



## Streatley's Refreshed Parish Plan

April 2016

## Acknowledgements

This refresh of Streatley Parish Plan has been coordinated by a committee of local people working closely with Streatley Parish Council.

Many thanks to the Parish Plan Refresh Group, comprising Karen Morton, Angela Bulmer, Gaye Walsh, Chris Prickett, Ian Helmschrott-Bowden, Fiona Strange, Sarah Curtis, Shirley Paul and Nicola Swan.

Thank you also to the Morrell Room, The Bull, The Swan, The Community Council for Berkshire, Trevor Long and Dominic Hale for practical support, and to all the local organisations and the hundreds of Streatley residents who have attended consultation events and completed the survey.

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## Background

Parish Planning is a way of hearing what its communities want. Most Parish Plans were originally put together some years ago, so our local authority, West Berkshire Council asked parishes to review and update (refresh) their Plans. Following a general call for volunteers, a working group was formed to refresh Streatley Parish Plan, which was originally published in 2006 as a result of considerable local work.

Several consultation events have taken place to gather local views as part of refreshing the Streatley Parish Plan. These demonstrated a great appreciation of the parish, particularly its open spaces and rural setting, with emerging ideas including a pavilion on the recreation ground, improved play equipment, a green gym, better footpaths, and a village fete. They also showed a clear split in opinion on the issue of parking in the high street, and strong feelings about where dogs should be welcome (or not). A household survey has subsequently built on those consultations to ascertain and quantify specific views. This document is a summary of the main things that were learned from that survey, and suggested projects to take forward.

**Statements made in this report are based on the 244 responses to the survey representing approximately 1/3 of the households in the parish.**

### *Methodology*

The group first reviewed the outcomes from the original plan, to look at what had been achieved, what still needed to be done and whether anything was missing. The majority of actions from the original Parish Plan had been achieved.

The Refresh Group undertook several consultation exercises to find out what local people thought should be included in the refreshed plan and the issues of greatest concern.

The following consultations took place over an 18-month period from May 2013 - December 2014:

- a) **Streatley Parish Assembly - 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013.** Exhibition of initial review findings and opportunity for public comment on the refresh plan.
- b) **Streatley School Fete - 29<sup>th</sup> June 2013.** Questionnaires handed out to all those attending the school fete. In particular, this provided a perfect opportunity to canvass the views of children and young people.
- c) **Consultation Event - 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014.** All local businesses, clubs, organisations and societies of Streatley were invited to a facilitated discussion.
- d) **Further Public Consultation Event - The Bull, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014** – A further consultation event was held to capture more ideas and assess the strength of feelings on local matters using voting methods.

From all of these consultations many ideas were put forward into a household survey.

- e) **Household Questionnaire** – This was issued in October 2014 - All Streatley residents had the opportunity to comment, either online or via hardcopy, this provided a quantitative measurement of the levels of support for issues identified in all earlier events.
- f) A final consultation brought back the local businesses, clubs, organisations and societies to consider the findings from the Household Questionnaire, identify actions going forward and begin to consider who would be willing to lead on these.

## The Household Questionnaire

### Demographics

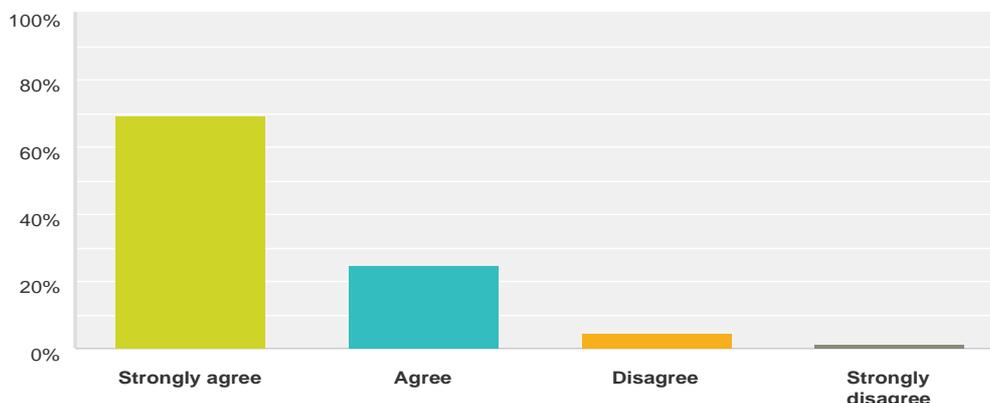
15% of survey respondents were under 40, 45% aged 41 - 60, and 39% aged 60+. Very few children completed the survey (but many were involved in other consultation events). Just over half of respondents were in paid work, a third were retired, and the remainder looking after family, volunteering or caring. Surprisingly, 34% of those in paid work are working in Streatley, with others working in Oxford, London, Newbury, Reading, Goring and many other locations. Almost all those working in Streatley were working from home: a largely hidden workforce.

It should be noted the survey sample had more responding from the 41-60, 61-64, 65-80 and over 80 age groups than the general village population. In contrast under 18s were under-represented in the sample, however efforts were made to ensure the qualitative data captured with children and young people significantly informed the overall document.

### The Community's View

#### Q37 It is important to keep the green spaces around the outside edge of the village (and not to allow development there).

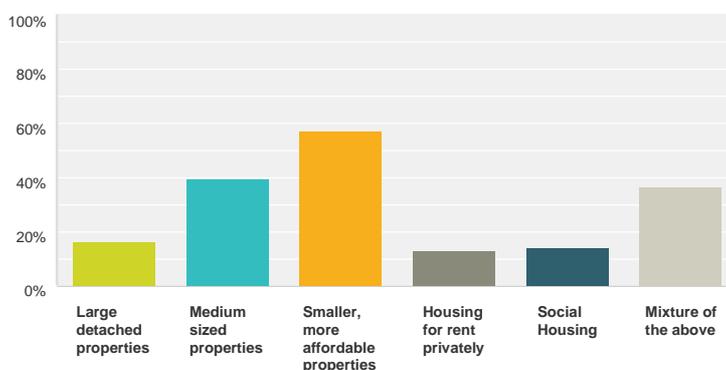
Answered: 215 Skipped: 29



Streatley residents help each other out, and almost everyone values a diversity of ages and backgrounds living within the village, and want the elderly and disabled to feel supported. People appreciate the location of the village, with 94% wanting to protect the 'green lungs'. Almost all respondents are in favour of maintaining the green spaces around the edge of the village and not allowing development. If there is to be building, most are in favour of developing smaller properties (affordability for older people or younger families is seen as an issue) with the next most popular categories being medium sized, or a mixture of all types including social housing. (See Chart). Most respondents feel safe in Streatley (64%) for those that reported feeling unsafe (17.5%) or occasionally unsafe (18.5%) the reasons most frequently reported were the speed of traffic on rural roads and the narrow footpaths for pedestrians (See Action 14).

**Q36 When new houses in Streatley are built (mainly infilling, we are not aware of any plans to build on Greenfield sites and Streatley has some protection) what sort of properties do you think should be the priority? Please tick up to 3 answers.**

Answered: 213 Skipped: 31



## Active community

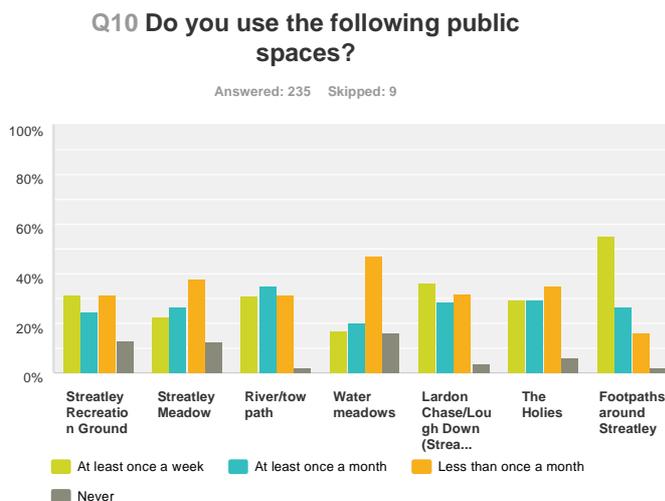
66% know whom to contact if they have a local concern but nearly half of those surveyed would like more information. The results showed that whilst 56.5% supported the idea of a Forum to discuss village ideas many would not get directly involved. A further 34% of respondents were potentially in support but it depended on a range of different factors such as suitable agenda topics, frequency of meetings, avoiding duplication with Parish Council Assembly, etc (See Action 1).

63% of respondents never or only occasionally use social media sites and most are not interested in learning more. Nearly half of the over 60's never use social media at all. However, most people would like a Streatley web page and would use it (with only a handful of people not liking the idea). (See Action 2)

Opinion was divided over using the using the phone box as a place for either a book or plant swap; 30% would support, 34% liked the idea but would not use and 36% did not like the idea. (See Action 3) Without being prompted a number of people suggested it could be used to house a defibrillator (See Action 4)

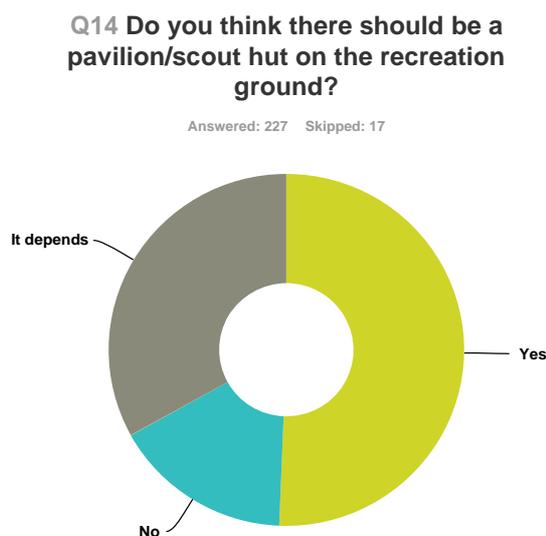
## Activities and facilities

Almost everyone surveyed uses the outdoor spaces sometimes, such as Streatley Meadow and Lardon Chase, although only half use these spaces more than once a month. Most people regularly use the footpaths, and there is a lot of support for creating a level circular walk along the river, with 89% saying that they would use it. A majority (56%) would also use a historic or nature trail. Nearly half of respondents (45.5%) would also support the opening up of other new paths, however there is also a substantial minority (28%) who feel we already have plenty of access and 26% said it would depend on finding specific locations or other reasons. (See Action 5)



New facilities most likely to be used if introduced included a green gym/trail (54%), a smooth track for running/cycling (42%) and a refuge shelter (43%) the overall support for schemes was even higher if including those residents who would like to see these provided although they would not necessarily use these facilities themselves. Opinion was divided on the provision of public toilets (43% would use, 22% would support but not use, and 35% surveyed were against). The most frequent concerns expressed were around cost and maintenance of facilities. (See Actions 6 & 7)

Responses to the idea of a pavilion or scout hut on the recreation ground is mixed, with 51% in favour and a further 33% saying that it depends - on size, location, design, security, management, maintenance and so on, plus the impact on the Morrell Room as an existing facility. (See chart opposite) If there was a pavilion/scout hut then most people thought it should include toilets, kitchen, changing rooms and a meeting room potentially fulfilling some of the facility suggestions above. (See Action 7)



## Environment

There is much interest in the history of the village, and a wish to make the most of the lovely surroundings. (See Actions 5 & 2)

In response to a question about whether anything hampers enjoyment of outdoor space, a surprising number of people mentioned being worried about the cows on Lardon Chase. Others mentioned muddy paths being difficult to navigate (particularly with buggies) and hedges being overgrown. There were also a number of comments about people not clearing up after their dogs. Some concern was expressed about the visibility of the allotments. (See Actions 8 & 9)

Places listed to be considered as community assets include The Bull, The Swan, Streatley Meadow, St.Mary's Church, Lardon Chase, The Holies, and the Morrell Room. (See Action 10)

67% of people think streetlights should be turned off at 1am with a further 17% saying 'maybe'. (See Action 11)

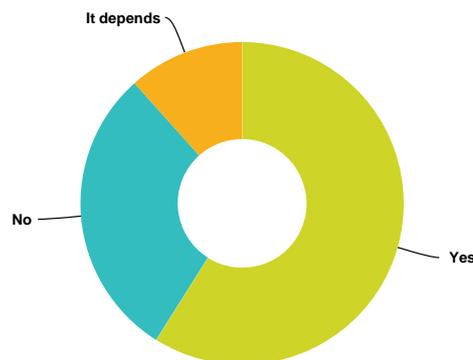
There are strong views about bonfires: nearly 61% of people would sign up to a voluntary bonfire code but 25% would not. (See Action 12)

## Transport

The majority of respondents (58%), particularly in the younger age groups, would use dedicated cycle tracks around Streatley. There are many useful suggestions about how to make cycling safer but also many people opposed to cyclists on the road on the issue of safety. (See action 13)

**Q16 If there were dedicated cycle tracks/paths in and around Streatley, would you use them?**

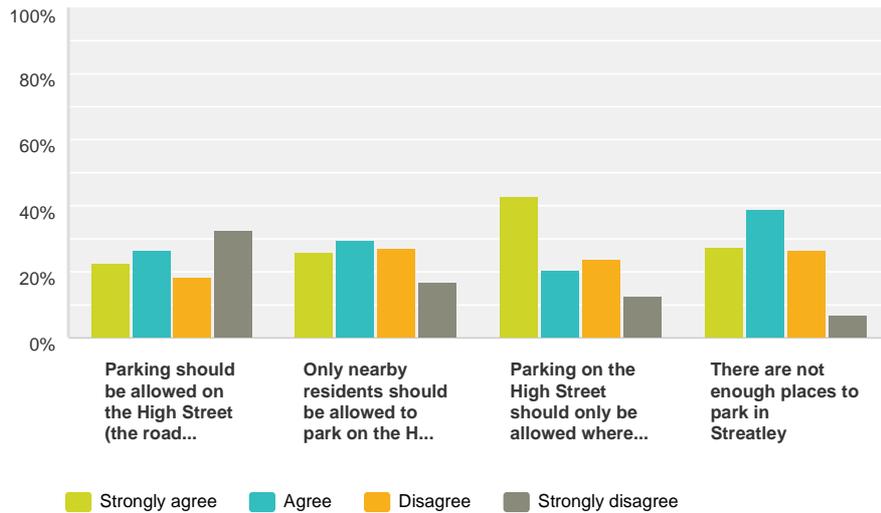
Answered: 224 Skipped: 20



As with the previous Parish Plan the village is divided on whether there should be parking on the High Street, with some strong views. (See chart below and Action 14)

**Q30 Parking in Streatley (for the purposes of this survey, please ignore temporary changes because of the Whitchurch Bridge closure)**

Answered: 222 Skipped: 22



## Moving forward and actions

We invited representatives of local groups, and those who had indicated an interest in response to the survey, to meet together to consider project ideas arising from the findings. From this (and other consultations) we propose the following projects and activities. Many of these already have volunteers who have offered to take them forward.

1. Build the Parish Assembly as a key local annual forum and encourage broader engagement.
2. Ensure the Streatley website carries clear information about who to talk to about matters of concern, and who is responsible for community facilities, events, activities etc. Make sure it has good links with other local sites, including (but not limited to) the history society.
3. Trial the use of a plant and book swap in the phone box.
4. Ensure sufficient availability of defibrillators and trained volunteers for the whole community, linked to the community responders scheme.
5. Create new walks in Streatley including an “historic Streatley” trail and one to incorporate the Thames Path.
6. Create a ‘green’ gym trail for Streatley.
7. Commission a feasibility study for a pavilion/scout hut on the recreation ground.
8. Guidance to be collated and disseminated (in partnership with landowners) as to how to safely walk through areas with farm animals.
9. Locate at least one extra dog bin in the village.
10. Ensure buildings of community value are added to the WBC list of Community Assets.
11. Reduce hours of usage of streetlights in appropriate areas of the village.
12. Collate and disseminate an appropriate bonfire guide for the village.
13. Develop a long-term vision for a network of cycling paths connecting different parts of the village and with neighbouring communities.

14. Parking / Traffic on the High Street. To analyse traffic survey data to better understand issues of congestion, and suggest remedies that might improve traffic flow, without disadvantaging those living on the High Street.

15. Hold an annual facilitated forum of local organisations to maintain a vibrant village.

## **Other findings – not currently part of an action plan**

### ***Active Communities***

- There is a mix of views on having a village fete - slightly more would prefer a Goring and Streatley fete, but nearly as many would support this continuing as a local school event.
- Many think that there are already plenty of events in the summer.
- There is a split in response to the idea of a skills swap, with a 43% saying they would not use it. However, this still leaves 139 individuals who would use it.
- Just over half the village think it should be promoted to visitors but there is concern about the lack of parking.
- A lot of people are working from home in the village.
- There is support for various project ideas (but fewer actual offers of help).

### ***Activities and facilities***

- A variety of new facilities have been suggested, such as climbing equipment, ping pong table, volley ball nets. There is majority support for all ideas, but also some-too, with the exception of improved play equipment for younger children which is almost universally supported. The biggest objections (albeit still a minority) are to a zip wire, skateboard ramps and public toilets.
- The survey included 3 questions from Streatley school children, one of which was if there was a swimming pool, should it be indoors or outdoors. Most people answered the question, and of those, an indoor pool was favoured.

### ***Transport***

- About a quarter of respondents find it difficult to get somewhere by public transport, particularly to Wallingford, Reading and Newbury.
- Many think there is insufficient parking, generally, in Streatley.
- Speeding is clearly seen to be a problem, with many solutions proposed.