these issues and to provide a clear indication of what kind of changes were acceptable and desirable. Some suggestions provoked negative reactions such as street lighting, which is only wanted by a minority.

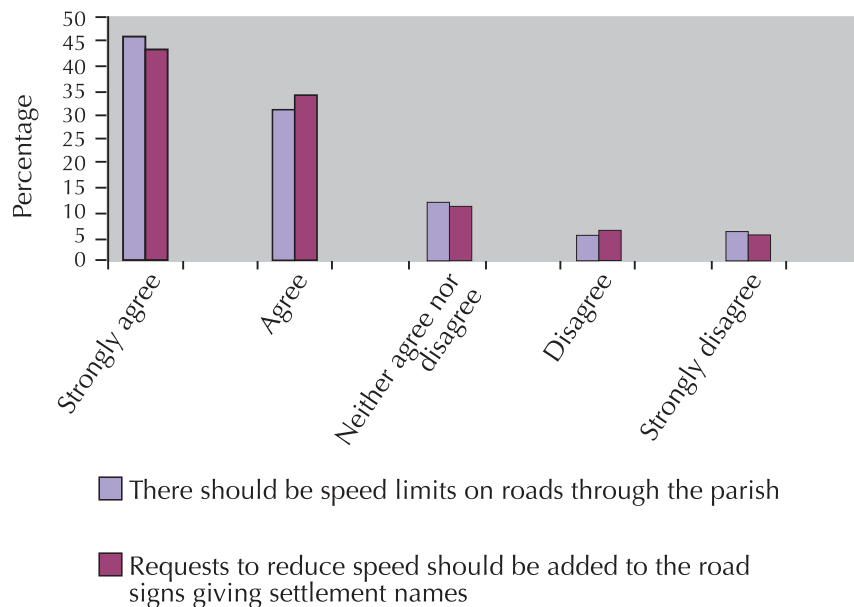
Rushbury Parish Plan



Speeding

“30mph limit from Wall to Longville. I have had 11 cars go through my roadside hedge in the last 15 years”

Speed limits in The Parish



Number =269/283

There was a strong feeling with many comments from those who live along the B4371 for speed limits in Longville and Wall. There were particular concerns also for better signage for the village hall and the ‘Gilberries Lane’ junction although residents using the other junctions also felt there should be more warning or ‘slow’ signs. Wall Bank was of concern due to the narrow road and tight bends. A very large number of practical suggestions were provided.

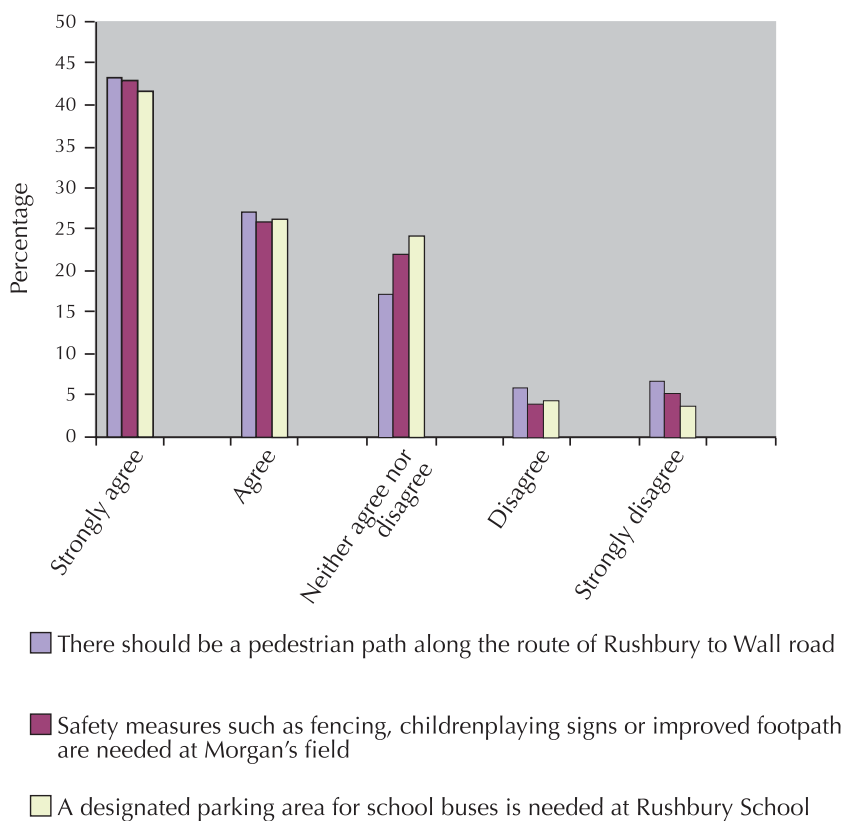
“A sign at Rushbury village hall indicating oncoming traffic turning down Darby Lane - this is vital”

Action: T3 Feedback information and detailed suggestion to local planning authorities and Parish Council

Action: T4 Parish Council to approach the relevant council and highway departments for better signage and or speed limits, statutory or advisory enclosing Plan Response. Provide responses to parishioners and maintain pressure for solutions to be found.

Pedestrian Safety

Attitudes to proposed safety changes



number = 263

The strength of feeling about a pedestrian route from Wall to Rushbury, particularly providing a pedestrian route from the Morgans Field development to the Village Green, is very clear. Whilst there is opposition to changes which would negatively impact the environment (for instance hedge removal would provoke an outcry) there is a strong support for investigation of a possible solution.

“As SSHA have provided dwellings for families with lots of kids, perhaps they should provide a direct pedestrian link to the green so they don't have to play in the road”

Rushbury Parish Plan



“The slip road that is supposed to be used for people living in the new dwellings should be blocked off at one end to stop people driving through to turn their car round to lower the risk of children getting hurt whilst playing in this road”

Action: T5 Feedback information and detailed suggestion on safety improvements to local planning authorities and Parish Council

Action: T6 Parish Council to form working group to investigate mechanisms to provide footpaths and improve safety to include the potential for land to provide footpaths in Longville on B4371 and on Wall to Rushbury Road and to liaise with SSDC re approach to SSHS re specific improvements suggested and potential funding for footpaths.

Parking at Rushbury School was raised as an issue in consultation. Again the real extent of this problem had not been appreciated within the Parish and early survey results were used at a public meeting to discuss. 91% agreed that something must be done. This depth of feeling had not been appreciated since the school governors had had no complaints, the only formal mechanism existing to raise the issue. Whilst “bubbling under” on Parish Council agendas the need for response had not been as clear. Suggestions included enlargement of the school car park by taking some of the school playing field and discouraging parking outside the school. This problem also applied to times when the Church was in use. Notes to Open Meeting 14th March Appendix 6

Action: T7 Parish Plan results to be shared at Open Meeting to discuss issue of parking at Rushbury School. Survey Results to be made available to all interested parties.

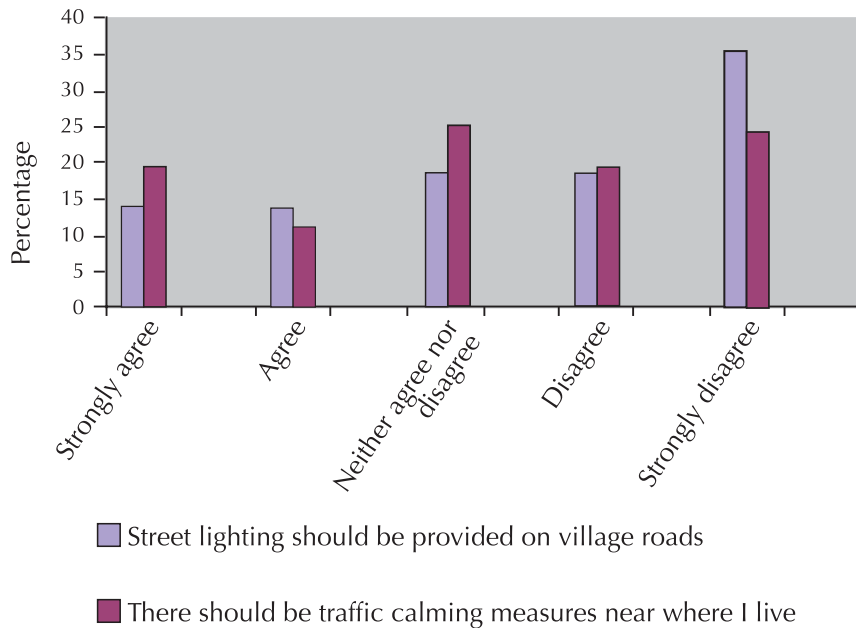
Action: T8 Parish Council to continue to address the issue of parking at the school and seek resolution.

Whilst improving safety is clearly very important there is a balance with the environment and context of the village, a wide number of comments were collected reflecting the desire not to “clutter” the village:

Pavements are not needs in rural areas. People should take responsibility for their conduct on rural roads. Do not turn rural villages into suburbia. Do not add any more signage to existing. We are spoiling our landscape and people ignore signs.

This view was reflected in attitudes to street lighting and specific traffic calming measures

Street lights and Traffic Calming



Number =278/267

The majority want the village to remain as it is with no street lights, or specific traffic calming. Comments were made that street lights would make it like a town which people do not want. Lack of street lighting was mentioned by many as a reason to live in Rushbury. Those requesting street lighting were along the lines of minimal lighting for improved safety.

As with street lighting just under a third of respondents wanted traffic calming but again this was only for specific areas, particularly Morgans Field and Longville where other measures may be more appropriate.

Rushbury Parish Plan



The majority of comments relate to the need for footpaths in Longville and between Wall and Rushbury. The speed of cars was again a concern in this respect.

Overall one major comment and observation was that it is we the parishioners who are most often responsible for the problems, whether as “speeding drivers who are parents taking children to school”, people parking at the school, farmers and the many of us who use cars to get to work or study. One popular suggestion was to further engage the local community on this issue

Action: T9 Information to all properties in the Parish to educate locals about the road safety problems to reduce the problems by making sure we who live in the Parish are not a problem. Youth Education.

Areas of particular concern to highlighted are:

1. B4371 Wall Bank to Longville side of village hall for speed limit,
2. B4371 Through Longville Village for speed limit and footpath,
3. B4371 Stone Acton, Gilberries Lane, Heath Common and East Wall junctions for Slow and warning signs,
4. Wall to Rushbury Road for footpath and warning signs.

Business

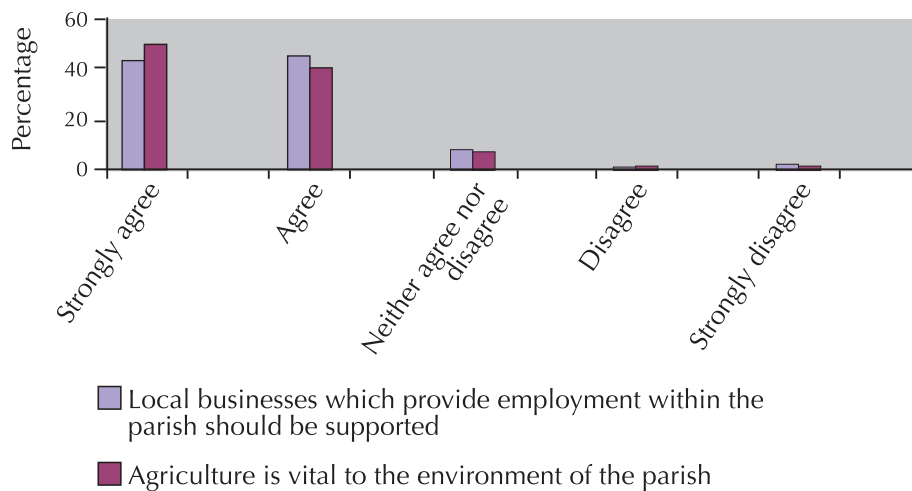
Parishioners strongly support both the idea of business, and the existing agricultural work within the Parish. 45 people, 15% of the total adult population, are employed in agriculture. Consultation and discussion showed that most farmers are unaware of the public support for their activity; existing business owners also felt relatively unsupported particularly with regard to business rates. People, however, are very concerned about local employment and the future “shape” of the Parish with changing agriculture and little alternate employment.



With more people working away daily, the parish could become a ‘rooster’ village.

With agriculture relying on less labour, parish life as we know it will steadily die out.

Attitudes to Business in the Parish



number = 283

Action: B1 To encourage and support local business within the Parish

Rushbury Parish Plan

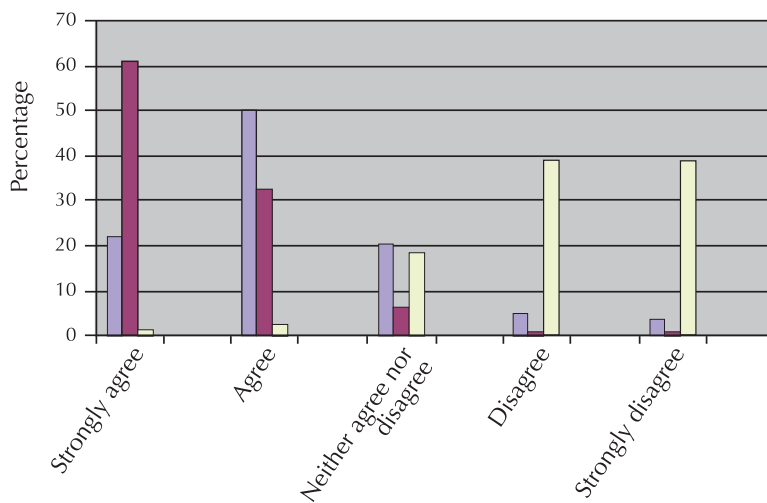


“It’s a nice idea to provide more local jobs, but just like houses some are more appropriate than others. Small businesses shouldn’t have too much impact on the surrounding environment and roads, although a business can grow”

“I am considering starting a small business in the Parish and can identify with the need for small scale business developments”

Whilst support is high for business, parishioners are concerned about scale of development and particularly environmental impact.

Scale and impact of Developments



- Only small business developments should be allowed in the parish
- Ensuring that development doesn't negatively impact on the environment is important
- There should be large business developments in the parish

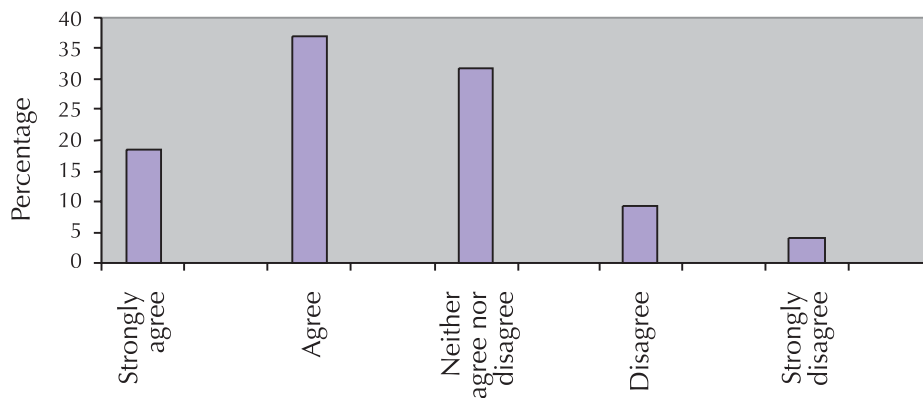
number = 283

Comments considered the benefits of business and the potential risks and, whilst small developments were welcomed, caution is urged and open consultation and further debate required where any specific development is considered. “Land should be available for business premises but I am opposed to cheap and cheerful business parks. We need high quality jobs in the area, but creating an individual ghetto should be resisted at all costs”

The “Take Home” message is however clear that most people welcome appropriate well planned business development.

Action: B2 To ensure that development for business is well considered and planned

It is important to encourage tourists into the parish



number = 272

Tourism provides occupation for 7 people within the Parish, but for many it is going to become more important in the future with rural diversification schemes.

Few people are antagonistic to developing tourism in the Parish.

Rushbury Parish Plan



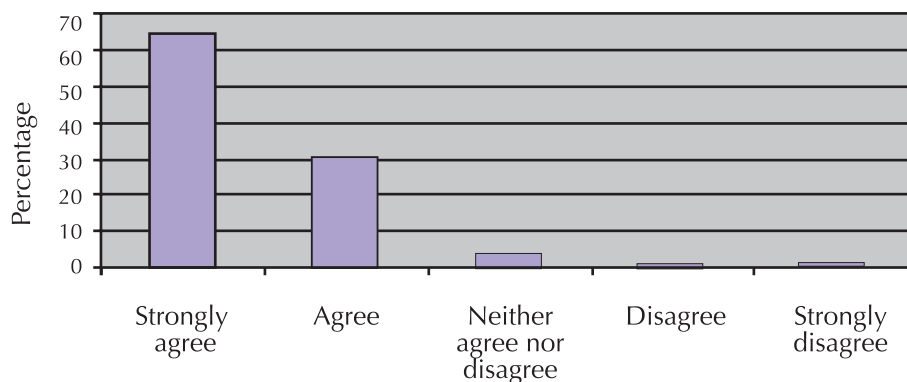
Environment

The natural environment and its historic features

'The environment is the single largest asset of the Parish and should be managed for the benefit of future generations.'

The environment featured strongly throughout consultation and 95% agreed or strongly agreed that the natural environment and its historic features were important to them.

The natural environment and its historic features are important



number =293

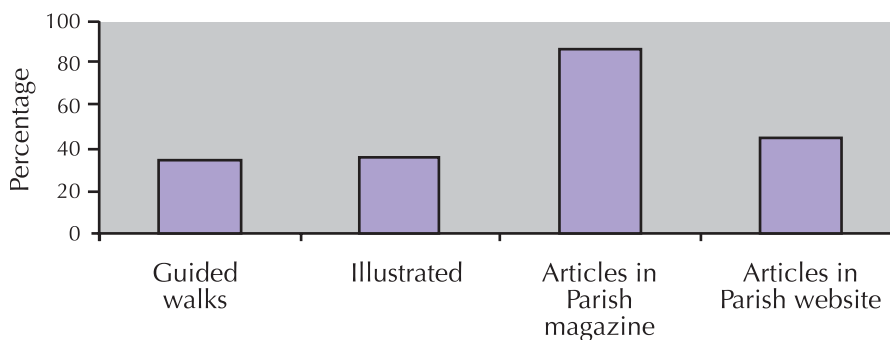
Action: E1. Establish a Parish environment group.

- **Formation of a group of interested volunteers to:**
 - Deliver environmental actions identified in the parish planning process.
 - Secure resources necessary.
 - Provide a forum of learning and discussion.

Learning more about the natural environment and its historic features

Parishioners are also interested in learning more about the natural and historic environment of the Parish. The chart below illustrates the level of interest and mode of learning favoured in direct questioning. The Parish Magazine was most often mentioned as a way to learn more. A Parish website, illustrated talks and guided walks were also popular.

Mode of learning favoured by those 260 people out of 299 respondents interested in more information



Note: Percentages reflect ability of respondents to use multiple sources of information

Action: E2. Develop an annual timetable of events, articles, guided walks for delivery by the Parish environment group.

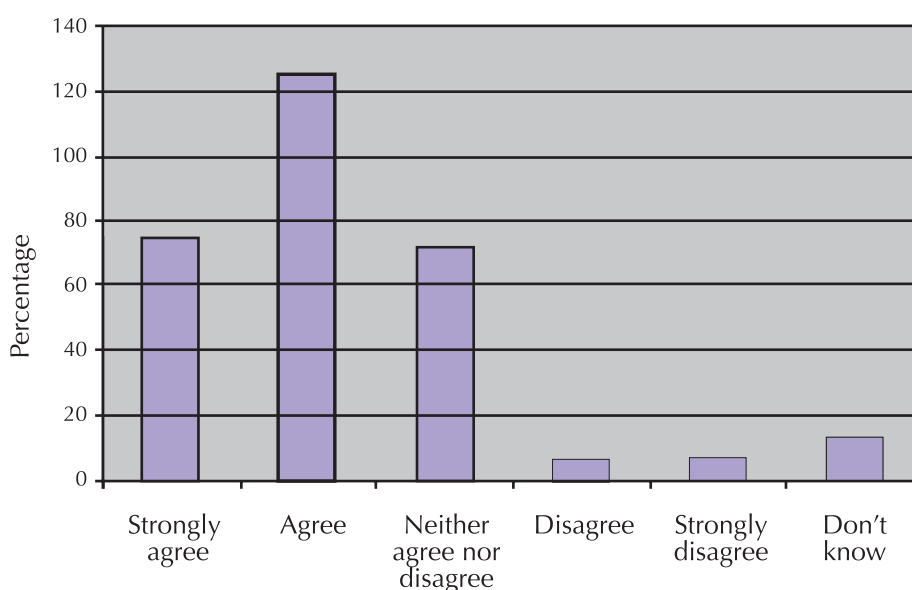
Parish Environmental Plan

There was also strong support for developing a Parish Environment Plan. In total 285 people responded to this question and a majority of 201 (71%) were in favour. However a significant minority of 71 (25%) respondents were non committal which may indicate a lack of knowledge about the value of such a plan.

Rushbury Parish Plan



In favour of a Parish Environmental Plan



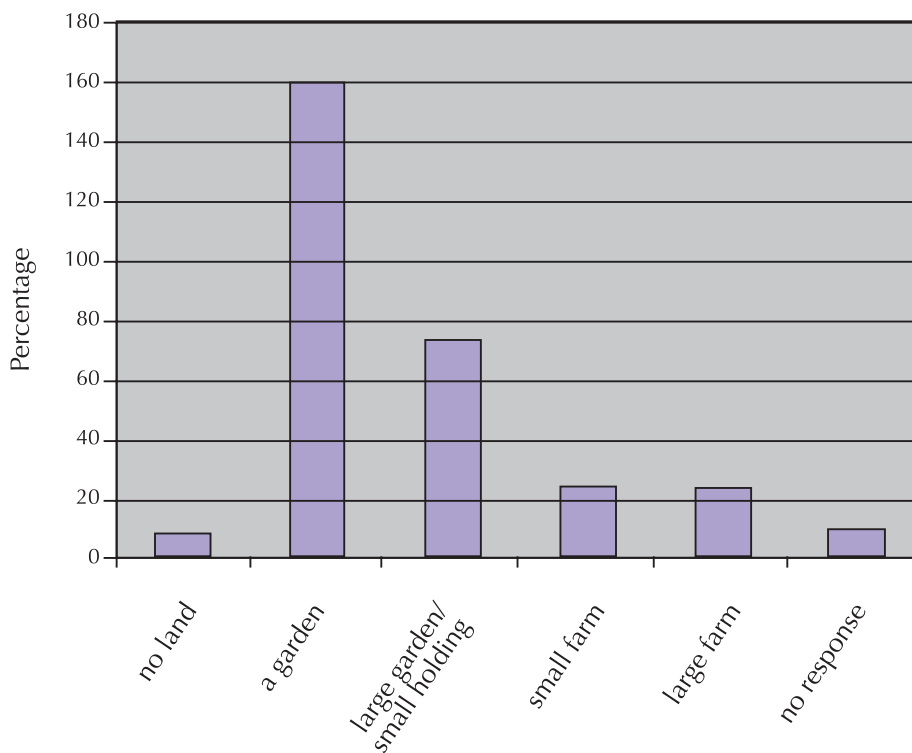
Action: E 3 The environment group to develop a “Parish Environment Action Plan” in conjunction with specialist assistance

- **Knowledge of the existing natural and historic environment assets in the Parish.**
- **An understanding of the practices in place to manage the environment. Identification of opportunities to further conserve and interpret the environment.**

Managing the land for wildlife

The Plan aimed to assess the level of interest there was in learning more about how land could be positively managed for wildlife. Beginning by asking about land ownership 160 (55%) of respondents had a garden and 74 (26%) had access to a large garden or small holding. A significant minority 48 (16%) of respondents lived on farms.

ownership/access to land



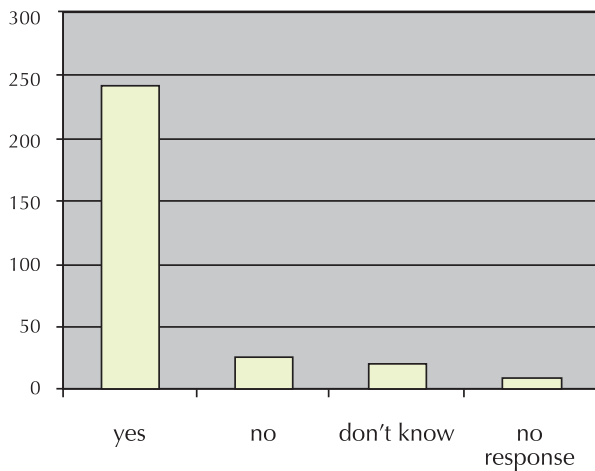
There were 104 responses to the question about how land could be positively managed for wildlife there were 48 positive responses, however, 41 respondents indicated that they did not want to learn more and 15 respondents already considered they were well informed. Access to a website, leaflets, talks and making use of the Parish Magazine were most frequently mentioned as a way of learning more.

Action: E4 Further Research and analyse Plan data to establish which parts of the community will be more interested to learn more and engage in positive environmental management

Rushbury Parish Plan



Recycling plastic & cardboard



In total 289 people responded to the question, 'Do you think it would be a good idea to include facilities for recycling plastic and cardboard cartons at Rushbury Village Hall?' The majority of respondents 242 (84%) considered this a good idea.

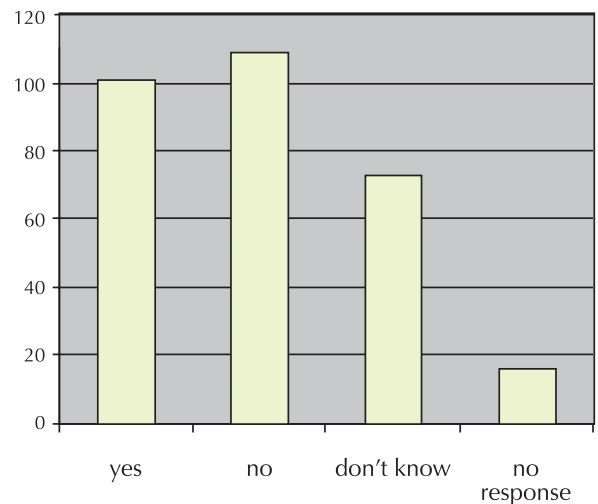
Action: E5 Discuss with SSDC their intentions for further doorstep recycling collections. Raise awareness within SSDC of the interest within the Parish for increased recycling.

Communal composting facilities

There was an interesting divide of opinion and a significant level of uncertainty in response to question 38 which asked, 'Do you think a communal composting facility for garden and suitable kitchen waste is required?' In total 283 people responded; 109 (38%) were not in favour, 101 (36%) were in favour and 73 (26%) did not know.

Further investigation is required to understand whether there is some aspect of communal composting that is an issue or whether these results simply reflect the fact that individuals have their own composting facilities.

Communal composting facility



Parish Footpaths

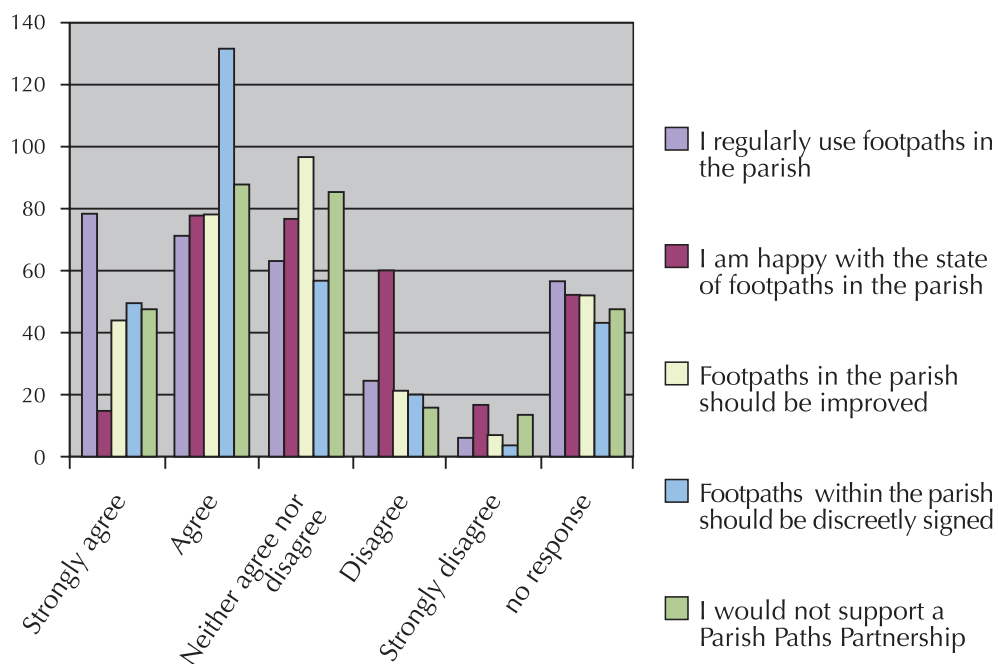
Question 39 asked about condition and usage of Parish footpaths and sought to assess the level of support for a Parish Paths Partnership.

In total 243 people responded to the question about using footpaths; of these 149 (61%) regularly used them.

When asked about the state of the footpaths, 247 people responded. There was a fairly even split between those who were happy with the state of the footpaths (38%), those that were not (31%) and those with a neutral opinion (31%). When asked if footpaths should be improved almost half of those responding 122 (49%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

The strongest opinion to this set of questions about footpaths was in response to the statement, 'Footpaths within the Parish should be discreetly signed'. In total 256 people responded to this statement and 181 (71%) agreed or strongly agreed that footpaths should be discreetly signed.

Parish Footpaths



Rushbury Parish Plan



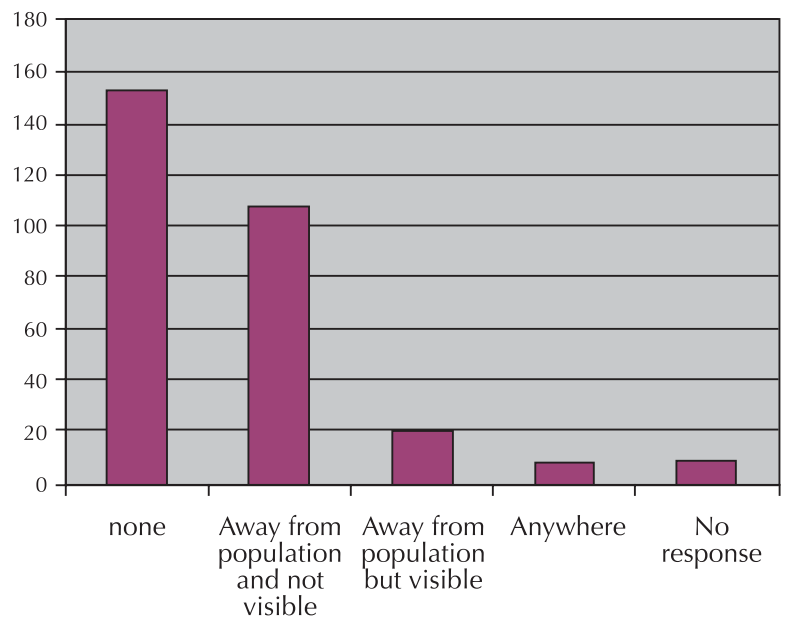
Finally, when asked, 'I would support a Parish Paths Partnership' 136 (54%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Action E6 Further investigation of attitude and response to establishing a Parish Paths Partnership. Some investigation could be made with Rights of Way Team regarding path signage

Communication Masts

There were strong feelings expressed about the erection of telephone or radio masts. In total 290 people responded to this question of these 153 (53%) did not want any communication masts in the Parish but 108 (37%) would not object if masts were sited away from the population and were not visible. A minority 21 (7%) respondents were happy for masts to be visible as long as they were sited away from the population and 8 (3%) were happy for masts to be erected anywhere in the Parish.

Erection of communication masts



Action
Note views of the community.

Comments on the Environment

'We are fortunate to live in a wonderful place - let's keep it how it is for as long as possible.'

In total 46 people commented about the environment. There were a wide range of responses but the most frequently mentioned related to conserving the natural environment and discouraging change in an area of outstanding natural beauty; 10 people mentioned this as important. 5 people were concerned about the proliferation of radio masts. 4 respondents drew attention to rubbish and litter making the Parish untidy and 4 respondents wished the roads were cleaner. 5 respondents were concerned about access to public footpaths.

'It's too easy to damage and very difficult to correct. We must aim to protect and develop as sensitively as possible for our own use and convenience whilst remembering our needs are very brief in the scale of protection and development of our environment.'



Rushbury Parish Plan



Summary of Actions

Code	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
C1	To Provide Feedback to Editor Parish Magazine	Rushbury Parish Plan Steering Group	Immediate
C2	Provide contact details for Parish Councillors and other PCC detail	Parish Council Parish Plan to provide all feedback	3 months
C3	Notice Boards to be assessed and where possible improved, other avenues for promotion of (paper information) e.g. notice board in pubs to be explored	Rushbury Parish Council/ Millennium Green	6 months
C4	A list of useful website addresses be collated and appended to welcome pack (includes SSDC, Ed Authority, local weather etc)	Welcome Pack Organisers/ Parish Plan Group	1 year and ongoing
C5	Parish Council to help in forming a subgroup to investigate website for Rushbury	Parish Council (lead), Parish Mag, PCC, Village Hall Committee, Other groups and users	1 year and ongoing
S1	To forward all individual comments and suggestions on local services and facilities to South Shropshire Partnership for onward distribution as well as copies of Rushbury Parish Plan	Rushbury Parish Plan Steering Group	April/May 2005
H1	To set up a steering group for the production of a village design statement.	Rushbury Parish Plan Steering Group	Initiated August 2005
H2	Local Parish and District Planners should enter into a meaningful ongoing dialogue particularly noting the results of the Parish Planning process	Steering Group	
H3	Parish Planners PC and DC to further analyse and consider responses in order to jointly develop strategy and consensus on future development and to jointly input into the village design statement	Steering Group/ Parish Council/ District Council	

Code	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
T1	Feedback information to local transport service providers and ask them to provide better timetables and information for dissemination	Parish Plan Steering Group	Effectuated through South Shrops Partnership March 2005
T2	Form local subgroup to specifically survey public transport users to further understand and represent needs		Autumn 2005
T3	Feedback information and detailed suggestion to local planning authorities and Parish Council		
T4	Parish Council to approach the relevant council and highway departments for better signage and or speed limits, statutory or advisory enclosing Plan Response. Provide responses to parishioners and maintain pressure for solutions to be found.		
T5	Feedback information and detailed suggestion on safety improvements to local planning authorities and Parish Council		
T6	to form working group to investigate mechanisms to provide footpaths and improve safety to include the potential for land to provide footpaths in Longville on B4371 and on Wall to Rushbury Road		
T7	results to be shared at Open Meeting to discuss issue of parking at Rushbury School		
T8	Parish Council to continue to address the issue of parking at the school and seek resolution		

Rushbury Parish Plan



Code	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
T9	Information to all properties in the Parish to educate locals about the road safety problems to reduce the problems by making sure we who live in the Parish are not a problem		
B1	To encourage and support local business within the Parish	Parish Council	Ongoing
B2	To ensure that development for business is well considered and planned	Parish Council	Ongoing
E1	Establish a Parish environment group	Parish Plan Steering Group	Meeting with AONB Summer 2005, Event Inaugral Meeting September 2005
E2	Develop an annual timetable of events, articles, guided walks for delivery by the Parish environment group	Depends on establishment Parish Env. Group	Outline of activity from Jan 06 to Dec 06 subject to funding etc
E3	to develop a "Parish Environment Action Plan" in conjunction with specialist assistance	Parish Env. Group	Production of Maps showing habitats, species etc, programmed events.
E4	Further Research and analyse Plan data to establish which parts of the community will be more interested to learn more and engage in positive environmental management	Parish Plan Steering Group	Aug 2005
E5	Discuss with SSDC their intentions for further doorstep recycling collections. Raise awareness within SSDC of the interest within the Parish for increased recycling.	New Collection announced by SSDC	October 2005
E6	Further investigation of attitude and response to establishing a Parish Paths Partnership	Parish Plan Steering Group/ Parish Env. Group	



Rushbury Parish Plan

August 2005