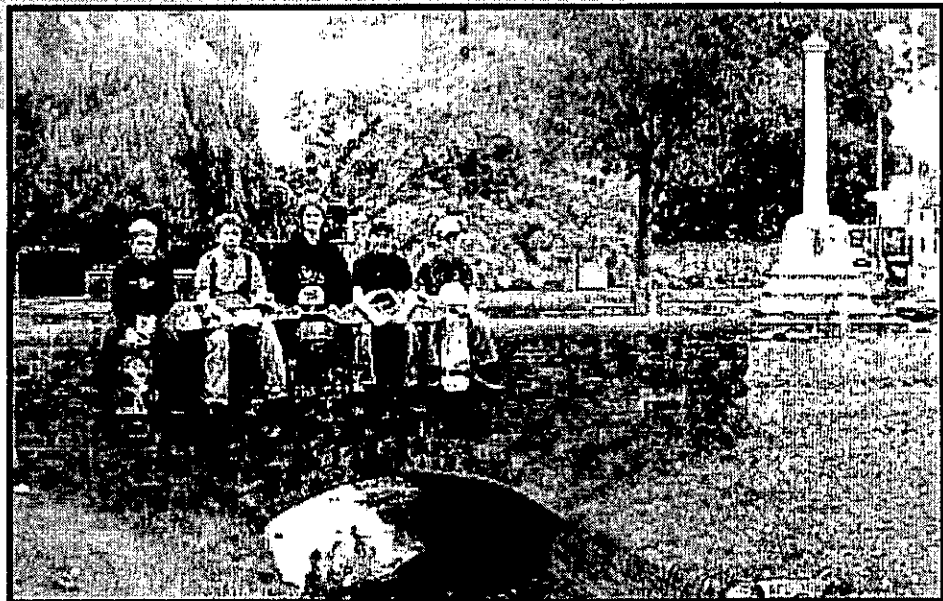


A PARISH PLAN FOR

WOLSTON





FOREWORD

In December 2004, every household in the Parish of Wolston was given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire examining the things that were important to them as individuals and families, and identifying what affects their daily lives.

People now living on the Bluemel Park development were not included in the original survey because the properties were not built when the questionnaires were issued.

965 questionnaires were hand delivered to individual households and 582 were collected, of which 553 had been completed. The Steering Committee had been told that it was unlikely that there would be more than 100 completed and returned, so to actually receive 57.3% of the total number issued was much better than predicted, and very encouraging.

Analysing the wealth of information supplied has been a mammoth task, and if all of it was printed, the document would be the size of a telephone directory, and our volunteers would not be able to deliver it to your door. However, this condensed version aims to bring you an overview of some of the concerns raised and an Action Plan containing the issues and suggestions as to how they might be resolved.

Copies of the full database are being maintained for future reference.

The questionnaire responses have given us a snapshot of what life in the village was like in December 2004. It provides information on village services and facilities, traffic and transport issues, the environment, housing needs, health issues, crime – both perceived and actual, and more. It examines quality of life issues - what's good and what's not so good, and seeks to find proposals for solutions to some of the problems identified.

Some of the items raised have been tackled already, but there is still a lot more work to be done, and the Parish Council, in partnership with villagers, outside bodies and organisations, will be keen to endeavour to help make the changes happen.

Although it is unlikely that it will be possible to satisfy all the aspirations expressed in the original responses, it is hoped that the issues identified in the village, and the solutions that are generated, will help to ensure that the quality of life for all residents, including those on the new development, should be improved.

The Parish Plan Steering Committee has worked hard to bring you this document which provides a "blue-print" for the future. We are indebted to everyone who submitted a completed questionnaire and took the time to get involved in the process.



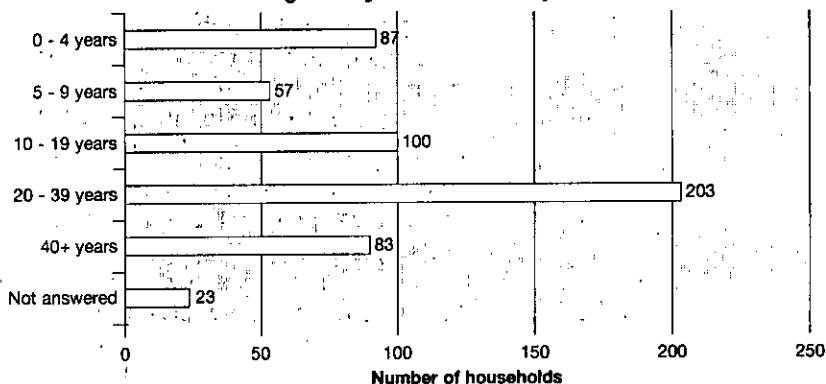
Tim Harvey-Smith
Steering Committee Chairman



SECTION 1 YOUR HOUSEHOLD

The first question asked how long members of the household had lived in the parish. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the majority of households had lived here for between twenty and thirty nine years. There were also a large number in the ten to nineteen years range, and in the over forty years long group.

How long have you lived in the parish?

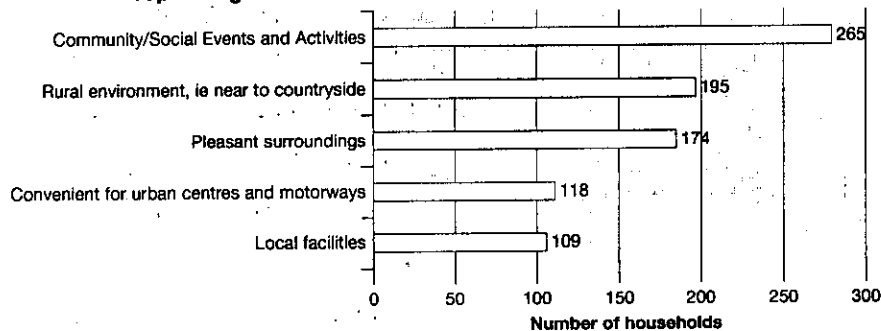


The next question asked, "What do you most like about living in Wolston?" and 88% of households who responded to the questionnaire gave at least one comment. There were actually 950 comments in total.

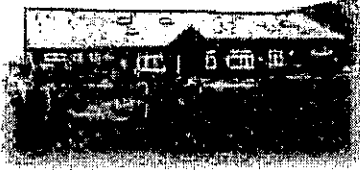
The majority of positive comments showed that people most valued the community spirit, the village's rural environment and its proximity to countryside, its pleasant surroundings and the care taken over maintaining them, the good communication links and the local facilities.

Positive comments included "It's home", "Always kept clean and tidy" and "Picturesque village"

Top Categories associated with "Most Like" comments



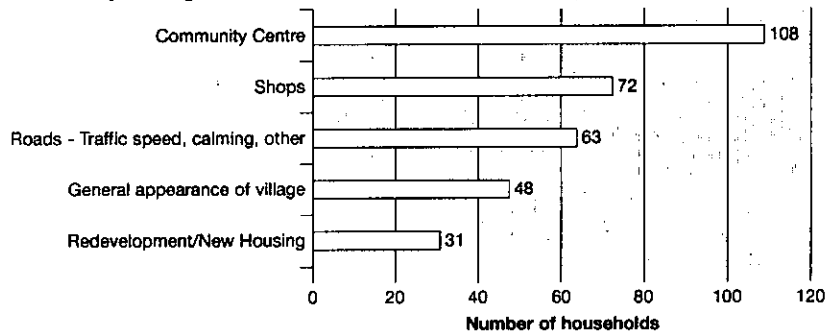
WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



There were only 10 negative comments. These included "Quietness (prior to the increase in air traffic)"; "It was a rural village, but times have changed"; and "I don't like living in Wolston anymore. It is no longer a village it is a suburb of Coventry"

When asked about "What is the biggest change for the better in Wolston since you have lived here?" there were 527 comments.

Top Categories associated with "Best Change" comments

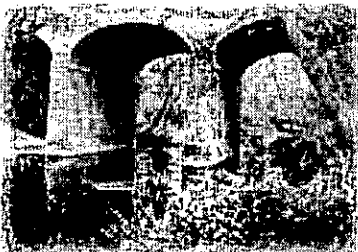


Positive comments about the biggest change for the better included:

"Shop improvements"; "Less litter, verges and grass areas well maintained"; "Now clean and tidy"; "Planting of trees, bulbs and flowers, having a Christmas Tree with lights, daily litter collection"; "Walking up Dyers Lane without the worry of being run over"; "Pedestrian Crossing"; "Development of Millennium Committee – organising events to bring the village together"; "Derry Shelter being pulled down to discourage gangs of youths gathering"; "Building Wolston High School, which brought more specialised Secondary Education and Further Education opportunities into the village" (The school opened in September 1956 and closed in 1991. It was located where the Manor Court development now stands); "Development of the Parish Plan Team – planning for a structured future";

Closure of Dyers Lane, the pedestrian crossing by the shops, and traffic calming all achieved 17 positive comments; Community events attracted 14; Housing 13; the School 12; buses 11; removal of the Derry Shelter, and Flood prevention measures 10 each; Skate board park 9; Doctors 9; and Library 8.

There were only 6 negative comments in this section, and these included the following: "Growth of the village - however the nature of that growth has resulted in a deterioration of community spirit"; "Nothing has improved whatsoever"; "None to date".



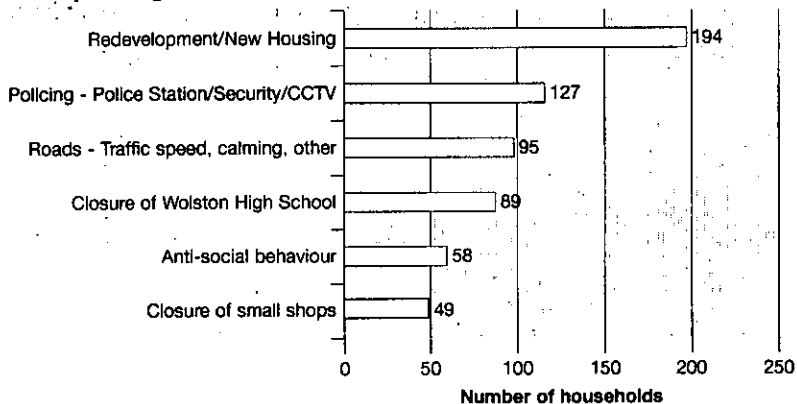
WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



When asked about "What the biggest change for the worst in Wolston" was, there were 793 comments.

Within the top categories:

Top Categories associated with "Worst Change" comments



Redevelopment/New Housing - included 96 comments on the village becoming too big, 70 about building on the Bluemel Business Park, and 20 about the failure to control building development.

Policing - included 101 complaints about the closure of the Police Station (the largest single topic) and 26 about a lack of policing (including the need for the village to have its own CCTV)

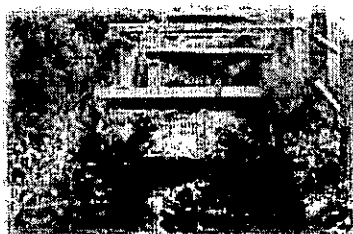
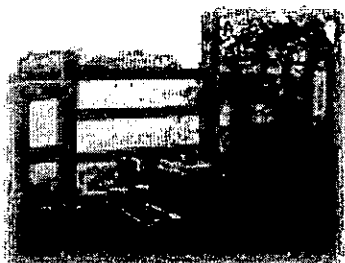
Roads - included 35 complaints about Traffic Calming, 29 for increased traffic through the village, and 24 for parking problems

Closure of Wolston High School - rated third highest with 89 specific comments.

Anti-Social Behaviour - included 18 comments specifically regarding anti-social behaviour, 18 regarding youth nuisance, and 21 vandalism.

Closure of the small shops - rated next with 49 specific complaints.

In addition, closure of Dyers Lane rated 19 comments, and a lack of community spirit rated 15 comments.



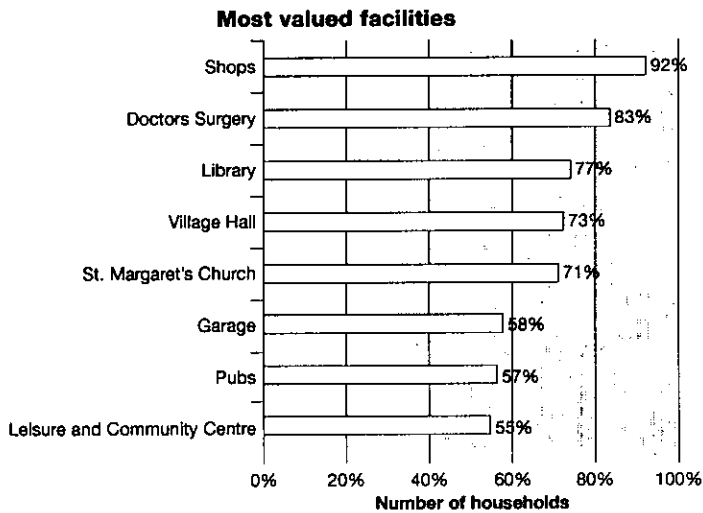
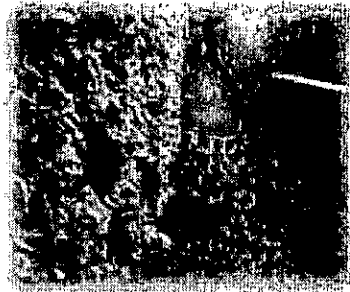
SECTION 2 VILLAGE FACILITIES



The facilities that were rated highest in terms of their current 'state' were the shops, the doctor's surgery and the library.

The areas highlighted as needing improvement were Abbots Walk Children's Area, Dyers Lane Children's Area, the Scout Hut and the Village Pubs.

Concerns people had about village facilities/services, and their suggestions for improvements, were also captured by the survey and the responses ranged from "We need more for young people to get involved in" to "The wood is very beautiful, and needs protecting".



In this section of the plan, the village's 'parking' problem was by far the biggest concern, singled out as an issue twice as often as its nearest rival. Parking within the village is clearly something which more attention needs to be given to. Respondents again put particular emphasis on the need to improve facilities for children and young people and made plenty of suggestions about how to improve the village pubs.

Concern was raised over the security and policing levels within the village, the health/pharmacy/dentist facilities and the level of choice offered by the shops and food outlets. The overall sentiment was positive with many people commenting on how lucky the village was to have such good facilities.

When asked about the future of the Community Centre, there were many responses, which asked for improved communication on opening times and information on how it could be booked for various activities including social events.



The five most popular suggestions were:

1. Wider variety of evening classes
2. Activities for younger people
3. Building a swimming pool
4. More keep fit classes
5. Older person activities

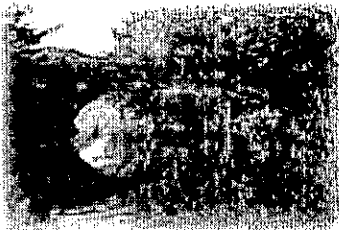
SECTION 3 YOUR ENVIRONMENT



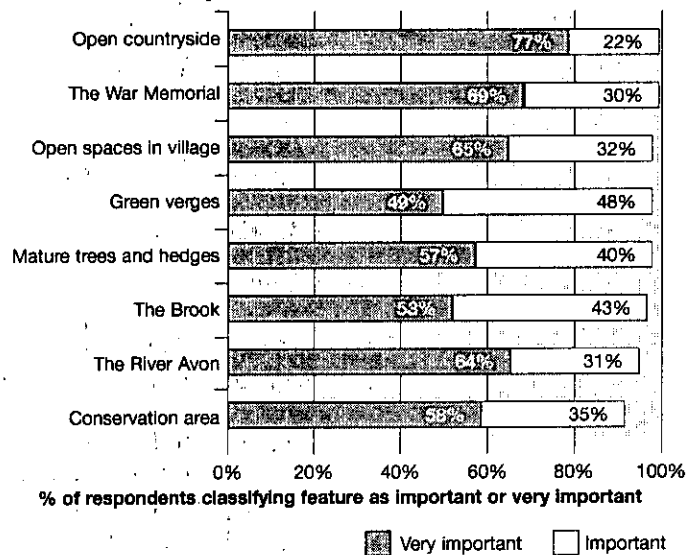
All environmental features listed in the questionnaire had over 80% of respondents rating them as either important or very important. The comments made emphasised that the combination of these features contributed to Wolston being such a nice place in which to live.

The chart below shows the features that were most highly valued by the respondents and the Open Countryside rated the most important. Perhaps, surprisingly, in this day and age, the War Memorial was rated as the next most important environmental feature.

Although the Allotments and the Plantation and Grove Woodlands were features which didn't rate as highly, these are very highly valued by those people who use them, and people feel very strongly about them and their upkeep. The concern for the Woodlands was reflected by the fact that over 30% of respondents felt that more could be done to improve the area.



Most important Environmental feature

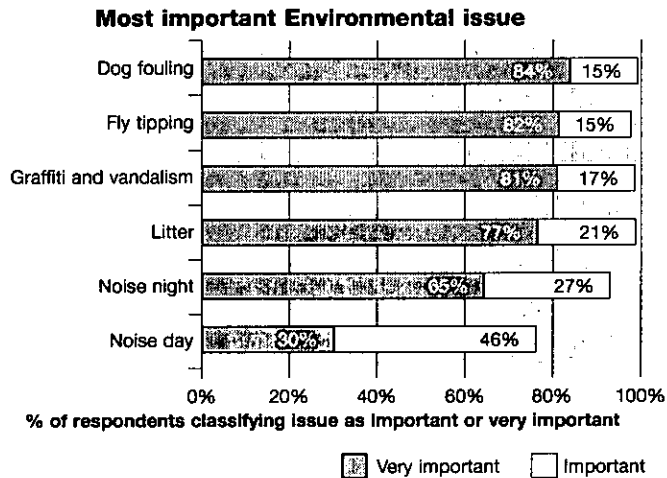
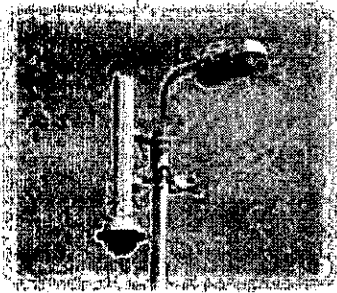


Other features, which people felt strongly about improving, were the footpaths, which surround the village and the area close to the River Avon. Suggestions included reinstating benches on the banks of the river and opening up some of the paths as public footpaths.



Respondents felt that priority should be given to increasing the care and protection of open spaces and green verges, improving wildlife habitats, and improving access to footpaths.

WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



When given the opportunity to name the environmental issue that concerned each household the most, Dog Fouling was clearly the biggest source of discontent. Emotion surrounding this issue is high and it is clear that a small minority of dog owners who allow their dogs to foul on footpaths and then fail to clear up the mess are generating a substantial amount of bad feeling towards all dog owners.

Fouling in the alleyway at the side of St Margaret's School seemed to be the worst area, but fouling in grassed areas around the village, and even in the Plantation and Grove Woodlands, were other areas which were repeatedly referred to.

Dog owners whose pets bark continuously both day and night were also singled out for criticism.

Anti-social behaviour, including graffiti and mindless vandalism, was the second biggest issue for respondents. Again, a few inconsiderate people seem to be having a disproportionate impact on the village environment.

Noise and unruly behaviour generated at closing time at the village's pubs was repeatedly described as a major issue affecting quality of life within the village.

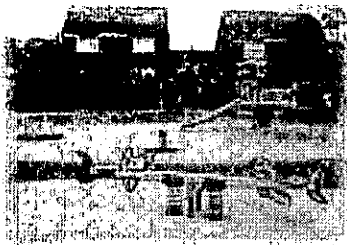
Development within the village was another large source of worry for the respondents with a particular concern about the new development at Bluemel Park and the potential for flooding.

Traffic and more particularly speeding was the biggest issue for households with litter also considered an important issue.

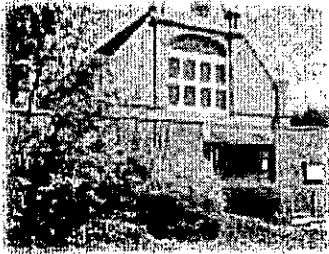
Other issues raised by several respondents include fly tipping, pollution from Coventry airport, the protection of the Grove and Plantation Woodlands and a desire to maintain Wolston's rural character.

The area identified as being the one where fly-tipping impacts on the village the most was in the Grove and Plantation Woodlands, with more than 150 respondents explaining that again, the small minority of people who dump their unwanted rubbish in this woodland are ruining the enjoyment of this beautiful area for the rest of the village.

Other areas clearly causing concern with regard to fly-tipping are on Stretton Road, Wolston Lane, and Coalpit Lane. The area around the recreation ground



WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



in Dyer's Lane was highlighted for its litter problems.

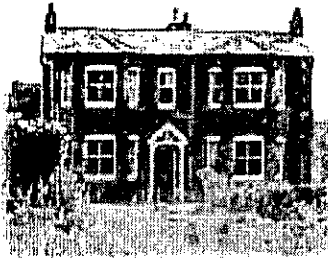
Several good suggestions were made including more frequent 'village skips' and a more robust 'fining' process, with several people frustrated that having reported fly tipping previously, no visible action was taken.

The question about the biggest eyesore in Wolston generated an interesting response. Specific buildings were identified and there were many references to improvements which could be made to the side of SPAR and the side of The Half Moon public house which are both seen by a lot of passing traffic. The frontages of other commercial properties were also highlighted for criticism.

Wolston's parking was raised as an issue, which lets the village down. The length of time the road bridge over the River Avon had been left un-repaired was also raised several times.

When given the chance to make their own suggestions for improving the Wolston environment to make the village a nicer place to live, several distinct themes cropped up time and time again. Improving the state of the Plantation and Grove Woodlands was a popular suggestion with many creative ideas.

Ideas also flowed on how the village's general upkeep could be improved and many of these suggestions included ideas for new street furniture. Traffic, speeding and parking were other major causes of concern with specific hotspots clearly identified. There was also a recurring theme that more could be made of, and done to improve, the condition of the brook that runs through the village, and the River Avon.



Respondents felt that the provision of additional seats, and providing additional ramps and dropped kerbs in appropriate places, would have the biggest impact on improving accessibility in Wolston.

The areas identified as having the most significant accessibility problems were School Street, due to cars parking on the pavements, the paths around the Church Field primarily due to the kissing gates, the narrow footpath opposite the War Memorial, and the alleyway at the side of St Margaret's School due to the barriers at the Paddock's Close end.

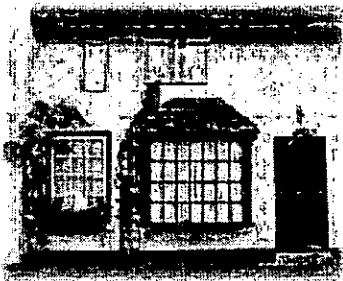
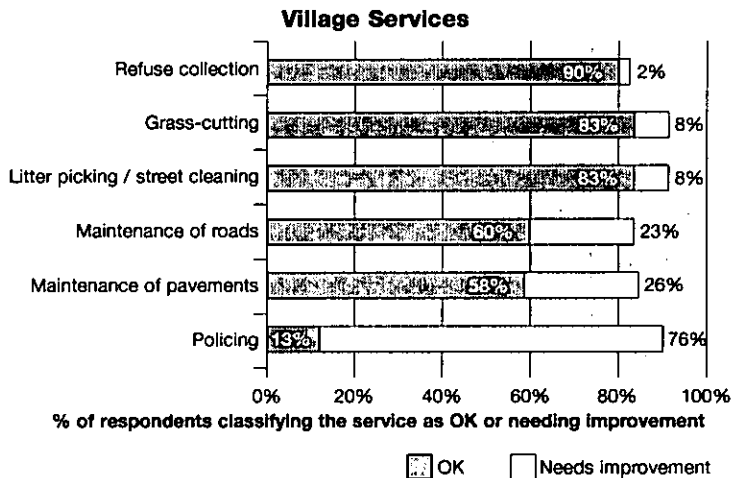
It was clear from the overwhelmingly positive comments made in the 'Environment' section of the survey that overall, people do enjoy living in Wolston and value the features, upkeep and appearance of their village. Targeted improvements in the areas identified would help it become an even better place to live and help to preserve the village for the future.



SECTION 4 VILLAGE SERVICES



The overwhelming majority of people rated the village services to be somewhere between satisfactory and excellent. The following chart shows the top three and the bottom three responses, classified either as OK or Needs Improvement.



As well as the 76% of households who suggested Policing needs improvement, 41 households identified specific problems and commented in the "free text" section that there was a need for more Policing in the village. The comments included:

"Policing very poor. No response. Lack of reassurance – no visibility. Growing level of anti-social behaviour";

"If we telephone Police about trouble from pubs, they don't arrive until too late"; "Policing - A greater, more visible presence is required – easily accessible to the public";

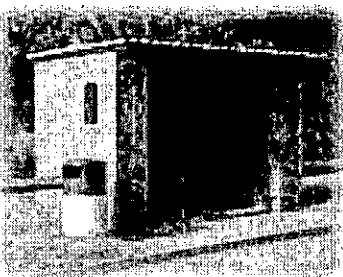
"I would like to see a Police presence on foot around the village not just drive by in a car";

"We need far more CCTV around Wolston as the Police now do nothing to stop crime around here";

"Policing very, very bad. We NEED Police!"; "Very rarely see a Police person around the streets";

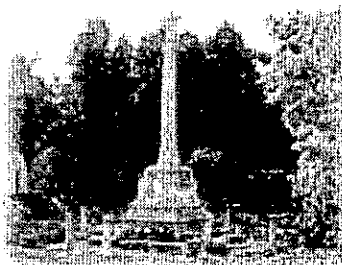
"As Wolston is growing in size, the decision to close and sell the Police Station was a mistake";

"The CCTV camera should be used and responded to by the Police"



Improvements to the recycling services, and an extension to the range of what can currently be recycled were seen as necessary improvements. Overwhelmingly people want green bins for garden waste, something the Borough Council is due to introduce in April 2006, and somewhere to recycle cardboard and plastics.

WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



The need to provide skips more frequently to allow for the disposal of bulky items was also seen as a way of helping recycling efforts. There was even a suggestion that the Borough Council should follow Coventry City Council's example and arrange free collection of bulky items, street by street.

Some people said they: *"find it difficult to store items for recycling"* and others that *"Bins, boxes, etc. have to stay at front of the house, so are unsightly"*

One respondent said *"Give us easy access to recycling and we will use it"* while another said *"Too lazy – feel guilty about it and keep intending to start."*

Some new residents were confused: *"Don't know which box is for which item, where and when to put them out, or who to phone to find out"* and some older residents said they don't recycle because they *"Hardly have anything to recycle"*.



SECTION 5 PUBLIC TRANSPORT



According to the responses received, there is a group of regular Public Transport users, but comments made by respondents identify that there are some problems, which need to be overcome to encourage wider use. Respondents tended to use the services for shopping, getting to work, or following education but a lot less saw it as a means of going out socially.

Some people would appreciate services that run earlier in the morning to make it easier to get to work, and would like buses that take them to the railway stations in Coventry and Rugby, so that they don't have to change buses. There were even a few respondents who wondered why the old station at Brandon couldn't be rebuilt and the stop brought back into use to help cut down on the number of car journeys made.

Other respondents felt that the existing bus destinations needed to be expanded to include places such as Leamington, Warwick, Leicester, Stratford, Kenilworth, Market Harborough, Nuneaton, Southam, Daventry, Northampton, Tesco at Walsgrave, local hospitals, Coombe Abbey, Ryton Pools, etc. and that this would be a way of increasing usage.

The difficulty of making the routes cost effective for the bus operators was highlighted by such comments as *"You often see buses with only two or three passengers on them during the day."*



There were concerns raised over the infrequency of the services provided for our older residents in the sheltered housing at the top of the village, which often results in it being easier for them to go down to the village on the two-hourly service, catch a bus into town and then come back from there, so that they can be dropped off near Bennetts Court.

The frequency of evening and weekend services were singled out for criticism. Some respondents wanted better evening services to make public transport more accessible to older teens and young adults to go into town to meet friends, or get to the cinema, etc. without the need for the parents to run a "taxi" service to collect them.

There were complaints that travelling by bus is far too expensive, and that cheaper fares would be needed if more people were to be encouraged to use them.

There were concerns that buses are often dirty, can be difficult to access for less able-bodied passengers or those passengers with children in pushchairs, because of the high steps, and they are uncomfortable particularly when they race through the village and over the traffic calming humps.

Some people wanted larger buses in the morning to cope with the number of people going to work, and smaller buses during the day when there can be less passengers to transport.

A number of respondents identified that there was nothing that could be done to improve the service and entice them to give up the freedom that driving their cars gives them.

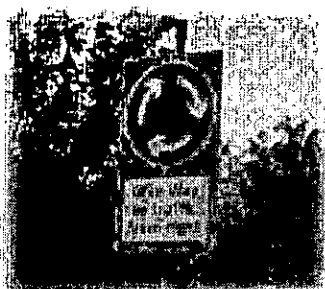
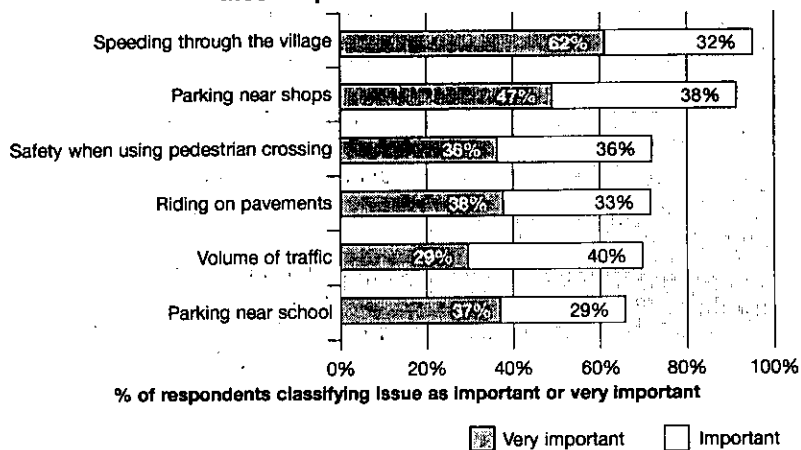


SECTION 6 TRAFFIC



Traffic problems provide a major headache in the village, particularly parking, or a lack of parking, for the shops. The resultant bad parking that takes place creates risks for the safety of pedestrians and other road users alike.

Most Important Traffic Issues



The existing traffic calming measures are seen as ineffectual in the effort to combat speeding vehicles in and through the village. Although the pedestrian crossing in the middle of the village is appreciated as an improvement, a number of people (342 households) reported concerns about the safety of using it because of experiences where there have been near misses. This is as a result of vehicles obstructing the crossing and drivers of through traffic not being aware of it or of the pedestrians trying to use it.

Parking near the shops was of concern to a large number of respondents. There were a number of imaginative suggestions made for improvements which included adapting the area at the side of the SPAR or using part of the Recreation Ground in Dyers Lane for a car park.

Concerns have been raised that the improvement work on the A45 with the new roundabout at the junction with Wolston Lane will encourage additional traffic to come through the village instead of using the Fosse Way. Coupled with the new development at Bluemel Park, there are concerns that the volume of traffic through the village will increase.

Speed issues have been raised many times and, despite traffic calming measures, the most effective has actually proved to be the parking of cars on the road outside residential properties, which has slowed through traffic.

The problem with this method of "traffic-calming" is that some of these vehicles are parked on the pavements forcing pedestrians to walk in the road to get past them.

In addition, residents are concerned that the ability of the emergency services to respond to incidents could be hampered by them not being able to negotiate the parked vehicles.

There are no easy solutions, as most of the respondents seem to accept.

People want to have the convenience of being able to drive everywhere, and not rely on public transport, but it brings its own problems



SECTION 7 HOUSING NEEDS



Households were given the opportunity to highlight what they thought their future housing needs might be.

One hundred and fourteen respondents indicated that they or somebody living with them would be likely to move to another home within the next five years, and nearly three quarters of these said they would like to stay in Wolston.

Sixty seven respondents indicated that they anticipated being forced to leave Wolston within five years because of a lack of affordable housing.

A further forty-three respondents indicated that relatives would need to move to the village either to care for, or to be cared for, by existing relatives.

From the Parish Plan questionnaire the following additional houses were identified as being required:

Type of property	To Buy	Shared Ownership	To Rent
2 bedroom house or flat	42	2	35
3 bedroom house	34	3	10
4 bedroom house	16	1	1
Bungalow	25	3	9
Sheltered accommodation	8	3	11
Adapted for disabled	3	1	3
Self Build	1	5	2



What is unclear is whether these needs can already be met in the village, since the questionnaire did not ask about the accommodation that the respondents would be leaving.

A separate Housing Needs Survey was issued to every household, with an envelope to return it to the Warwickshire Rural Housing Association.

There were very few respondents, with only eighty households completing the Housing Needs Survey. This is either a reflection that there is very little additional housing need in the village at present, or the respondents were satisfied with the accommodation they have and don't envisage a change in their circumstances in the next few years.

The feedback from the Housing Needs Survey, which was analysed by the Rural Housing Enabler for Warwickshire, has been incorporated into a report entitled "A detailed investigation into the Housing Needs of Wolston".



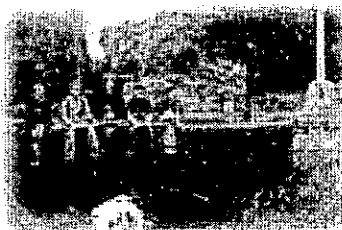
WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



The Housing Needs Survey identified the following immediate need:

Type of property	To Buy	Shared Ownership	To Rent
2 bedroom flat	-	-	1
2 bedroom house	1	-	1
2 bedroom bungalow	-	-	1
3 bedroom house	-	1	1
4 bedroom house	-	-	-
Sheltered accommodation	-	-	-
Adapted for disabled	-	-	-

(This has been submitted to Rugby Borough Council for adoption as supplementary planning guidance. The information in it is already influencing applications for new development within the village and is being used when any planning applications for additional housing are submitted to the Borough Council.)



SECTION 8 HEALTH ISSUES



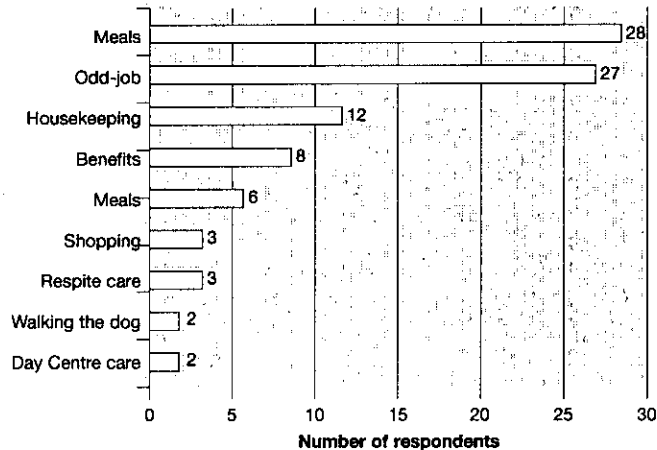
The health issues section of the questionnaire asked whether there were difficulties accessing medical services and aimed to find out why. Only a small minority of respondents indicated difficulties, which were specifically around health.

Health issues raised included difficulty accessing NHS Dentists (10% of responses) and getting to hospital appointments or to visit people in hospital. There were also some concerns about the lack of a Pharmacy in the village (5% of responses) and the belief that unless you were a patient at the local surgery you could not access the Pharmacist on site for advice.

The opening times at the surgery were identified, by some respondents, as restrictive and the problem with making an appointment in the afternoon was highlighted.

Some older residents also said that they found it difficult to get a home visit. Again, a small minority of respondents wanted help with daily activities, the largest group seeking help with odd jobs (10% of responses) or gardening (10% of responses).

Areas in which people need help



What the majority of respondents seemed to indicate was that they needed information about what is available, and how to access it.

For instance they wanted details about GP Surgery opening hours, and consideration of some adjustments to the opening hours to allow appointments to be booked in the afternoons.

They wanted information on how to arrange transport to hospital for appointments and visiting – what statutory and voluntary services there are to help with this; addresses and opening times of local chemists that they could access; and also needed confirmation that the GP pharmacy was available to them even if they were not registered with the Practice.

Someone commented that a “community emergency transport policy is needed badly – volunteers – who will ferry the elderly and infirm to hospitals, who will collect their prescriptions, their pensions from the Post Office. But of these, the imperative need is to help get to hospitals.”

There was obviously a demand for more information about the local agencies, which could provide help with Benefits forms, etc. such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and The Pension Service local service staff who can arrange to run advice “surgeries” in rural areas.

People also wanted to know about the range of Voluntary organisations, Charities, and what Age Concern can offer that may be relevant to them.





SECTION 9 CREATING EMPLOYMENT

The majority of respondents felt that Wolston has a very good balance and mix of businesses and enjoy the conveniences offered.

The closure of the Bluemel Business Park and the businesses it housed was widely viewed as a big loss to the village, with a number of respondents commenting that an opportunity was missed by not incorporating some small business units in the new development.

Twenty-one respondents indicated that they are intending to become self-employed in the next five years, and half a dozen respondents who currently own businesses said they would ideally like to base their businesses in Wolston.

There was a clear message that future development in the village should not spill into the surrounding greenbelt, and an overall sentiment that Wolston needs to be kept as a village and should resist further development which might turn it into a small town.

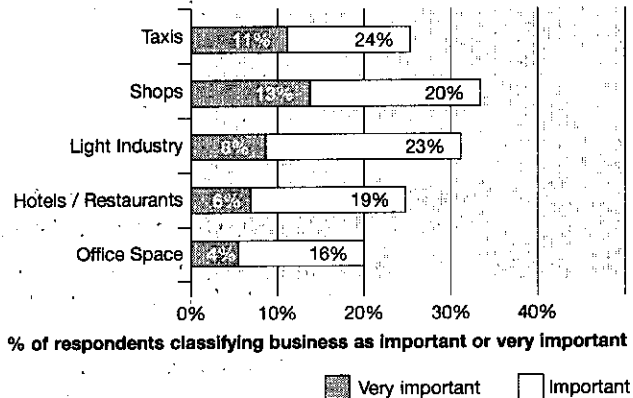
Most people were complimentary about the extended and refurbished Spar village shop, although concern was expressed about the lack of competition this now presented.

The safeguarding of the village post office was seen as a huge positive (offering a car taxation facility would make it even more popular!) and respondents were concerned that further village outlets do not close down.

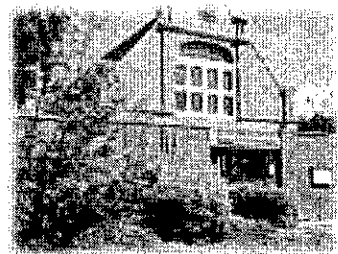
When respondents commented on businesses in Wolston, another popular recommendation was for a nice restaurant to open in the village. One respondent wrote "It would be super if we had a 'destination' restaurant here".



There should be more of the following in Wolston



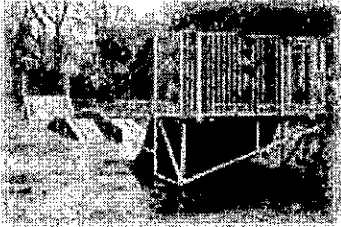
The chart above shows that whilst most people are content with the amount of business in the village, approximately a third of respondents felt that Wolston ought to have more. The lack of a Wolston-based taxi firm had the largest response with 35% of respondents indicating this as being an important gap. One respondent answered, "City firms don't want to come out this far."



When entering their own suggestions, lack of a quality butcher and a chemist were the top two areas which most respondents felt Wolston had inadequate provisions for.

Another 'fast food' outlet serving either Indian or Chinese food came in third place. Respondents also felt that opportunities existed in the village for a bakery/cake shop, cafe/coffee shop and greengrocery/flowerist.

SECTION 10 CRIME

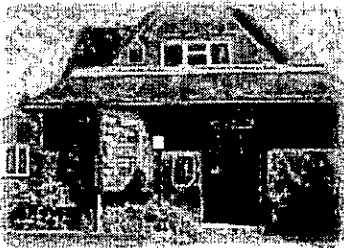
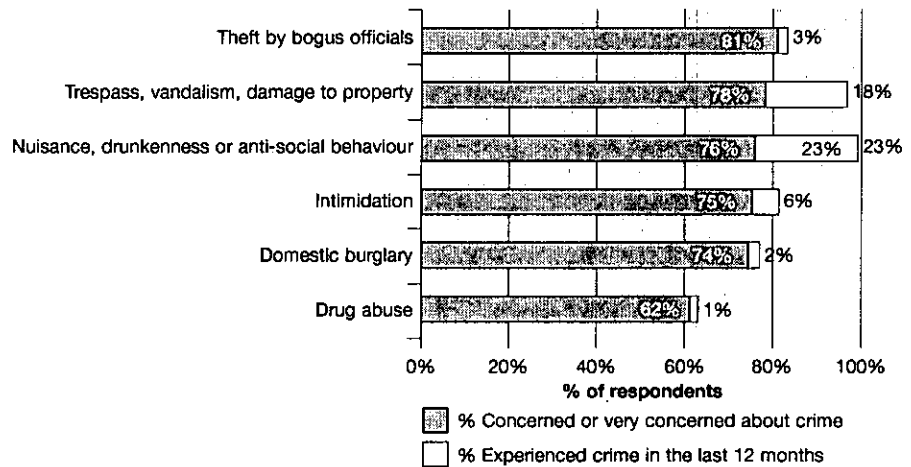


This section of the Questionnaire was specifically aimed at the subject of Crime - perception of crime, experience of crime as a victim, and what could be done to improve safety.

Some respondents felt so strongly about fear of crime, the loss of the Police Station, and the lack of evidence of Rural Policing that they identified these issues in the various "free text" sections of the questionnaire.

The figures show that the perception and fear of crime far exceeds the incidence of crime itself, which is what the Police always say in defence of the service they deliver.

Experience and fear of crime



Respondents were most concerned about Theft by Bogus Officials, and yet the number who reported that they had been victims represented just three percent of the total who were concerned.

Trespass, vandalism, or damage to property was the next largest concern, and for this nearly eighteen per cent of people who responded had actually experienced the crime in the last 12 months.

Nuisance, drunkenness or anti-social behaviour was rated the third highest area of concern with seventy-six per cent of people, and nearly twenty-three per cent of the respondents had actually experienced this in the last 12 months.



Regrettably, the behaviour of a few young people tends to create the impression that it is all young people who are vandals, or a nuisance, or drunk or being anti-social. People responding to the survey were asked to identify whether they thought that the provision of some youth activities would help to tackle the problems, and one respondent said, **"The sort of young people causing the problems, probably wouldn't participate in these activities"**.

Solutions to some of the problems identified that parents had more of a role to play.

"More parental control over their teenagers, Improved parental responsibility i.e. education/support/fines for children's behaviour".

WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS



Outdoor consumption of alcohol, often by young people, was identified a number of times as a problem, probably because the worst excesses can be observed in the form of empty bottles and lager cans dumped around the village on a daily basis. There is also regular evidence of the drug culture, which permeates the village in the debris that can be found in the litter strewn around the village.

One respondent commented on the fact that they had to put up with *"Drink, drugs and disorderly behaviour most days/nights."*

Respondents were asked if there were any areas of the village where they didn't feel safe, and if so why? There were **255** responses to the question.

Analysis of the results shows that there are a number of distinct areas, which were identified as places people don't feel safe:

- Footpath from Paddocks Close to the Church Field
- The Village Centre and outside the shops
- By the Red Lion Public House
- Dyers Lane and the Recreation Ground
- Manor Estate – by the Library and the roundabout
- From Main Street through to Larchfields (behind the old Post Office)
- Footpaths to School Street from Abbots Walk and Meadow Road
- Approach to the Leisure Centre



Comments included reference to groups of young people hanging about at night in the village centre by the circular bench, by the shops, outside the Red Lion public house, near and in the Recreation Ground, near the Grove and Plantation Woodlands and by the roundabout into Millennium Way. People reported finding their presence and behaviour intimidating.

There were also comments about poorly lit footpaths in various locations around the village creating areas where people don't feel safe.

Problems caused by some of the customers from the public houses have resulted in one person responding that she didn't feel safe: *"In my own house. My neighbour was attacked in his house and in the street outside his house"*

A solution to the public house problems was identified:

"Not allowing pubs extension times. On New Year's Eve people are still hanging around at 3-4 a.m. outside Red Lion pub."

Other comments which reflect poorly on the village as a whole include:

"Our son does not feel safe in the village"

"My teenage kids won't go to Dyers Lane because of drunken youths"



Disappointingly, only one respondent said, *"I feel the village is a safe place to live"*, although another respondent wrote that they had *"No personal experience of any category"* (of crime).

WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS

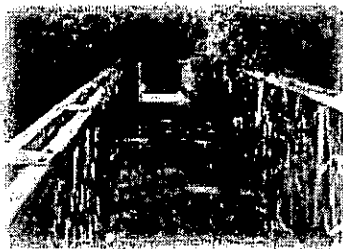
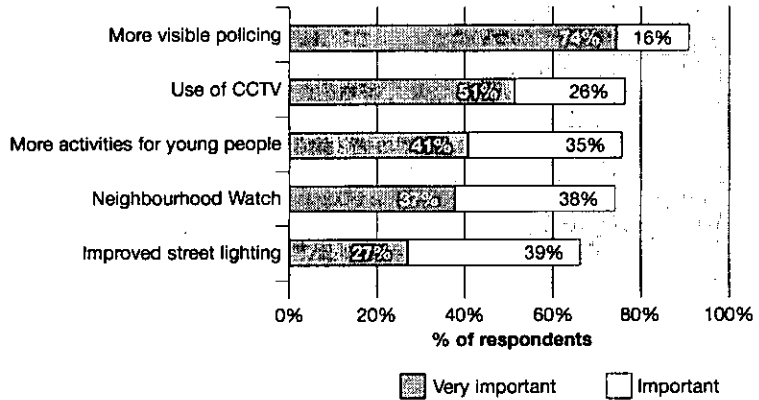


Respondents also thought that the Police did not acquit themselves well in helping to tackle the problems, and could have made a significant impact by making sure that they “*apply the Law – Police fines, zero-tolerance policy*”. This was aimed both at the illegal parking in the restricted area of the pedestrian crossing, and with regard to the anti-social behaviour, litter problems, underage drinking and drug taking.

There was seen to be a direct correlation between the lack of Policing and the unruly behaviour by the younger element, and the use of drugs.

Respondents overwhelmingly thought that there was a need for “more visible policing” as the table below shows.

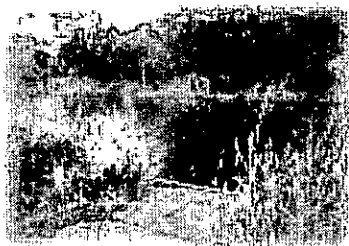
How do think safety can be improved?



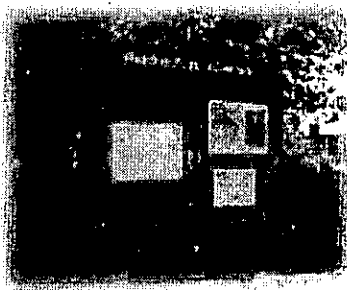
Some respondents saw the use of CCTV as the only way to replace the lack of Police presence and felt annoyed that the Home Secretary had pledged to put more Police on the streets but they were not seeing the evidence of this.

The closure and the sale of the Police Station were seen as the removal of a deterrent factor, which had previously existed, and something which had led to an increase in crime and hooliganism. Some people felt that the Police resource level for the village was totally inadequate and resulted in a lack of visible presence with limited or no foot patrols. There were also calls for a service 24 hours a day and to re-open the Police Station.

Respondents identified the Lack of Policing and the Closure of the Police Station as being the Biggest Change for the Worst because of the detrimental effect these two things are felt to have had on the village.

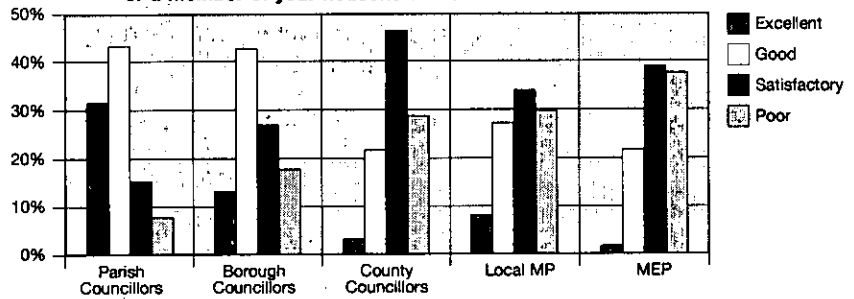


SECTION 11 ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES



This section was included to try to find out not only how well the local elected representatives communicate the decisions they take on matters that affect you, but also how responsive all levels of elected representatives are when you or your household raise a matter of concern with them.

How responsive do you feel that your representatives are when you or a member of your household raise issues with them?



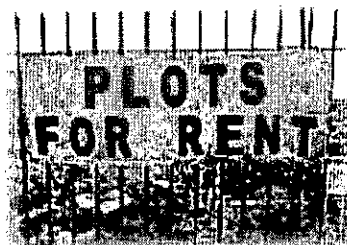
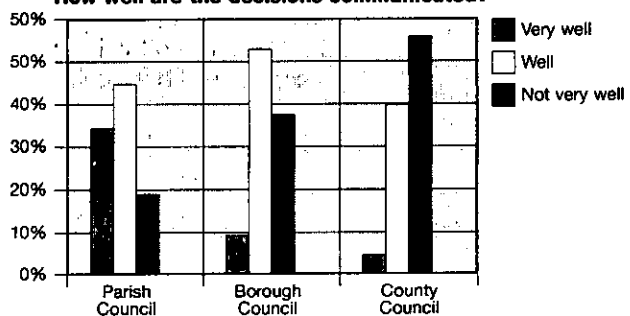
Answers showed quite dramatic variations, although in a lot of cases respondents had not actually had cause to raise issues with any of the elected representatives.



Representatives	Number of respondents who have never raised and issue
Parish Council	211
Borough Council	380
County Council	314
MP (<i>Andy King at time of survey</i>)	304
Member of the European Parliament	357

Most local representatives were identified as generally satisfactory or better at responding to matters that concern you, once alerted to the problem. Communicating what was being done on behalf of the electorate was generally satisfactory, except for the County Council. (see table below)

How well are the decisions communicated?





SECTION 12 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The questionnaire asked what information people in the village would like better access to and the responses clearly indicated that information on 'Wolston', whether it is its walks, its history, its organisations and clubs, services and facilities, or local events, is what is most wanted by villagers.

There is clearly a need to better communicate what is going on within the village.

Although the big push is towards e-government and people accessing information electronically, the reality in the rural area is that this is still not the preferred method by which people would choose to receive information.

People value being able to see posters and receive flyers through their doors giving them access to information, but would also like to know where they can get further information on a range of topics, including what is available at the Leisure and Community Centre, where the definitive footpaths are around the village, etc.



Respondents felt that more flyers and notices in shop windows were the other two most successful methods, which could be used to improve village life - website and word of mouth the least useful.

There was also a core of respondents who identified a need for improved access to information on the Parish Council generally, Training and Education, and Benefits and Entitlements.

Several respondents asked whether the village website was still up and running and suggested it could be something funded by the Parish Council with Parish Council minutes to be included on it.

A number of answers mentioned the Parish Magazine and questioned how it or a 'Village Newsletter' could be better distributed/more widely circulated (careful not to forget outlying dwellings!).

There were also many requests for the village library hours to be extended and a plea for pocket sized bus timetables to be more readily available.



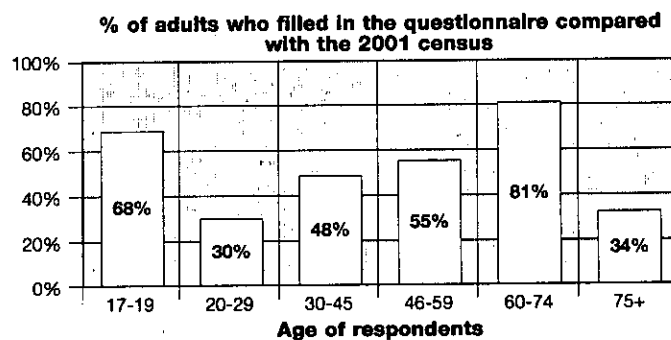
SECTION 13 PERSONAL DETAILS



This section asked basic questions about each member of the household aged 17 or over. It sought to provide a snapshot of the age of respondents, if they were in paid employment, whether they saw the need for commercial or housing development in Wolston and if so, where they thought any development should take place.

There were 997 responses to this question, of which 69 did not identify whether they were male or female. Of the remainder 44% were male and 49% were female.

There was a very good response from certain age groups



General questions relating to current employment reveal:

Current employment	Number of respondents
Full-time in Wolston	42
Part-time in Wolston	49
Full-time outside Wolston	401
Part-time outside Wolston	111

Some respondents also said that they are looking for new employment; 119 are looking for new full-time employment and 99 for new part-time employment

Respondents were asked if they were in favour of any further development, and if so if it should take place outside the village boundary or in existing open spaces.



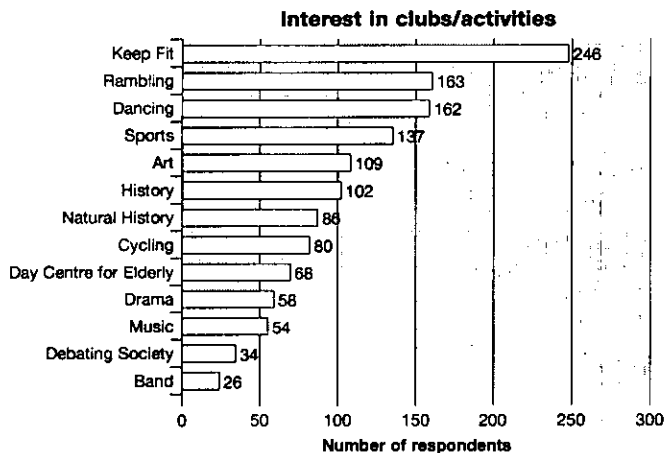
Feelings about no further development	Percentage
Strongly agree there should be no further development	51.7%
Agree there should be no further development	15.4%
Disagree there should be no further development	20.3%
Strongly disagree there should be no further development	12.6%

Comments ranged from: "The village is large enough – it will soon be too big to be a village"; and "Wolston is large enough – it lost its village identity 20 years ago"; through to: "Building must take place with sensitivity to the need for open space within the village".

SECTION 14 LEISURE AND EDUCATION

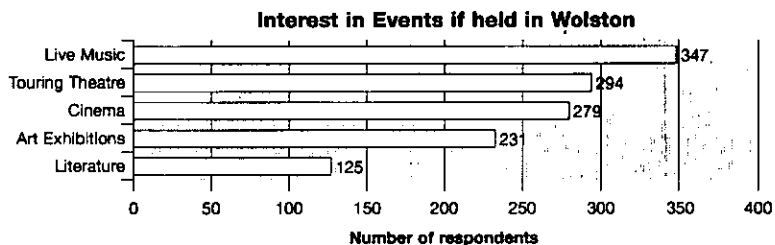


There was plenty of interest shown in bringing new clubs and activities to Wolston. The chart below shows the numbers interested in the ten most popular activities, but lots of interest was also shown in a music society, band and a debating society.

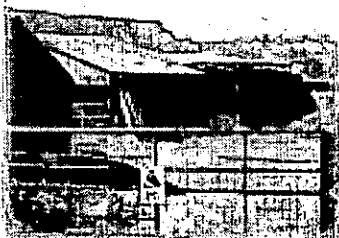
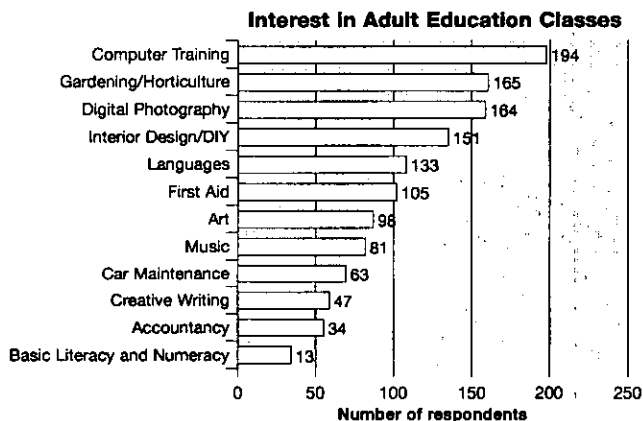


Other suggestions by respondents included antique/craft fairs; community events; dances and farmers/local produce markets.

Substantial interest was also shown in whether the following could be brought to Wolston:



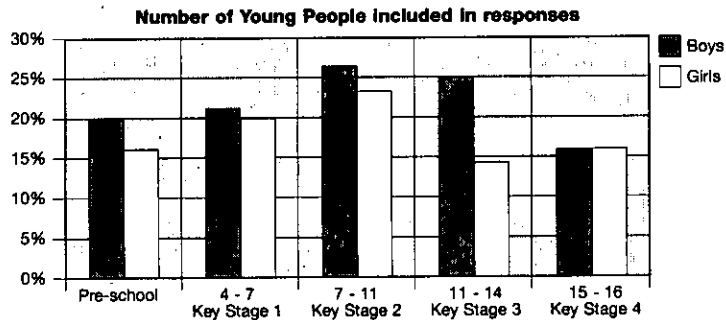
There was wide interest in a range of adult learning courses and many suggestions too ranging from cookery/wine to craft work, proving that if the right courses are on offer, they are well advertised and they are held at convenient times, the demand for them in Wolston is there! The majority of respondents suggested that evening classes would be best.



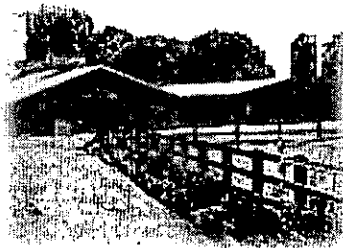
SECTION 15 YOUNG PEOPLE



The questionnaire asked general questions about the children in the households responding, about their schooling, their hobbies, and what they'd like available in the village.



There were 213 responses, 113 were identified as male and 93 female. When the questionnaire was circulated in December 2004, thirty-three households put comments for why they did not use St Margaret's Junior School.



The reasons were grouped according to category, then counted, one comment per category per household.

Fifteen of the respondents gave negative comments about the school (these are shown below).

Fourteen gave other comments, such as their children were settled at another school, were too young for school, had special educational needs, or because of religious choice.

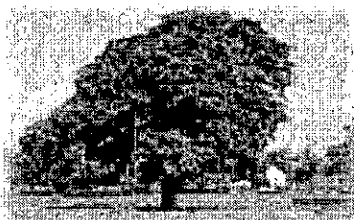
Four more recorded that they intend to use the school when their children are old enough.

Category	
Higher standards / Better Facilities elsewhere	7
Unhappy with standards	5
Don't like open plan	1
Don't like mixed age classes	1
Didn't like the Headmistress <i>(N.B. A new Head Teacher has been appointed since this survey was done)</i>	1



WOLSTON PARISH PLAN RESULTS

When asked, "Would the young person be interested in any of the following facilities if they were available in Wolston?" the responses were:



Possible facilities	Number of children interested
Holiday Play schemes	90
Walking Bus	23
Young Person's Drama Group	55
Creative Arts	65
Regular Discos	76
Organised Sport	99
Youth Shelter	44
Youth Café	66

Additional comments included consideration of more play equipment for the older age range; a go-kart track and more bike ramps; organised day-trips (because not everyone has access to a car); Basketball nets; astro-turf for Hockey; a soft-play area; better facilities in the Meadow Road area (because they can't play far from home.); and inevitably a swimming pool.

And finally...

When asked if there were any important topics that the questionnaire had failed to cover, or if there were any comments respondents would like to make, the response was passionate and varied.

The following responses give an idea of the flavour of the comments that were received.



They ranged from the appreciative such as...

"Preserve and enhance areas to help retain Wolston's unique charm and character."

"To involve the children, make them responsible for their village. It is important to retain village landmarks such as the brook, phone box, post box, trees, church field, woods, etc."

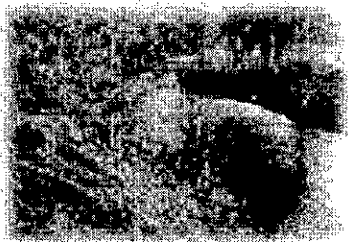
to the more critical such as...

"We feel as a family the woods are for enjoying walks and walking our dog, not for motorbikes and quad bikes to tear up the footpaths and cause danger to walkers".

"Don't be fooled into thinking youth nuisance will be solved by more activities for them. Some youngsters have so much to do they don't have enough time. Those who are "disengaged" will remain so whatever is offered. I really think zero tolerance of nuisance, yobbish behaviour is the only solution."

"Not much (in the questionnaire) on the lack of policing was there!"

"When is the river bridge going to be repaired, before much more of the brickwork ends up in the Avon? Unnecessary money has been wasted on "repairing" two bridges over the brook but the river bridge stands damaged or crumbling - utterly ridiculous!"



the inevitable comments on our parking problems...

"Parking on pavements down Warwick Road. People in wheelchairs or scooters have to go on the road to get past them."

"Parking in School Street should be addressed urgently - grass verges could be used as laybys as in Manor Estate."

some good suggestions...

"As there is a large horse-riding community in the village, it would be beneficial to have improved sign posting for car drivers to indicate this hazard."

"Information such as Parish Council minutes could be available via Internet."

"Would like to know more about activities, classes etc in village - but never see or receive any information."

...and finally, from two very persistent respondents who responded with the same answers to practically every question...

"Can we open Dyers Lane?"

"Sorry but I must say again STOP CARS speeding and Dog fouling all over the place - get the owners to pick it up and bin and bag it."

your comments were noted!