

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questionnaire (October 2019)

Introduction

The NP area comprises the parishes of Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton with the exception of a small part of Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish which lies within the urban extension at Staplegrove. The questionnaire was sent to 3417 addresses within the NP area, and 378 responses were received. This represents a response rate of 11%, with an average completion rate of 99%.

The questionnaire only asked for the age span of each household responding. So, the data collected is of the oldest and the youngest in the household and this charted in appendix 1.

The responses came from a wide range of the post codes in the NP area, with no particular emphasis in any one post code area. The first four codes that appeared most often were:

TA2 8QB Cashford Gate

TA2 8AX Roys Place

TA2 8PX Waterleaze

TA2 8TA Acacia Gardens¹

Section 1 Outdoor Recreation

1. 85% of responses stated that members of the household visited parks and open spaces in the area, whilst 16% never did. Of the 85%, the majority visited green spaces daily or once or twice a week. The most popular green space was Farriers Green, followed closely by Canal View and Hankridge Nature reserve². The least visited were Standfast Place and Summerleaze Crescent. There were no parks or play areas that were not frequented at all. Farriers Green was the most popular choice by virtue of the variety of play equipment in it, suiting a range of ages.
2. Most households reached the play area/green space of their choice on foot or by bicycle, although some travelled by car. There was very little use made of scooters/moped. The majority visited parks within 5- or 10-minutes' walk although a lesser number travelled for up to 20 minutes to their destination of choice.
3. In question 5 the aim was to get the overall opinion households held of the green spaces in the NP area. On a scale of 1-10 where 1 is poor, the average score was just over 4 out of 10. This is cross referenced by the responses to subsequent questions which drilled down into particular elements of the green spaces including cleanliness, provision and emptying of bins, maintenance of green spaces, street furniture, play equipment and organized activities. These were largely judged to be acceptable, by 59-68% of respondents, which is slightly at odds with the overall rating of 4/10 (40%) given in question 5. The features of the green spaces expected to score badly came up to expectations - 68% rated organized outdoor activities such as yoga and parkrun as poor, whilst provision of a teenage meeting area was rated poor by 56% and an outdoor gym or trim trail rated 57% (some respondents may have discovered the three pieces of outdoor gym equipment in Farriers Green). Some of the following questions in this section

¹ Post code information obtained from Royal Mail 'Find a post code'.

² Maintained and managed by SWTC

teased out the responses in more detail and by cross referencing to other questions some conclusions can be drawn.

3.1. Provision for teenagers

We were particularly interested in the provision for teenagers as there is none in the NP area at present. 54% of respondents in question 13 considered there was too little provision for teenagers: in question 14, a total of 43% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the provision for teenagers whilst 41% didn't know. 56% of respondents thought that provision for teenagers was either very important or important. This data would seem to support the case that the Parish Councils need to consider making provision for teenagers in the NP area. The installation of a 'teenage shelter' (supplied by companies such as Glasdon) could be considered in a major planning application as part of the POS provision. Alternatively, provision of more sports amenities open to all might solve the problem. Question 36 tried to solicit information from respondents, asking for suggested locations for a range of activities that had been put to the Parish Councils at various times, by individuals (tennis, MUGA, baseball, outdoor bowls and allotments). Disappointingly, the responses to question 36 are not conclusive, (249 skipped, 129 responded) there did not appear to be any strong feeling for any of the sports listed, and very few actually offered ideas for appropriate locations. There was no guidance to be had from the responses to this question.

The graph of age span of the respondents does not show any particular peaks in the teenage years, and so, whilst teenage provision may be an issue for parents of teenagers, there may not be as much demand as there is for example for more seating for parents at green spaces. This could be a project kept on the back-burner for now.

3.2. Wildlife areas: nature reserves and amenity green space

The rating given to wildlife areas was rated as acceptable by 55% of respondents. Looking deeper into the importance of nature reserves and amenity greenspace reveals that 57% of respondents thought there was too little nature reserves, but 59% thought that amenity green space was about right. But in terms of the quality of the nature reserves that there are, 48% were satisfied; and 62% were satisfied with the quality of the amenity green space. The importance of nature reserves was either very important or important to 91% of respondents, and amenity green space also scored 91%. This data indicates that the Parishes seem to be getting it right in provision of nature reserves and amenity green space, although it would be considered positively if some more nature reserve could be found in the NP area. The recommendation is that SWTC turn some attention to Hankridge: it was designed as a silt trap to slow the flow, but even silt traps need maintenance. Maintenance schedules for Dyers Brook Nature reserve are already in place, and will be delivered by a maintenance company either under ownership of WMPC or under the ownership of the developers. Developing safe public access to the Viridor wildlife park could be explored.

3.3. Allotments and community gardening

Tracking through the responses about allotments provides information to inform future provision. 53% of responses thought there was too little allotment provision, although 32% responded 'don't know'. Given that the only allotments currently are the 11 garden plots at Spital, it's not surprising that a third of respondents didn't know. In terms of satisfaction with what there is – a 46% 'don't know' response reflects the lack of information about allotments in the NP area. However, 67% of respondents said that allotments were either important or very important. The responses to question 36 failed to come up with any practical locations for new allotments. The need would seem to be present in the community and therefore the Parishes might wish to bear this in mind for possible use of

public open space in new major planning applications. The demographic of respondents indicates peaks at 60, 65, 70 which *might* explain the popularity and importance of allotments in our NP area (although not cross referenced with national statistics). The appointment of a Parish Ranger who could organize activities such as community gardening would be a way to get people together and avoid isolation. Some respondents suggested a community gardening team to visit the new houses and help design and plan gardens so that they were resilient and sustainable. The Parish Ranger appointment is proposed in the budget.

We revisited community gardening in the section on accommodation – looking particularly to address issues of potential isolation of residents in apartment blocks. Responses to question 45 showed that 86% would favour community gardens for cultivation by residents, whilst 91% supported external space within the curtilage for sitting outside. To deliver these ideas needs consultation with developers at an early stage to ensure the apartment blocks are oriented in such a way as to allow areas for sitting and community gardening.

3.4. Information about sports provision in the NP area was gathered from questions 4, 13,14,15, 25,26,27,28,29,30 and 36.

3.4.1. Outdoor football pitches were examined. In terms of the open spaces most visited, 5% used Stoney Furlong football field, 17% used Waterleaze football area, and 9% used the Cashford Gate football area. In terms of how much outdoor football pitch provision there was in the NP area, 33% didn't know, 36% said it was about right and 28% said there was too little. In terms of satisfaction with what there was, 33% were either satisfied or very satisfied, offset by 43% who didn't know. 46% of respondents said outdoor football was not important to them. We looked at the proposals for the new football pitches off the ERR, and 72% responded that they would not join a football club at the proposed new ground, although 82% would support extending the planned changing rooms to provide a club meeting area. This might indicate, an appetite for a different offering of a meeting place in the NP area rather than a need for more football provision; despite the fact that responses to questions 52 and 53 show the community halls are not supported by the majority of respondents (Brittons Ash used by 35%, Cheddon Fitzpaine used by 34%, and West Monkton Village hall used by 50%). The figures do not suggest there is a need for more football provision in the parish, and investigations are being made into other uses for the sports pitches off the ERR. No data was collected in this questionnaire about the Rugby Club although a spokesperson for Taunton Rugby Club has confirmed a waiting list at the Hyde Park ground of 200 youngsters wishing to join for junior training.

3.4.2. Cricket: 69% of respondents said that they would support an all-weather outdoor provision at West Monkton Cricket Ground. 39% said that they would be a regular player/spectator or that they played already; and there were 32 respondents with children aged between 9 and 16 that would join a junior section if provided by the club.

3.4.3. Interest in other sports, tennis, baseball, outdoor bowls, and MUGA was sought through question 36. The responses to this question are inconclusive and it would appear that there are no particular interest groups that are not catered for in the Parishes.

4. Use made of green spaces

Responses indicated that most people visit the green spaces for walking, fresh air and exercise – for themselves, their children and grandchildren and their dogs: walking and exercise

representing 19% each of the responses whilst walking the dog accounted for 28%. At other places in the questionnaire comments were made in support of large secure field areas where dogs could be let off the lead, and this might be something the Parishes would wish to keep in mind when considering the next major planning application and the use of Public Open Space, particularly in view of the evidence of the extent of dog ownership in the NP area. Time and weather were two most common reasons for limiting people's use of green spaces followed by work commitments, and actually nothing! People indicated they would stay longer or use the spaces more if there was more seating and better equipment: this is the sort of initiative Parish Councils can deliver as part of their regular budgets. Benches are half the price of seats with backs and an allowance to purchase and install more seating can be made in the budget. Fear of loose dogs and intimidating youth put some people off, others were deterred by the perceived lack of maintenance of play equipment. The information provided in questions 10 -12 supports the case for self-help groups in the play areas tidying up, litter collecting, removing dog fouling and repainting play equipment. Questions 22 and 23 resulted in a very long list of those wishing to have more information about the NP area green spaces, 125 responders, although not all provided contact information. 40 people were interested in volunteering for Parish Warden/Ranger duties although not all provided contact information. If a Parish Ranger were to be appointed, then the volunteers could be welcomed and allocated tasks as appropriate, e.g. repainting and refurbishing play equipment; the Parish Ranger could comply with risk assessment requirements etc.

None of the types of green space provision was considered to be too much. There were a significant number of 'don't know' responses in respect of some of the individual green spaces especially outdoor football pitches, allotments and teenage provision.

For the longer view, maybe a site could be identified for installation of a barn similar to the one at Longrun Meadow to allow under cover outdoor activities, although this is not viewed as an immediate priority.

5. Green spaces current maintenance

Respondents were asked their opinion on current maintenance programmes of grass cutting, tree maintenance, dog fouling, graffiti. The majority considered this was good, although there was a significant proportion of 'poor' responses. 65% considered the grass cutting regime to be good or very good. As this is delivered by a number of agencies in the NP area, it's hard to draw any particular conclusions. 55% of respondents rated tree maintenance good or very good, however 25% rated this as poor. This may reflect the demise of many of the trees planted in MH1 due to damage by vandals and lack of watering. The same proportionality is seen in the responses to cleaning and litter clearance, control of dog fouling, dealing with vandalism and graffiti, and general maintenance, with about 25-30% rating these services as poor. As with the trees this might be reflective of issues experienced by residents of MH1, although many of the issues have now been dealt with. Dog bin installation and emptying remains on Parish budgets, also litter bins.

6. Future management of green spaces in the NP area

By and large the green spaces in the parishes are managed either by Somerset West and Taunton Council or by Management Companies set up by the developers to manage development parcels. There was great support for wildflowers round the boundaries of the green spaces (90%), but drilling down into the details, people did not want a reduction in the frequency of grass cutting, (70%), and the question that suggested there would be a change in the appearance of green spaces under a different management regime generated 53% of 'don't

know' responses. Support for a reduction in the frequency and type of standard management herbicide spraying regime generated nearly equal 'yes' and 'no' responses (39% yes, 35% no). It would seem that initiatives to encourage wildlife and ecology in the NP area might be supported as an ideal, but some of the inevitable outcomes may not be fully understood. It would be positive to think that under the new policies of SWTC coming forward that gradual changes can be made to the public open spaces that encourage more wildlife, and wildflowers. The fact remains that such change has to be managed because land left to its own devices does not turn into a wildflower meadow but returns very quickly to a scrubland of brambles and nettles. Planting ideas were also explored in the sections on accommodation and neighbourhood. Most responses indicated that adult seating or benches, would be the one small thing that would make a big difference to the range and number of people who use the green spaces, followed by control of dogs, picnic areas and picnic benches, more equipment. A few mentioned permanent Barbeque stands. The addition of seating to the green spaces could be achieved relatively easily by the Parishes through budgeting.

76% of respondents indicated they visited Hestercombe House and Gardens regularly or sometimes. Over 50% of respondents supported the suggestion to improve the links from the south either on foot or by bicycle. Hestercombe is run by the Hestercombe Gardens Trust. Both Parishes attend regular meetings of the HGT Advisory Group. Hestercombe House and Gardens attracts 75% of the respondents either regularly or occasionally. They are often members, going there for walking in the gardens and enjoying the cafe, and to a lesser extent to visit events, exhibitions and the bookshop/shop. 22% never went there. Some comments were made about the expense of the admission ticket (the 8th most frequently used word in the comments box).

7. Accessibility

83% of responses considered that there was no limitation on accessing outdoor recreation areas/equipment in the Parishes. Of the 6% that were affected, the most often quoted means of increasing accessibility were improved paths suitable for wheelchairs, and more seating. We also enquired some more about accessibility in the questions about Hestercombe. Support was given for improving accessibility at Hestercombe on foot and by bicycle, and making paths more pushchair friendly. Suggestions made by respondent for improving accessibility in terms of both cost and mobility will be shared with Hestercombe Gardens Trust.

8. Country Park

Questions 24 and 31, 32 were included to inform budget planning for next year as ideas about the Country Park took shape. Decisions about the future ownership and management of the Country Park are ongoing, but the aspiration of the two Parishes is to obtain ownership and deliver the requirements to enable the Park to be an accredited National County Park. Some readers may know of the Yeovil County Park, whose administration team provided a lot of helpful advice. The original direction of travel was informed by advice such as this and supported by a SWOT analysis for stakeholder, set up by TDBC in 2018.

8.1. The responses on the importance of a labyrinth tended to be polarized, those knowing and understanding what a labyrinth is and its uses/benefits supported with high ratings, whilst those who did not know responded with low ratings. It seems that the majority did not understand the value and purpose of a labyrinth as the average score was 2.7 out of 10. This is disappointing since a labyrinth can be produced cheaply by mown paths, hard surfaces are not essential.

8.2. Respondents were not keen on contributing ideas - less than 50% offered any suggestions for designated use of public open space (139 answered, 183 skipped). Of those that

responded, the most common suggestions were for wildlife areas and trees.; which are included elsewhere in this report.

8.3. In the Country Park, opinions were sought on the proposed provision appropriate to obtaining National Country Park accreditation. Using weighted averages, the most popular offerings were 'coffee shop and toilets (4.21)', and 'cycle/walking/running trails (4.24)'. These were followed by the 'publicly accessible observatory (3.82)' and 'visitor (interpretation) center and meeting place (3.74)'. In descending order after that came the 'outdoor theatre 3.6)', 'trim trail (3.56)', and 'adventure climbing frame (3.46)'. Each of these schemes would only be possible by fund raising at a fairly high level; personnel to deliver this aspect of the CP development have been identified. Interest in the Observatory has been expressed at the highest level and internationally.

8.4. 65 new volunteers came forward for the Country Park.

9. Bridgwater & Taunton Canal

Like Hestercombe, this is a marvelous asset located in the NP area, governed and administered by the Canal and Rivers Trust. The CRT has a difficult position since there is no increase in any dues paid to the CRT even though the numbers of users of the towpath, by virtue of the outward expansion of Taunton, have increased hugely. As could have been predicted, the comments on the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal were very much about the relationship between user groups – i.e. cyclists and pedestrians, with suggestions for separate lanes (12%), and lighting (9%). Widening the path to make traffic safer and seats along the route were also supported, *although CRT has stated it is safer not to widen the towpath as it keeps speeds restricted*. Maintenance work is ably delivered by the Inland Waterways Association of volunteers.

10. More outdoor recreation

In question 36, the Parish Councils were responding to residents' questions and comments about where to locate various outdoor recreation activities in the NP area. As per question #13, respondents were not willing or able to identify locations for these activities, so were not helpful in assisting the Parish Councils to fulfil the requests made by individual residents. The activities were tennis courts, MUGA, Baseball court, outdoor bowls, allotments. 108 respondents answered, and disappointingly 214 skipped. No clear support emerged for any of the suggested activities, nor any available locations. In order to respond to requests for provision of certain activities, the Parish Councils need to see evidence of need, usually by numbers of supporters of the activity. It is not sensible use of public funds to provide a facility that will not benefit a significant sector of the population. The responses received to this question do not justify further pursuit of any of the listed activities at this particular time. Provision for these activities needs to be included at the very earliest stages in a major planning application. The response reflects the difficulties the Parish Councils have had in finding suitable locations, and there does not seem to be any clear way forward, apart from suggestions to the Planning Authority for use of Public Open Space in the next major developments that come forward.

11. The final questions in this section on Outdoor recreation were looking at alternatives to motorized transport.

Cycling in the parish to a greater or lesser degree was undertaken by circa 65% of respondents, whilst 35% never rode a bike. Suggestions for Commuter Route (85%) and Leisure cycling (64%) attracted the most suggestions. Separation of vehicles and cyclists was important for commuters, whilst joined up routes were important for leisure cyclists. Improvements to the

cycle network by making routes safe and easy to use was supported by 86% of respondents. 50% supported making junctions safer to use and providing secure cycle parking. 49% wanted accessible information about routes whilst 40% supported clearer way marking. Specific improvements included better cycle paths separated from traffic on the roads. Parishes can assist by including waymarking/signage in their budget considerations, and monitor the location of secure cycle parking. Cycle Parking provision could be included in Parish Council budgets if a suitable site is available. The delivery of joined up cycle routes would be the remit of those who develop the roads infrastructure, and is stated in NP Policy T1. Responses to this section of the questionnaire will be sent to Mike Ginger, Taunton Area Cycling Campaign.

Section 1 Outdoor recreation: summary/questions/conclusions

- Parks and play areas need to be within easy reach of houses, natural surveillance is an added bonus – check future major planning applications.
- Investigate site availability and installation costs of teenage shelter? Or other teenage provision? Location difficult, needs to be overlooked but not too much. Investigate sites coming forward – too late for Hartnells but what about Pyrland and West of Greenway? Needs to be part of a planning application from the get-go otherwise residents will object. In view of the demographic for the area, it's probably not a high priority. However, installation of more seating is a priority, the demographic shows many younger children in the area (Cheddon, Nerrols and West Monkton Primary schools admissions reflect this), and mothers have requested seats whilst they watch their children play in the play areas and green spaces. This has the benefit of providing natural surveillance, and also serves a social function in building friendships and communities for overall health and well-being. Provision of extra seating can be included in budgets. Suggest that Parishes carry out a seat audit, mapping the location of all existing seats and noting their condition. This could initiate a programme of refurbishment if necessary, and would provide data for the proposed leaflet/map of green spaces and play areas in the NP area (see below)*.
- Installing more outdoor gym equipment at Farriers would be another way to improve the health and well-being provision in the NP area, although more of a medium-term priority. We would need to check the position with SWTC and cross reference to major planning applications coming forward. We would also research the availability of grant support. It would be worth investigating the opportunity for installing Outdoor Gym equipment at Waterleaze? (or possibly Cashford Gate, though that has Play Equipment already).
- Appoint a (shared?) Parish Ranger to oversee the team of volunteers and be able to do risk assessments for various activities in the Parishes; organize community activities??
- Parish warden volunteers to keep POSs tidy, remove dog fouling, ensure dogs on leads in play areas, organize activities in POS?? Have a meeting of those who put their names forward and see what they think they could do – e.g. an audit of paths and see where seats could be added also possibly picnic benches and brick barbeque stands
- *Produce a folded map/leaflet of all play areas, show cycle links and paths. Make available at all possible outlets in the two parishes e.g. community halls, schools, etc. Use input from Parish Warden and Parish volunteers. Add signs for all Play areas and Interpretation Boards for green spaces. This project could be started this year and carried through into 2020-21 if necessary.
- Maintenance schedule for public open spaces needs wildflower planting and reduction of the use of herbicides. Professional advice on a maintenance regime to achieve this end have to be commissioned. Frequency of mowing entire areas should be reduced, and paths

mown through instead. Need to contact developers/management companies to see what changes can be made. Depending on ownership, could be implemented relatively quickly, and reflected in small amendments to NP Policy R2.

- Set up a labyrinth by mowing grass paths and find a mindfulness teacher to co-ordinate people using the labyrinth – where???
- Canal towpath raises issues for cyclists. CRT has concerns about increased usage due to increased development (not clear what Parishes can do about this) and has also stated it will not widen towpaths as keeping them narrow reduces speeds. Users of the busy commuter route between Swingbridge and the centre of Taunton would dispute this statement. Need to maintain lines of communication between Parishes and CRT.
- Ensure that new planning applications with cycle paths actually join to existing cycle paths surrounding the development site. This is NP Policy T1, so need SWTC Planning Authority support and awareness.
- It is apparent that there needs to be a dialogue with developers regarding future provision of Public Open Spaces and the activities/equipment installed. The data collected shows the provision for Under-5s to be ok, but we need to look more imaginatively at what else is installed (see ref to NP Policy R4 first bullet point). The dialogue with the developers must include allotment provision.

Section 2 Accommodation

1. Housing

Demographic relating to housing for older people was skipped by 174 respondents, 204 answered – *there was a problem with data inputting on this question: where respondents had awarded a scale point more than once – for example if 2 x scale point 5 were awarded, the survey would not accept the second 5.* Currently the weighted scores favour more bungalows (3.30), closely followed by privately owned supported accommodation (3.23). Rented accommodation was less well supported. This finding adds support to the NP policy H1 that requires 10% of dwellings *on the open market* to be single storey. Currently this does not appear to be either supported or reinforced by the Planning Authority which is disappointing, since the demographic overall for the area indicates an aging population³. The support for privately owned, supported accommodation is evidenced in the responses and it is hoped that a development opportunity may be spotted by a provider of such accommodation in future development in the area that would serve the needs of the older members of the community by offering an alternative to bungalows.

2. EV cars and charging

The government support for electric vehicles and associated charging points is a recent thing, which did not have such a high profile when the NP was made. In view of the need to follow a climate change strategy, should a policy about EV charging points be added to the NP? NPPF legislation on Climate Change was updated on 19th March 2019 and it may be necessary to go through the section on www.gov.uk to formulate a policy, or better, for the Parishes to declare a Climate Change Emergency in line with the declarations made by SCC and SWTC in 2019.

****(PAC - Happy to do this if needed).*

³ SCC population data

Installation of EV charging points was well supported, 61% of respondents were in favour of installation in new houses (*which has become law in the interval between writing the questionnaire and receiving the responses*); and 62% support for installation in the public realm. Further, question 49 in the 'Our Neighbourhood' section showed that 89% of respondents would support installation of EV charging points in a car park, 60% in a layby; there was significantly less support for installations in public open space. This is probably a good outcome, since laybys often serve other off-loading functions and therefore it would not be prudent to have them occupied by vehicles for 30 mins to 2 hours of time (depending on the type of charging point installed). Installation of EV charging points in public open spaces could lose the benefits of natural surveillance from overlooking and therefore create problems associated with vandalism. The Parish Councils can support this government led environmentally friendly movement by developing and delivering Climate Change Policies in line with those being developed by the District and County Authorities. Question 49 was well answered, with very few skipped responses (39).

The declared Climate Emergency (SCC and SWTC) predicates that action should be taken regarding building standards, style and materials. Do we need a new policy under 'Housing' in the NP?

3. Building standards

The majority of respondents (59.9%) supported getting closer to 'passivhaus' specifications in new build, solar panels alone being less preferred than passivhaus (29.74%).

In terms of water recycling and insulation the majority of respondents supported all items on the list: water butts, water recycling, dual flush system, water saving taps, ways to reduce fossil fuel usage, solar panels, increased insulation: and that they should be considered in all new properties and renovation/extension. Water butts are already a part of the NP in Policy R3, although it would be true to say that only a few developers have installed them (DWH at Nerrols), so maybe the wording in NP Policy R3 should be strengthened to make it a requirement. 56% of respondents thought water butts should be considered as part of new development and renovation/extension; this provides evidence of strong support. 56% of respondents thought ways to save fossil fuel should be considered, and the same percentage thought increased insulation should be considered. Most new builds in the NP area are built without chimneys, so the ways to save fossil fuels may have to be restricted to extensions/renovations – therefore it could be down to SWTC to revise the relevant planning policy on extensions. Water recycling is something that could be included in a Design Guide by developers.

Insulation levels are defined under Building Standards, but could be increased by a NP policy, and would need to under Climate Emergency.

4. Building style

In terms of looking after the health and well-being of residents of apartment blocks, 91% of respondents considered that external space within the curtilage for sitting outside was important, whilst 86% supported community gardens for cultivation by residents. 65% thought that Juliet balconies/balconies were important for health and well-being of residents, although 26% thought it was not important. Whilst it would be unrealistic to attempt to legislate the design of apartment accommodation, such development may be open to discussion about orientation and layout of buildings and their curtilage at the early planning stages, and written

into the Development Guide. Would it be possible to add a bullet point to include requirements in Policy R4 Recreation and Community Facilities?

The sustainable measures suggested for water resilient and sustainable gardens included specific planting schemes (use of grasses), low maintenance design, compost making opportunities. A number of respondents suggested water butts, which is in accordance with current NP policy R3. Help with garden design was suggested, and groups of volunteer gardeners, perhaps headed by the Parish Ranger.

5. Dark Skies

86% of respondents agreed that use of warm white LED lighting at an appropriate LUX level should be required for all new installations of external lighting on dwellings and business premises alike. This should be added to the Dark Skies Policy R1. The responses to this question will be sent to Larry Burrows (SCC Ecologist and Bat consultant) at SCC.

Section 2 Accommodation: summary/questions/conclusions

- The results showing support for more bungalows reinforces the NP policy and maybe some rewording is needed to draw this to the attention of builders and developers who do not appear to be delivering the 10% open market quoted in the Policy H1. It has to be asked why so many respondents skipped this question (204) when overall there was a 99% response rate to the questionnaire. Perhaps, firstly, it was quite difficult to answer – rating choices 1 -5 in order of importance, secondly in times of national uncertainty, people tend to stick with what they have. Furthermore, analysis was made more difficult by a technical glitch which may be possible to remedy to increase reliability of results. We will report back if it has been possible to get improved data on this question. Nevertheless, the data supports NP Policy H1, and it is up to SWTC Planning Authority to better support the 10% requirement for bungalows.
- EV charging points should be included in all new planning applications, including installations in the public realm. If the Parishes develop a Climate Change Emergency statement in line with SCC and SWTC (both declared in 2019) then it should be possible to promote installation of EV charging points into homes, by a grant giving initiative (and beefing up public transport/rapid transit bus routes).
- Parish Ranger activity- run a garden advice service for new residents on how to make their gardens more water resilient and sustainable – could this be done by some arrangement with Monkton Elms/subsidy or grant/gather in volunteers to help each other? Good for community?
- Develop a new NP Policy on Building materials, style and standards in the context of Climate Change Emergency:
 - should aspiration to passivhaus standards be included – e.g. requirement to demonstrate how passivhaus standards have been implemented? And should the water recycling be included as a requirement on all new developments? How difficult is it to recycle grey water for watering the garden?
 - Include special considerations for Apartment blocks to include Juliet balconies, sitting out area within curtilage, and/or community gardens could be included in the NP to ensure delivery?
- We do need to add to the Dark Skies Policy R1 the paragraph about installation of external lighting.

- Under Climate Change Emergency, build in the opportunity to provide compost bins by grant application.

Section 3: Our neighbourhood

1. The driver behind the questions in this section was the Taunton Garden Town Vision, to ensure that the delivery of major urban extensions and smaller peripheral developments on the edge of the town (in our Neighbourhood Plan area) were compliant with the Taunton Garden Town Vision. Tree planting in public open spaces of new developments is considered conducive to health and well-being of residents and climate change awareness, and both Parishes wish to ensure their residents are happy and comfortable with the places where they live. Ensuring an ecologically friendly environment is a strong aspiration, and Parish Councils are considering declaring a Climate Change Emergency in line with SCC and SWTC. This would allow Parishes to take environmentally positive measures; it can be planned for in the Budget. In question 48, the questions were based on the published Garden Town principles, acknowledging the known benefit of trees in the built space. Support was given for innovative planting schemes in public open spaces in larger developments of more than 10 houses (81.4%) as well as in smaller developments of less than 10 houses (74.5%). Whilst there are practical difficulties in delivering tree lined streets, the notion of tree planting in residential streets was supported by 70% of respondents. Hedges were mentioned too and the benefits to wildlife. Although not part of the question, for health and well-being of residents, it is recommended that seats, litter and dog bins are incorporated in these tree-planted areas, so they become a place where residents can meet and enjoy fresh air and nature. The support for tree planting is already in place in NP Policy R2, but needs better support and awareness by SWTC Planning Officers.
2. Location of EV charging points was supported in car parks particularly (89%) and to a lesser degree in laybys and public open spaces; although 59% did not support installation in laybys. See under 'Our Accommodation'.
3. Located as we are at the foothills of the Quantocks and not far from the Somerset Levels, water resilience needs to be an important consideration to our NP community. So it was encouraging to see that respondents considered swales and rain gardens to be equally important to them (62% and 63%). The majority of respondents supported measures that would minimize flooding (87%), and promote habitats that are resilient to flooding and climate change (77%); whilst fewer, (64%) supported measure to facilitate irrigation. These responses demonstrate support for NP policy R3, but there needs to be a more robust approach from SWTC Planning Authority to ensure delivery.
4. Community Halls and schools' facilities
In exploring the use residents make of the facilities that are currently available, it was found that the majority of respondents do not use the three village halls. In answer to the question 'do you make use of the facilities/events/classes in any of the community halls in the NP area?'; at Brittons Ash 65.91% answered no, at Cheddon Fitzpaine 66.16% answered no, and at West Monkton 52% answered no. The Tacchi-Morris was used by 51% of the respondents. Use of educational facilities generally was low. These results will be shared with the establishments listed as they may wish to consider outreach measures (although some may say they are booked out already).

Section 3 Our Neighbourhood: summary/questions/conclusions

- Suggest that NP policy R2 be suitably amended to include tree planting requirements in both large and small developments Could the parishes offer a grant scheme to residents to supply trees (have done this before in West Monkton) – initiative can be built into the budget. It doesn't need to cost a lot if bare rooted whips are supplied, it costs more if bigger trees are supplied.
- EV charging points in public realm – encourage retailers? Offer incentive?
- Water resilience – do we need to beef up what's in NP Policy R3 at the moment?
- To support Climate Change Emergency measures, Parish Councils could offer grants for installation of EV charging points, and compost bins.
- Very surprising statistic about use of community halls: management committees need to be informed. What sort of outreach initiatives could there be?

Some overall observations

Football - People were supportive of adding club room facilities to the proposed changing rooms at the sports pitches off the ERR. But the use made by residents of the facilities and events at the three community halls is less than 50% in each case. Could we therefore justify the cost of additions to the changing rooms to make another meeting place? Or is it the case that as football has no built provision in the NP area, those respondents making a positive response had images of a friendly football clubhouse? There has not been any initiative for changing facilities to be provided for the pitches at Waterleaze, Stony Furlong or Cashford Gate. There was little support for the proposed new football pitches in MH1, so what is the extent of the need? Do the football pitches at Waterleaze, Cashford Gate and Stony Furlong satisfy the need for football activities in the NP area?

Cricket – West Monkton Cricket Club. The ground is listed as a community asset and is leased by WMCC from Persimmon for 28 years. The new clubhouse has come from s106 funds. The Club successfully ran an All Stars activity for the under 9's last year. Responses indicated 32 children aged between 9 and 16 would be coming forward for a junior section. 69% of respondents indicated support for an all-weather provision at the ground: would Parishes be prepared to support by grant towards this. (esp. WMPC?).

Country Park -*This initiative is currently on hold due to policy changes by SWTC*

Rugby football – not included in questionnaire, but new initiatives may indicate local support

Name Signage for all green areas, Interpretation Boards, dogs on leash signs: there are too many dogs for a 'no dogs' rule to be practically enforceable, 90% walk their dogs in green spaces.

Some amendments to NP may be needed, need to consult with A Rhodes in December.

End of questionnaire comments

259 respondents made no comment, 119 did.

We liked the ones that said thank you.

We were very pleased how many people wanted to volunteer in the area: and so many wanted more information about green spaces we are exploring the possibility of producing a free map/leaflet. To those who ticked yes in question 23 to volunteering, but then didn't provide contact information – all we can say is 'sorry!', please get in touch using the contact information below.

There were relatively few comments about large developments and road infrastructure (*neither of which were the focus of this questionnaire*). We are hopeful that ongoing explanations of where we are in Planning Terms has helped most residents to understand the situation. Please contact any of your District Councillors about development issues, which are part of the Forward Planning Policies of SWTC.

We thought the comments alleging drug trafficking and needles at Farriers Green needed to be substantiated by fact and reported to the Police.

Whilst we didn't mind the skipped questions (it was a long questionnaire), we are sorry that some of you felt unable to complete the questionnaire for a variety of reasons; ranging from 'ridiculous waste of money' to 'too much pie in the sky'.

By way of explanation, the evidence gathered from the responses of residents to this questionnaire will inform both Parish Councils on the best ways to allocate precious resources in budget setting meetings at the end of this month, at which the Parish Precept will be determined. The data will allow Parish Councils to develop projects that will benefit the majority of the community. We will share the data collected (but not your personal details) with other stakeholders in our community so that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from the information you have contributed. The stakeholders include West Monkton Cricket Club, Taunton Cycling, Canal and River Trust and IWA (South West), the three community halls in the NP area, Hestercombe House and Gardens, SCC Bat Officer.

Keep informed

You can keep abreast of Parish Council business by attending the Parish Council meetings (second Tuesday of the month for West Monkton, at the Brittons Ash Community Hall, and second Thursday of the month for Cheddon Fitzpaine at Cheddon Fitzpaine Memorial Hall), both start at 7.00pm. There is a Parish Surgery at West Monkton on the second Thursday of the month, drop in at 8.30am.

Notice boards in both Parishes are posted with agendas.

You can visit the websites: www.westmonkton.net and www.cheddonfitzpaine-pc.org.uk

You can email or phone the Clerks:

Cheddon Fitzpaine

Mrs Jo Pearson 07891 529809 cheddon@live.co.uk

West Monkton

Mrs Amy Shepherd 01823 413 524 clerk@westmonkton.net

Mrs Tricia Cavill 01823 413 524 assistantclerk2@westmonkton.net

Appendix 1 graph of age span appended