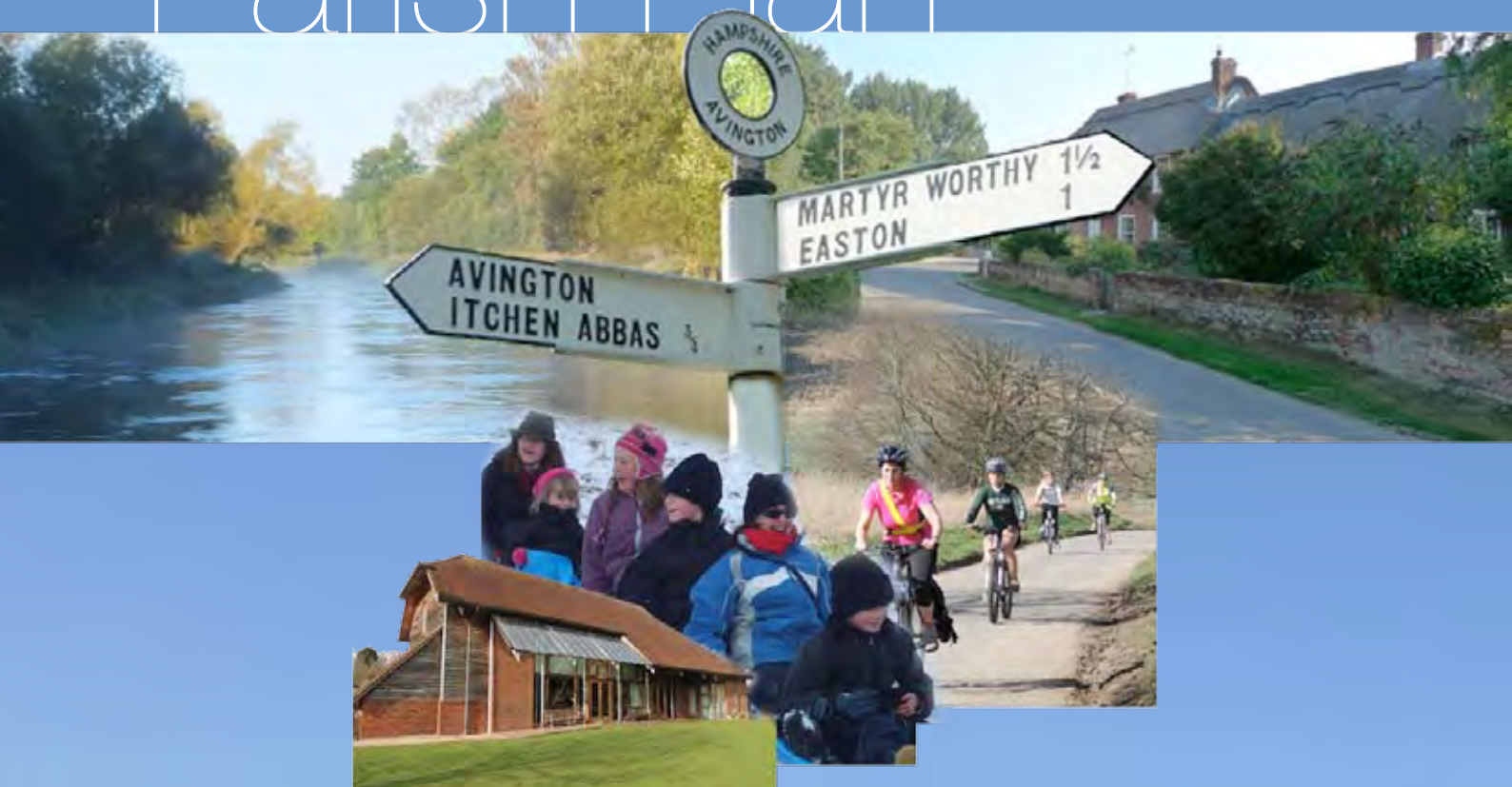


The Itchen Valley

Parish Plan

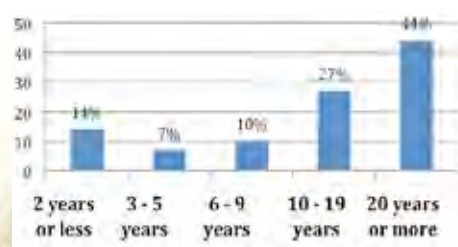


About the Itchen Valley

The civil parish of the Itchen Valley covers a large area to the east of Winchester. It is mainly rural, ranging from chalk downland in the north and south, to the valley floor and the watermeadows by the Itchen. There are four villages, two each side of the river, and various scattered farms, a total population of approximately 1450 people.

The M3 runs through the parish from north to south and the South Downs National Park boundary runs from east to west along the old railway line to the north of the river. The Itchen carries a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation and there are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) along the Valley.

The Pilgrims' Way long distance footpath runs roughly along the river and the national cycle path number 23 does likewise. Roads on both sides of the river run east/west, but the river can only be crossed by car at Easton and Itchen Abbas. There are four conservation areas: Avington, Easton, Chilland and Martyr Worthy.



Average length of time lived in Itchen Valley is just over 18 years, slightly less for Itchen Abbas.



The four villages

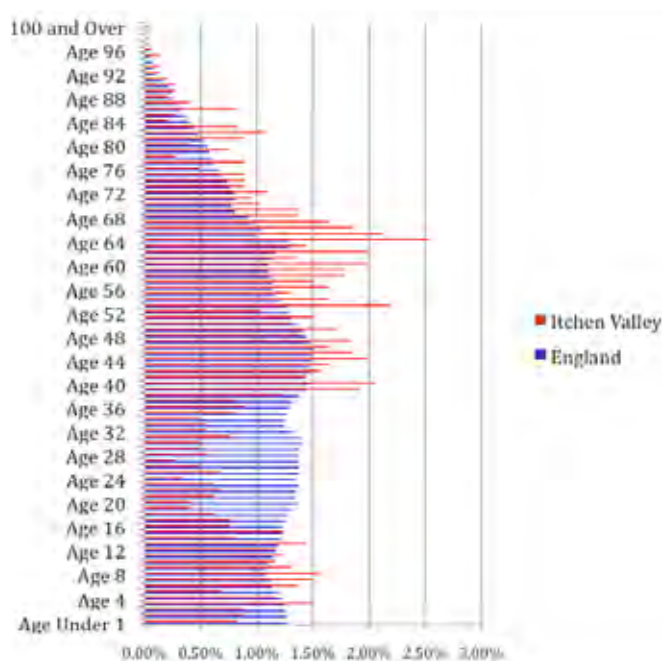
Avington was historically an estate village based on Avington Park, a minor stately home. The village centre, clustered around the Georgian church, is relatively small with dwellings of varied sizes. It has a 9-hole golf course and a recreational fishing lake. There are 81 addresses and household questionnaires were completed by 36 of them (44 per cent) and were accompanied by residents' questionnaires covering 64 individuals.

Easton is rather larger with a Norman church, two pubs, a very small shop, a village hall, a sports field with play equipment and a cricket field. There are 180 addresses from which 70 household questionnaires (39 per cent) and residents' questionnaires covering 137 were collected.



Itchen Abbas is a linear village strung out along the B 3047 but with a centre at the eastern end around the county primary school, the modern village hall and the Victorian church and pub. Of the four, Itchen Abbas has seen most development in recent years, including some light industrial units. This is the biggest of the villages, with 230 addresses resulting in 117 household questionnaires (51 per cent) and residents' questionnaires covering 222.

Martyr Worthy consists of houses on both sides of the B 3047 and two lanes running at right angles down to the river from that road and up towards the downland. It has a Norman church, a village hall and a King George V Memorial Playing Field, with an adjoining children's play area. There are 119 addresses yielding 37 household questionnaires (31 per cent) and residents' questionnaires covering 72.



Ages of Itchen Valley residents compared with national figures

The Parish Plan for the Itchen Valley

What is a Parish Plan?

A Parish Plan is a statement of how the local community sees itself developing over the next few years. The government has said that it wants communities to take more control of their own neighbourhood, to say what needs doing and to engage with other organisations to get it done. Of course, there are some things we would like to change and others we would prefer to stay as they are. We can't prevent some change from happening, but we can influence it.

In a rural area such as ours, a Parish Plan looked to be an effective way of achieving this. Although the Parish Council has taken a keen interest in its production, it had to be community-led to be effective, and for wider government to take proper heed of it, whether at city, county or national level.

Our Parish Plan has been developed to:

- reflect the views of all sections of the community
- record the features and local characteristics people value
- identify local problems and opportunities
- show how residents want the community to develop in the future
- prepare a plan of action to achieve this vision.

How has it been produced?

It was begun by the Parish Council with well-attended public meetings in early 2012, canvassing first thoughts from residents with a 'brown paper poll' where post-it notes were used to list things that they liked about living in the parish, some of the things that they didn't like, and things that might be improved upon. It's interesting to note that some of these have already been achieved.

Things we liked included:

- Tranquillity and rural setting, especially the river
- Footpaths and other leisure pursuits
- Supportive community
- Proximity to towns for amenities
- Road/rail/air links
- Good schools

Things we weren't so keen on:

- Dependence on private transport locally
- Poor maintenance of roads and verges
- Mobile phone and Broadband not good enough
- Too many inconsiderate cyclists



1. Initial Meetings in
Itchen Abbas and Easton

3. Consultations
at village events

Autumn 2012

Summer 2012

2. Setting up
Steering and
Village Groups



4. Questionnaire
drafted and
tested

January 2012



A group of volunteers for each of the four villages was set up at the last of these meetings and these groups in turn elected a Steering Group, with the Parish Council also represented. This group, containing a good mix of age groups and including people from all four villages, met regularly to review progress and agree next steps. The Steering Group also attended the Avington and the Easton Village fetes during the Summer of 2012 to encourage people from all of the villages to comment further on the topics of interest.

The Steering Group then devised a questionnaire reflecting the topics identified at the public events. To ensure that all sections of the community were involved, separate questionnaires were produced for households and businesses, and children from the local primary school were also involved in the project. As an incentive, a prize draw for a meal for two was drawn from returned questionnaires, won by a resident in Itchen Abbas.

Almost half of the households in the Valley (42 per cent overall) completed and returned their questionnaires, which is a great success in itself, and provides a solid base of evidence to support the proposals in the Plan. More information on the analysis of the results of the questionnaires is provided in the next chapters. These comments provide the basis for the actions proposed in the Plan.

Winchester City Council has been involved at all key stages and kept informed of progress throughout, to ensure that the due process has been properly followed, in order for it to be accepted by wider government as the genuine voice of the Itchen Valley.

The Plan

This plan has been produced by the community and facilitated by the Parish Council. It aims to give those who live or work here and those who may seek to do so an idea of the aspirations of residents and local businesses for an outstanding area comprising four villages in the valley of the river Itchen.

It has been informed by the results of a questionnaire (the Questionnaire) distributed to all households in November 2012 and will be updated on a regular basis.

It was very clear from replies to the Questionnaires that the vast majority of residents enjoy living in the parish and appreciate the attractive environment and village atmosphere.

One of the objects of Parish Plans is to produce an Action Plan for the future – but with such a contented population this is not so easy!

The Steering Group has, however, identified five topics from the replies to the Questionnaires as meriting further examination, covered in the following five sections:

- Transport
- Roads and verges
- Communications
- Housing
- Community

5. Distribution and collection of Questionnaires

Spring 2013

6. Analysis of results

Business Questionnaire

7. Drafting plan

Children's Survey



8. Consultation with residents

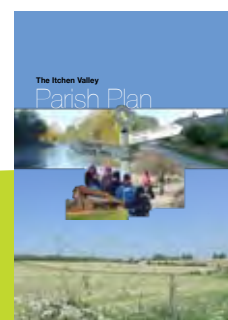
January 2014

9. Finalising plan

10. Open meeting to present plan

May 2014

11. Continuing action plan to achieve our goals



Transport

Overview

This section of the Plan deals with the modes of transport available to residents within the Parish. In general they fall within the categories of:

- **Private transport** including non-recreational use of cars, motorbikes, bicycles.
- **Public transport** including trains and buses.
- **Community transport** including Dial-a-Ride, volunteer car services, community mini-buses, school buses, etc.

The questionnaire told us that nearly three quarters of households make at least one regular journey per week by car. The average length of journey is 10 miles, but by far the most common journey is 3-8 miles, possibly into Winchester or Alresford. Three-quarters of the journeys have only the driver in the car. There are only a small number of regular long-distance journeys.

There is an infrequent bus service along the B 3047 and nothing in Easton or Avington. This is clearly not an encouragement for people to use public transport more. Only 18 out of 260 households stated that anyone made a regular journey by bus.

The most common reason given for this was that the buses are not frequent enough. In Avington and Easton the key reason is that the bus stop is too far away and in Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy the bus not running late enough and the expense are cited for non-use. 60 per cent of households do not use a bus pass.

Just over half the households have at least one bicycle, and many of these have more than one.

Nearly half the households with bicycles use them fewer than 12 times a year and only a quarter use them once a week or more.

Private transport

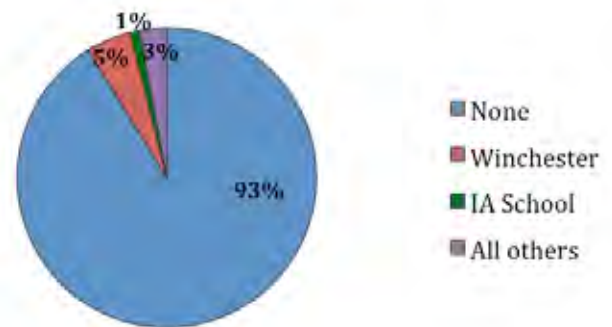
Being a rural parish, the use of cars is the predominant form of transport for non-recreational journeys and while over 50 per cent of households have bicycles, only a small number of residents use them regularly for non-recreational journeys.

Public transport

There are no stations or railway lines within the Parish although it is served well by the mainline station at Winchester. The parish is served by a single bus route (no 67) from Winchester to Petersfield which passes along the B3047 through the villages of Martyr Worthy and Itchen Abbas. Neither Easton or Avington are on the direct bus route. The bus service is primarily funded by Hampshire County Council, but even this has an uncertain future.

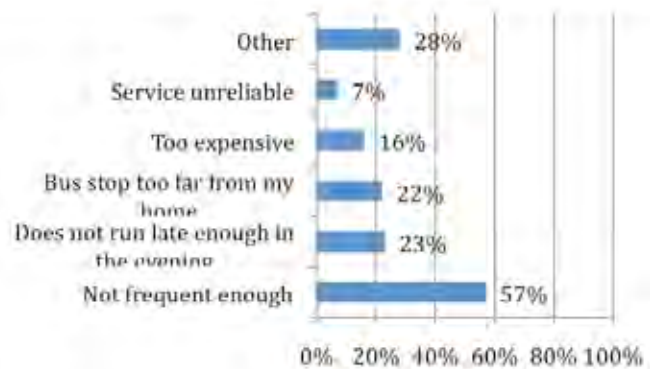
Community transport There are a wealth of community or council-led transport options available to local residents including Dial-a-Ride, community mini-buses and school buses. However, at the current time, the full range of options is not fully understood or information readily available.

Q6: If anyone in the household makes a regular journey by bus to the same place at least three times a week, where is that journey to?



Only 18 out of 260 households stated that anyone made a regular journey by bus.

Q19: Which of these are reasons that deter you from using the local bus service, or using it more often?



By far the most common reason given was that the buses are not frequent enough. In Avington and Easton the key reason is that the bus stop is too far away and in Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy the bus not running late enough and the expense are also important.



“ I would really like a regular, cheap and reliable bus service that goes to Winchester and Alresford. ”

What you said:

Road

- When I moved here we had a half-hourly bus service (which now goes along the dual carriageway, where there are no villages).
- When my children were teenagers they had the independence of being able to socialise in Winchester with a late bus.
- We need maps on bus stops showing where they go. Even the people at the bus station didn't know the route of the local bus!
- I would really like a regular, cheap and reliable bus service that goes to Winchester and Alresford.
- I think there needs to be a bus service through Avington to Winchester and Alresford. It's too much to ask elderly people to travel to Itchen Abbas bus stop.
- Bus service needed for children to return from Winchester or Alresford in the evening
- Bus operator charges same price for weekly season ticket but for fewer bus routes
- First bus to Alresford is too late for Perins school start.
- Last bus back too early to allow for after school activities.

Rail

- Extend the Watercress Line into Itchen Abbas – but not too far!
- Better connections to Winchester and London.

Air

- Blighted by increasing aircraft noise.
- Aircraft noise is a nuisance, but the benefit of having Southampton Airport so close might be an overriding factor.
- Apart from speeding drivers and aircraft noise it is a beautiful area, lovely people, great schools and facilities.



Transport objectives and actions

Use our cars more effectively for the benefit of the community

- share journeys to work, station, shops, school etc
- develop a volunteer local car service
- provide lifts to the hospital for the elderly or sick

Make better use of bicycles

- leisure and exercise
- reduce car dependence

An acceptable bus service

- lobby to maintain the current service as a minimum
- Research options for community buses, including the Alresford Trust bus, Tesco and Dial-a-Ride
- set up local bus forum to engage with service providers to improve services

Keep aircraft noise at current levels

- set up a lobby group including local experts able to give professional advice

Private transport

It is clear from the analyses that the predominant form of transport for non-recreational journeys is by car, with nearly 75 per cent of households making a least one regular journey during a week with the average distance being 3 to 8 miles. (i.e. local journeys). Conversely, 10 per cent of households do similar journeys by bicycle. It is unclear from the analysis the reason for this disparity, although it could be assumed that many car journeys are for shopping where it would be inappropriate to use a bicycle, or journeys to work where wet weather and unsuitable clothing is an issue. It is not proposed to list any actions regarding private transport under this section. A cycle rack has been provided at the Itchen Abbas village hall by IVPC for those wishing to use the bus stops there.

Public transport

Although trains are not directly utilised within the Parish and hence their usage was not analysed in detail, the proximity of the parish to the mainline train station in Winchester is considered to be an asset. Any major reductions to frequency and /or routes may have a detrimental effect on the parish and hence it would seem appropriate to maintain a watching brief on any proposed changes in order to bring some influence to bear.

Although only 18 out of the 260 households who responded said that they made regular journeys by bus, it is nevertheless seen by many to be a critical lifeline for those without access to alternative means of transport (mainly the young and more mature) and as such, needs to be maintained. In addition, the main reasons stated for lack of use of the bus service were that it is too infrequent, does not run in the evenings and that the villages of Easton and Avington are not served directly.

Various suggestions have been put forward, including smaller buses that can pass through both Easton and Avington, more frequent services, extending service into evenings and Sundays. These and other options will be investigated in conjunction with the community transport options.

Some people expressed concern about aircraft noise.

Community transport

There are a number of community/council led options for community transport, but a comprehensive understanding of these options is not yet available and the analysis to date has not evaluated the current or potential use of these options.



Roads and verges

Current situation:

The parish has mostly country lanes, the one exception being the B3047 which takes a lot of traffic between Winchester and Alresford and has become busier over the years. In recent years a 30mph speed limit has been imposed on parts of this road. It is a bus route and carries some HGV traffic and large farm vehicles. The landscape appeals to cyclists both recreational and more sporty types, often from clubs cycling in large groups.

Immediate issues

There is concern over certain issues but there are clear differences between the views of those in the different villages. For example, Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy residents were more likely to support a 30mph speed limit on the B3047 than residents in the other two villages.

Those who walk along the B3047 have requested a footpath. There is no footpath at all between Chilland and Itchen Abbas. There is no wish for street lighting so these two issues should not be linked. There is huge support for a grass verge along the B3047, but much less for a tarmac pavement, especially one with street lighting. There is also support for cycle paths for recreational use, and for cutting down the number of signs beside the roads.

The very poor condition of the B3047 is often mentioned and needs some urgent action. Station Hill in Itchen Abbas has now been resurfaced and is a great improvement, although action is needed on this road in other places. The south side of the road towards Itchen Stoke shows signs of collapse. Cyclists have been especially critical and therefore ride towards the middle of the road to avoid the poor surface, causing more issues for traffic flow. Potholes in all roads are a cause for concern.

Many residents who use or live close to the B3047 are concerned by the speed of traffic. New speed limits do not appear to work. The stretch from the outskirts of Itchen Abbas to Chilland is a particular cause of concern for cyclists and pedestrians.

Just over half of those who responded were aware of danger spots. Comments have been made about the speed of traffic through Avington, in particular farm and commercial vehicles coming through too fast. They also cause significant damage to verges and drains. Use of the hump back bridge by the waterfall in Avington by heavy vehicles was also seen as a problem as the bridge was not designed to take such stresses.

The issue of cyclists is frequently mentioned. Some large groups can hinder other road users, especially in the lanes. Some cyclists can also be inconsiderate towards pedestrians on lanes with no pavement, and travel too fast through village centres.

In the Business Questionnaire it was pointed out that better and more advance notice of road closures such as the A31 cutting at Avington during events such as the Boomtown music festival would be helpful.



Q21: Are you aware of any major danger spots in the Itchen Valley?

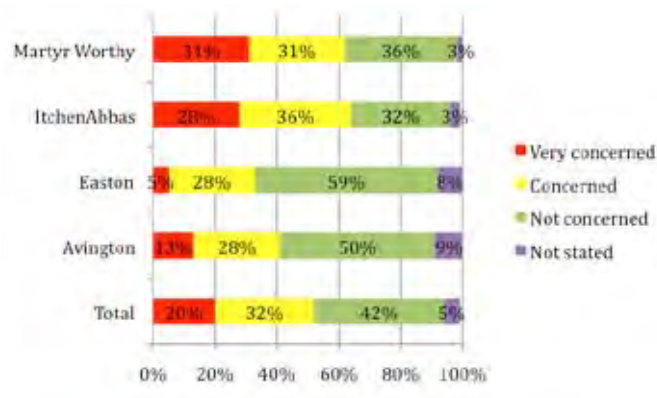
Answer: Only just over half of those who responded were aware of any danger spots, the danger spots described by those who did know of any were:

Grace's Farm corner	15%
Trout/Little Hayes Lane	12%
IA Village Hall	9%
Station Hill/Northington Lane/s bends	8%
Avington	8%
A33 junction	8%
A31 junction	6%
Chilland Lane	5%
Cricketers	5%
Mill/Park Lanes	5%
Chapel Hill/Percy Hobbs	5%
Easton	5%

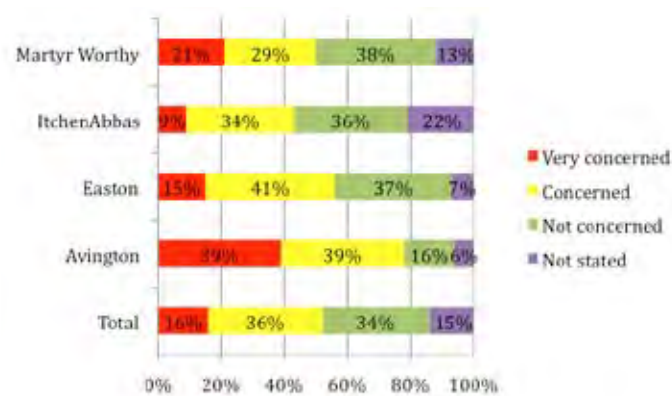
A variety of other places were mentioned by smaller numbers.

Q20: How concerned are you about traffic speed?

On Itchen Valley Parish stretch of B3047:



Elsewhere in the Valley:



There is concern over certain issues but there are clear differences between the views of those in the different villages.



What you said:

Speed related comments

- The B3047 is quite a dangerous road. The speed limits are mostly ignored. Crossing the road at Couch Green can at times be life threatening.
- Speed limit on B3047 – 30mph through Itchen Abbas is too slow, it is 40mph through Abbots Worthy. There has never been a speed-related accident on the road. Suggest restore it to 40mph.
- Agricultural vehicles – often large, travelling at speed through Avington between Avington Manor Farm and Bridgets Lane
- Mini roundabout outside Cricketers in Easton could improve safety in centre of village
- Cutting on A31 at Avington is dangerous
- The private road off the B3404 should be enlarged to take vehicles over 12.5 tons, lessening traffic around the houses in Fair Lane
- Too much rat run commuter traffic
- Junctions are becoming increasingly dangerous, especially the junction of Easton Lane with B3047 (by Grace's Farm)
- The typical speed along the B3047 is more like 50 mph, a speed that will kill in an instant. I dream of the day that all cyclists, walkers and joggers can use our beautiful country roads in safely.

Traffic noise and road maintenance

- Road noise from the M3 is intrusive – needs a quieter surface
- Most noise associated with traffic comes from tyres, controlling speed and change of road surface would help resolve this
- More verge cutting needed, often overgrown
- Hedge is growing out into road at the bottom of Rectory Lane. Speed sign in Rectory Lane has been lying on the verge for three years.

Parking issues

- Too much on-street parking in Easton, mostly from local businesses. That makes the bends in particular very dangerous – and the blocking of driveways is disrespectful
- There are often cars parked in slip road by the entrance to Rectory Lane
- Too much parking on Little Hayes Lane by parents waiting to collect, blocking access for emergency vehicles and residents' parking/driveways
- More visitor parking needed in Station Close.

Roads and verges objectives and actions

Improve road safety and reduce vehicle speed when dangerous

Test support for a Community Speed Watch scheme on the B3047 and, if feasible, set it up

Investigate use of '20's plenty' signs in village centres

Create passing places at narrow points along Avington Park Lane

Possible closure of crossing-gap on A31 at Avington

Improve visibility at danger spots (see list on p10)

Improvements to danger spots

Reduce traffic noise and improve road maintenance

Target: no potholes

Quieter surface on B3047

Seek to upgrade maintenance of B3047 to 'A Road' status to reflect its peak time usage

Encourage farm and other heavy vehicles to slow down and avoid damaging verges/drains

Lobby for less noise from M3

More discipline for parking

Run a campaign to reduce on-road parking in Easton

Establish dialogue with IA Primary School and parents about parking in Little Hayes Lane

Improve pedestrian safety

Improve and extend footway along B3047

Improve maintenance of existing footways and hedges for safer use

Clear old railway line footpath from Bridgets Lane towards Abbots Worthy

Lobby cycle clubs to promote good manners in cyclists

Produce signs asking cyclists to slow down and be more considerate through villages

Introduce rumble strips to slow down traffic and cyclists

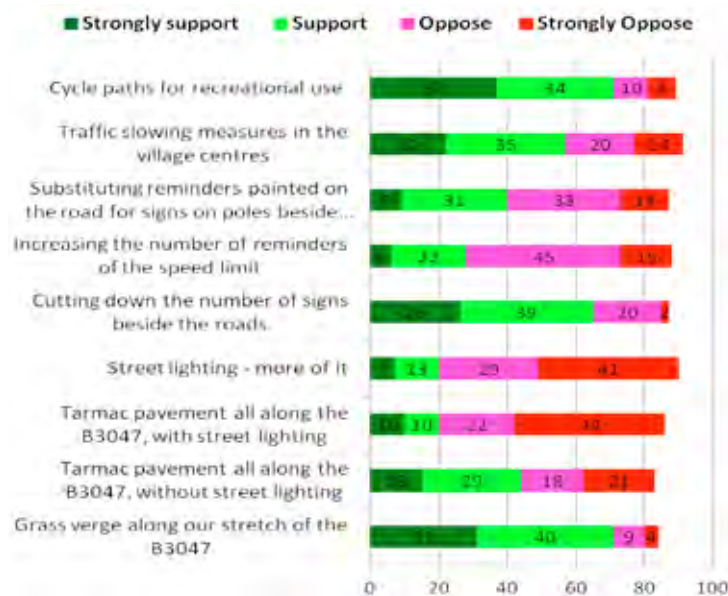
A high standard of maintenance for footpaths and pavements

Keep gullies and ditches clear to improve road drainage

Appoint lengthsman to assist with better maintenance of footpaths and verges

Replace stiles with kissing gates where possible

Q 23 Which of the suggestions on this list do you support and which are you opposed to?



There is good support for a grass verge along the B3047, but much less for a tarmac pavement, especially one with street lighting. There is also strong support for cycle paths for recreational use, and for cutting down the number of signs beside the roads.



Roads and Verges: what you said:

Footpaths and pavements

- No need for path along B3047 as there are already plenty of alternative footpaths
- The footpath network needs improving to enable people to walk along the route of B3047 to Prince's Mead and Kings Worthy and down Easton Lane from B3047
- Need old railway line footpath to Prince's Mead
- Having walked, run and cycled the roads and lanes in the Itchen Valley, I am very grateful every time I get home alive
- Better signage for Avington and business units in IA on B3047 for traffic travelling from Winchester. At present vehicles, including large lorries, miss their turning and use junction of B3047 and Little Hayes Lane to turn round.

Better maintenance of footpaths/pavements

- Footpaths need better maintenance – they get muddy and difficult to walk
- Pavement between the Trout and Little Hayes Lane needs to be kept clear of overgrowth and weeds
- Encourage traffic to slow when pedestrians have to walk along the highway
- As a mum of two under threes I need to take a pram but many of the gates/turnstiles are too small to get through
- Road side banks and ditches not cleaned or maintained by council. Footpaths and cycle ways have some bushes at eye level hanging down
- Stinging nettles on footpaths!

Pedestrian access and safety

- Pedestrian safety might be improved by moving the white line edging slightly towards the centre of the road.
- As a family with young children we would appreciate traffic-calming measures in village centres (in our case Easton) so we are able to go on family walks through the village more safely
- A safer road/footway on the B3047 as I regularly walk with my 1 year old in a pushchair
- Easton is used as a short cut for the school run, most drive too fast to stop or do not use pull-ins.
- B3047 is dangerous between Martyr Worthy War Memorial and Easton Road
- There are more options for a path along the B3047 than the two choices given here. Progress on allowing a safe walk to church, pub, school can be made
- Cyclists often take up all the whole road through the villages
- Cyclists appear from nowhere – very fast and silent!

Communications

There was praise for the village magazines, but the mobile phone reception is very poor and broadband not good. Mobile phone reception was particularly poor for residents of Itchen Abbas and Avington.

No-one seems to have much problem finding out what is going on, although few know much about services such as Dial-a-Ride, and only a minority use the library services.

Of the businesses who responded to the survey, most were reasonably happy with their broadband but complained about the mobile phone network cover.

Mobile phones

This was of considerable concern to many residents. Among those who discussed the issue:

- There was total support for the view that the poor signal is a major problem.
 - There was also good support for putting a mast/aerial on the church tower or village hall roof or other suitable place in order to get a better signal.
 - There are technical issues about wavelengths etc that will determine what the best place for a mast or masts would be. 4G would give better quality but lower coverage. The companies are encouraged to share masts so there is no need to switch to a 'best' provider. Planning permission is required for erection of a mast, so safety issues need looking into before evidence of local support is sought.
 - Tom Ashbee recommended that people be encouraged to support the Countryside Alliance Campaign for better signals in rural areas. To take part, download the free RootMetrics app onto a smartphone or tablet and use it at home or out and about.
 - Margaret Paren of the South Downs National Park suggested that we contact her for support, showing evidence that it is considered a problem in the area. Email her at: Margaret.paren@southdowns.gov.uk
 - There are devices which can be plugged into the router in order to boost the signal inside the house such as Vodafone's SureSignal, O2's Buzibar and Orange/EE Home Boost. However, internet research found "Repeater devices transmit or re-transmit in the cellular frequency bands. Only the mobile network operators are licensed to use equipment that transmits in these bands. Installation or use of repeater devices by anyone without a licence is a criminal offence under Section 8 of the Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006". Clearly more investigation is needed.
- In any case, our mobile phones are primarily for use outside the home where a booster won't help.

Broadband

There were mixed opinions about this, with a substantial minority considering the service poor or very poor and few even thinking it good. Even in this community with a relatively high population

of older people only six per cent do not use broadband. Not everyone has a problem with the speeds they are getting, depending on what they are trying to do with the internet. The following information relates to the situation in Itchen Abbas and Martyn Worthy:

- As a short term measure the advice is to change to a different broadband provider, the cheaper packages suffer from the providers trying to service too many people. It seems likely that you'll get what you pay for.
- Improvements are due to happen in 2014. BT are planning to upgrade the exchange (which is at the top of Chilland Lane) with twenty-first century network (21CN). It is likely that they will put in ADSL2 which is in fact already 'old technology' and the danger is that if they do install ADSL2 equipment, they will be disinclined to install the more modern ADSL4 at a later date. We recommend that they are lobbied to put in more modern equipment or commit to updating it in due course.
- The next stage, planned for 2015, is 'fibre to cabinet' i.e. taking fibre optics from the exchange to the junction box at Station Approach. This should then improve things for those whose homes are supplied from the junction box rather than the exchange. It would be helpful to know which phone numbers are supplied direct from the exchange and which are via the junction box, and what the difference will mean – presumably BT could tell us?
- After that, it is likely that 'fibre to house' will be offered at a price but that will probably only be necessary for those running businesses.

In the Business Survey, the majority of responders were happy with the broadband but most were dissatisfied with the mobile phone network cover.

We are not currently aware what future plans are for Easton and Avington broadband coverage, but more information is available from <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/broadband.htm>

Landlines

The recent dialogue showing the widespread occurrence of poor landline reception was coordinated via the Itchen List and has already led to action by BT, although we have yet to see if this has had any significant effect. We intend to keep the pressure up via elected representatives.

Phone boxes are there for emergencies but don't accept coins.

Magazines

Local magazines were perceived as doing an excellent job in communicating local information to residents. The two Itchen Valley magazines have now amalgamated into the Itchen Valley News which seems to have been generally welcomed, so job done there.

“ The main opportunities for improvement are all to do with communications, especially poor mobile reception.”



Communications: What you said:

Broadband

- slow broadband
- Poor quality of broadband
- Would strongly like to see improved internet access
- Lack of high speed broadband limits economic growth in this area
- Broadband must be better. This is essential for so many reasons and hardly needs promotion as an innovation
- Broadband is slow and erratic, connection often cuts out – if we could get a fibre connection that would be ideal
- Internet a real pain at the moment. Very slow and needs re-booting at times.

Mobile phones

- poor mobile reception
- poor reception for mobile phones
- Would strongly like to see an improved mobile phone service/connection
- The main opportunities for improvement are all to do with communications, especially poor mobile reception
- I can't phone for a lift from the IA village hall.

Landlines

- Telephone now working fine after four weeks of problems
- We had to stop using the old fashioned phone as it was really crackly both ends
- We thought it was our telephones at fault and were about to invest in new ones
- It has cost a lot of people money in replacing phones unnecessarily
- Our telephone line has been awful for the last two months in the same way as others have reported ie incoming ok but outgoing shocking
- An engineer came out and told us it was our equipment at fault so we had to pay for the visit.

Magazines and other media

As a number of you suggested, the two Valley magazines have now been combined successfully.

The new Parish Council website is also up and running now.

Communications objectives and actions

A strong mobile phone signal

Appoint a resident IT expert to provide advice and guidance when dealing with service providers and Council

Get better use from existing facilities and find new mast sites if required

Find out if upgrading to 4G could improve signals

Support the Countryside Alliance Campaign for better signals in rural areas

Excellent landline service

Set up register of residents affected by poor lines and take action

Lobby BT via WCC and MP for upgrade of infrastructure

Identify a resident willing to understand the telephone line infrastructure and push for improvements

Availability of Superfast Broadband to the whole area

Run a campaign for early introduction of Superfast broadband for all properties

Encourage more people to register interest on Hants BB website

Lobby for better broadband service from Hampshire CC/Winchester CC

Contact South Downs National Park for support, with evidence that it is considered a problem in our area

Provide information about what's happening locally

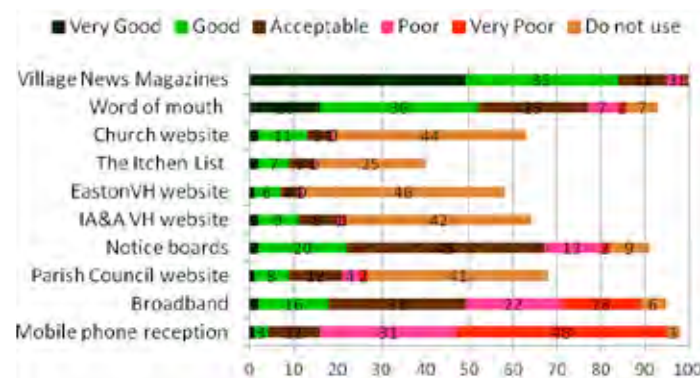
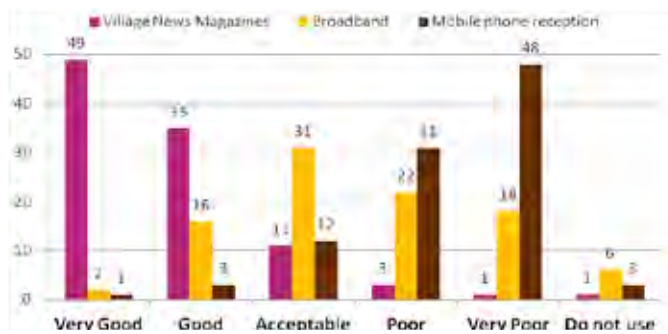
Encourage more residents to join Itchen List

Make more use of IVPC and other local websites to communicate useful information

Support local magazines

Ensure that people who do not use electronic media are kept informed

Q25 How good or bad do you think the various communication services are in the Itchen Valley?



There was praise for the village magazines, but the mobile phone reception is very poor and broadband not good. Mobile phone reception was particularly poor for residents of Itchen Abbas and Avington.

[Council Information](#) [Site Map](#)

[Contact Us >](#)
[History >](#)
[Useful Links >](#)
[Village Design Statement >](#)
[Gallery >](#)

Welcome to the website of the Itchen Valley Parish Council

Our Parish

Itchen Valley Parish Council is one of the largest Parish Councils in the Winchester District. It includes the villages of Avington, Easton, Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy and covers the area from Cheesefoot Head in the south to Shroton Wood in the north. It forms part of the South Downs National Park. There are almost 1100 voters on the electoral roll.

The southern part of the Parish is in the East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The River Itchen flows through the centre of the parish with Avington and Easton to the south and Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy to the north. There are four conservation areas and a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the Parish. In addition, part of the River Itchen has been nominated as a Special Area of Conservation, a European Designation.

Walking and riding routes known as the Pilgrims' Way, the South Downs Way, St Swithun's Way and the Oxdrove Way pass through the Parish.

What we do

- consider and comment to the City Council on planning applications
- maintain the King George V recreation ground & play area, Couch Green and the Old School Field at Easton, together with all other land owned by the Council.
- set an annual budget which determines the Parish Rate
- nominate representatives to village organisations
- identify and pass on to the responsible authority for action any matter of general concern (services, etc.)

Valley News

Issue 2 February 2014 For Avington, Easton, Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy

In this issue:
A windy, wet January
Martyr Worthy bus fire
The Itchen List

Housing

Housing overview

There is considerable support for traditional architecture and more opposition than support for modern architectural styles. The most strongly opposed suggestion was for a large (defined as 20+) development on a green field site, but also considerable opposition to smaller developments on green field sites, with a minority supporting this latter option. As far as conversion of existing farm buildings is concerned, there is both more support and less opposition to conversion into several dwellings rather than into single large houses (see chart for Q29 on p19). There is little difference between the opinions in the villages, except for slightly more support for social housing in Martyr Worthy. There is relatively little support for improving services if it increases the likelihood of increased housing development, especially in Avington where only 8 per cent support it.

Housing Summary

There was opposition to significant development, especially on green field sites. The rural environment is highly valued and any erosion of this would be unwelcome. Concern was expressed in 1995 in the Itchen Valley Management Strategy that gradual erosion of the environment was taking place as a result of a number of small developments (death by a thousand cuts, it was called) and it is still relevant today.

The Second Schedule sets out the number of new houses built in the last 20 years.

Ten houses were built at Shepherds Field, Martyr Worthy in 2005 by Hyde Housing Association following an initiative by the Parish Council. There are two social housing units in the Banner Homes development in Itchen Abbas and five new houses recently built in Station Close, Itchen Abbas.

Hazeldene Gardens (pictured below) and Baring Close, Itchen Abbas provide housing for the over 60s.

The main interest in new build was for smaller houses suitable for down-sizers (often elderly/disabled people) who wish to stay in the area.

There is a varied housing stock in all the villages and, with a good range of local schools, family houses are always in demand.



There is already a reasonably good supply of houses suitable for single people, particularly in Avington and Easton. There is more opposition than support for building in gardens.

Housing Need

There is support for a small number of low density houses suitable for those wishing to downsize from the large family houses with gardens to smaller houses. These people have told us that they would prefer houses with fewer but good sized rooms and some garden. Some single storey houses or bungalows may be required for those who find stairs difficult.

Design

There is strong support for traditional architecture and also support for conversion of disused agricultural buildings into several houses rather than into one larger house. eg West Hill Dairy in Avington and The Old Dairy in Easton.



Conservation Areas:

Avington, Chilland, Easton and Martyr Worthy

Development which adversely affects the setting of the four Conservation Areas or public footpaths would be unacceptable, as would proposals adversely affecting the River Itchen which has a SAC designation.

Utilities

Mains water	In all villages
Mains drainage	Easton and some of Avington
Mains gas	Easton, Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy

Flooding

Developers should be made aware that in 2007 and 2014 flooding of fields, houses and cellars occurred mainly as a result of rising groundwater. This was mainly, but not exclusively, in the water meadows by the river and in the lower parts of Easton, Chilland, Avington and Martyr Worthy.

Housing: What you said

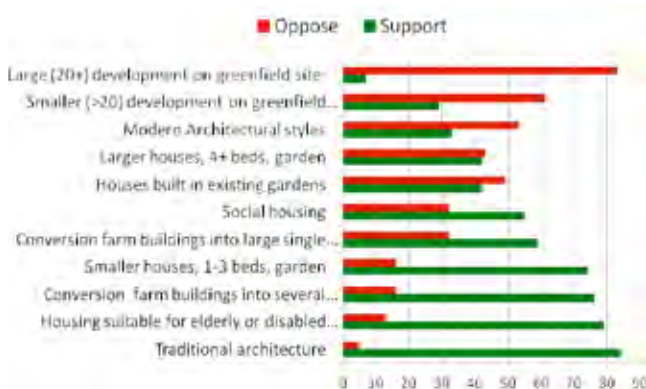
Against limited development

- We are lucky to live here – I hope it doesn't get spoilt by over-development
- An outstanding place to live – let's keep it that way.
- More development/urbanisation would destroy the environment that exists now.
- It is the countryside – not a suburb of Winchester!
- This is a very happy place to live, which has evolved at a sensible pace. We might be wary of large scale changes forced through.
- It is important that decisions are made that are guided by a policy that we wish to continue to live in the countryside and that we do not wish to live in suburbia. We must also not allow ribbon development.
- If you want better facilities move to a town.

For limited development

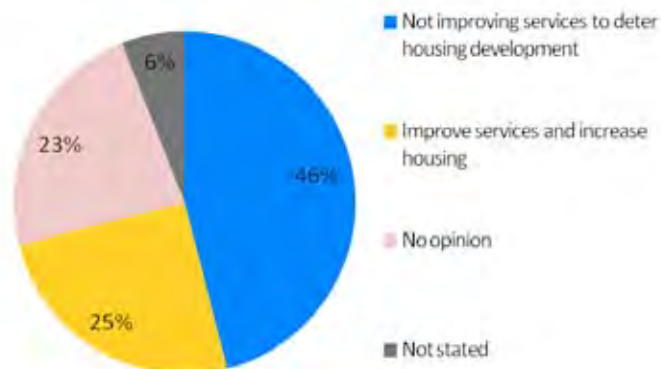
- The housing stock needs to be more diverse and provide for young families and downsizers
- It is good that we attract young families and should do what we can to encourage them. But we should also recognise a great deal of the success of the village is that it is the right size. We mess with that at our peril
- Our community must continue to develop together with the rest of the country and not become stuck in its own time warp. I hope for controlled progress and development. It is the community itself that should control the development, in particular our Parish Council.
- I would welcome housing developments that pay homage to local traditional styles and respect the demographic of young, hard working professionals who are desperate to get on to the property ladder
- We must ensure that the village doesn't die. This may mean having some new houses in the right locations
- Small planned developments in under-used areas that don't spoil views and valued open spaces. Bridget's Lane development is a good example of this rather than in gardens that could spoil the nature of the valley
- I believe that we can have better services without the threat of widespread housing development as it is important to preserve the River Itchen and to do this it is vital that the catchment area is preserved too
- Should encourage development of older properties
- Need a reduction in smaller houses/cottages being turned into large houses
- Redundant farm buildings could be an area for redevelopment, not just conversion. Such sites could also be redeveloped to encourage small business use and therefore provide employment opportunities
- Stillwaters building site/eyesore - pull it down!
- I appreciate and support the need for more housing, but the hospital does not have capacity to treat many more people. Until that issue is resolved how can we encourage more people to live here?

Q 24: It is likely that proposals for further housing development in the Itchen Valley will arise. Which of these options do you support and which would you oppose?



Q29: If the services in the Itchen Valley were improved, it is more likely that the villages would be considered suitable for the building of more houses. Which of these two statements comes nearest to your opinion about this?

- I would favour not improving services in the villages if it helped to deter housing development
- I would favour the improvement of services in the villages and increased housing development



There is less support for improving services if it increases the likelihood of housing development, especially in Avington where only 8 per cent support it.

Housing objectives and actions

Preserve the rural character of our area

- Produce a short design code for those wishing to develop in the Itchen Valley and advise developers to minimise urbanising influences (lighting, pavements, signage etc)
- Advise developers and planners of flood risks
- Work with SDNP and other agencies to protect our rural environment

Create houses for older and for younger people

- push for high-specification smaller homes for down-sizers and more starter homes rather than large houses

Develop farm buildings for new use

- promote the idea of small-scale live/work units
- push for stricter regulations to ensure that infrastructure such as country lanes can support the increase in traffic before granting planning permission or change of use

Apply planning common sense

- Discourage extensions to already large houses
- Find out what can be done about half-built houses remaining unfinished for years

Concern about erosion of the rural environment is expressed in terms of opposition to greenfield development.

There is relatively little support (25 per cent of responders) for improving local services if this meant increased likelihood of more development as against 46 per cent opting for no improvement in services if this reduced the likelihood of development.

The main interest was in smaller houses, with smaller gardens for downsizers who wished to stay in the area. This group needs rooms of a reasonable size.

There was limited support for more social housing, but WCC has not yet found any local applicants for the new social housing in Itchen Abbas.

“It is good that we attract young families, we should encourage them. But we should also recognise a great deal of the success of the village is that it is the right size. We mess with that at our peril.”



Housing: What you said

General comments on development

- Remove area from the South Downs National Park, it is a tenuous link.
- I have a real fear that the National Park will stifle all development in their area and on land adjoining the Park and we will end up living in a museum. It is unlikely that we will get additional phone masts to overcome the poor mobile phone reception, let alone wind turbines or solar farms.
- The quality of life is extremely good for families, and the SDNP will maintain this. I await the policy statements of SDNPA to determine how this area will look in 2020.

Housing for older or younger people

- We need suitable housing for older people who have lived in the Valley for a long time and wish to stay, but this would also rely on having an integrated transport service, either public or privately run which currently is sadly lacking.
- We need housing suitable for older couples in the big local houses to downsize to. That is NOT the same as 'small 3 bed' of the type intended as starter/young family homes.
- The housing stock needs to be more diverse and provide for young family and downsizers
- Conversations about housing always turn to sheltered housing for the older residents to move to – I support this.
- We must provide lower cost housing so that young people can live and work in the valley, otherwise the area will stagnate into a middle class retirement ghetto.
- The housing stock needs to be more diverse and provide for young families and downsizers
- It is good that we attract young families and should do what we can to encourage them. We should recognise a great deal of the success of the village is that it is the right size. We mess with that at our peril.

Development of farm buildings for business use

- In question 24 mention is made of converting existing farm buildings into houses. Such redundant sites could be an area for redevelopment, not just conversion. Such sites could also encourage small business use and therefore provide employment opportunities in the countryside.

Redevelopment of older houses

- We should encourage development of older properties.
- Need a reduction in houses/cottages being turned into large houses.
- I think it is really important that if adjacent houses are bought up by developers, the density of development should be restricted.
- The permanently unfinished Stillwaters building site is an eyesore - pull it down
- Do not approve of the unsightly house being built by the waterfall [Stillwaters] on the road to Avington.

Community

Open Spaces, Play Areas and Sporting Facilities

The Parish benefits from the open spaces and sporting facilities listed in the First Schedule.

The Questionnaires showed that the most-used facility was the network of footpaths and bridleways.

Over half of the population finds that litter, risk of theft, dog fouling and aircraft noise slightly affects their quality of life. Inconsiderate cyclists were found to be one of the most serious problems, particularly in Avington.

The magnificent trees of the Itchen Valley are considered to be a positive feature of living in the parish. The storms of 2014 have, however, highlighted some of the issues caused by lack of tree maintenance and there is concern about trees growing very close to houses. Discovering who is responsible for trees was difficult. Improving views of the river from footpaths would also be welcomed.

Community Buildings

There are four churches and three village halls maintained by relevant committees and generally well-supported.

Population

This was shown in the 2011 census as 1290 (although listed as 1459 on the Office for National Statistics website) including adults and children. Few travel to work within the parish, most commute to London or surrounding areas by car or rail, others work from home. From the responses to the survey 44 per cent have lived here for over 20 years although only 10 per cent were born here.

Children's Facilities

Some people use more than one of the three play equipment areas in the parish. Consultation with local school children highlighted the lack of play equipment for the 7 to 11 age range. 24 per cent of the households with children attended the Itchen Abbas Primary School while 26 per cent have children at St. Swithun's.

In the Children's Survey, most comments were favourable, but some wanted to see more facilities in the play areas, and it was suggested that the public play area at the village hall in Itchen Abbas be better publicised. Play facilities in Little Hayes Lane were also called for.

Local Activities

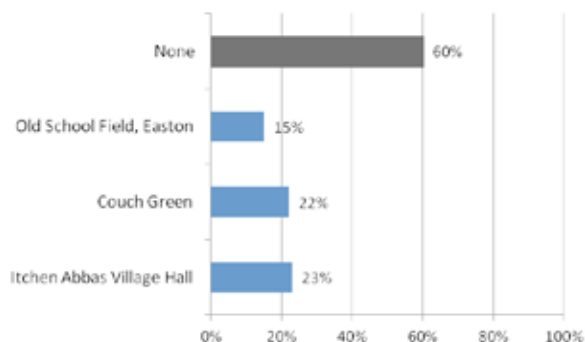
The existing activities in the village halls and the mobile library service are advertised in the Itchen Valley News magazine. Worthy Park Tennis Club has an informative website.

Participation in these activities is unlikely to be as high as suggested by these figures. For example, we know the actual number of people attending the mobile library service is far lower than four per cent of the valley population. It is possible that those completing the questionnaires are also more likely to be involved in local activities.

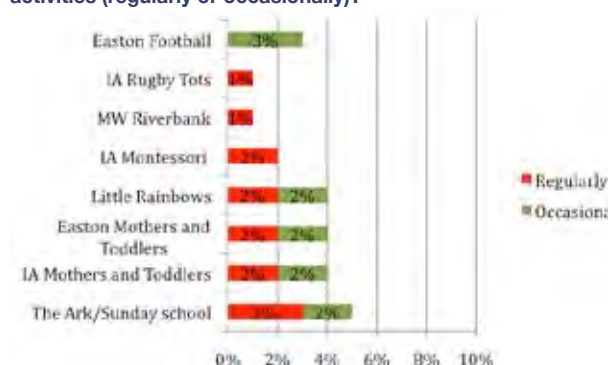
The other activities not shown in the chart had only one per cent or fewer helping to run them, suggesting that most activities in the valley rely on a small number of people to organize them.

We clearly need more local volunteers if we are to support activities such as youth clubs.

Q12 Has anyone in the household used any of the children's facilities at any of these locations in the last 12 months? (Including with visiting friends/grandchildren, but excluding dog walking)



Q13 Does anyone in the household currently attend any of these activities (regularly or occasionally)?



A quick look at this chart might suggest that activities are poorly supported but we know this is not the case. In fact, half of the households with children attend these activities.



“We need to preserve our agricultural heritage and also the quality of the River Itchen.”

COMMUNITY: What you said:

Preservation of river and countryside

- Mature trees on farmland are part of the landscape. Most are overgrown with ivy and close to the end of their life, especially around Easton. Would like to see local landowners being funded or presented with trees to plant that will mature in years to come.
- We need to preserve our agricultural heritage and also the quality of the River Itchen.
- This is a very attractive rural area yet not remote.
- The green space and countryside is very important and should be valued most highly.
- More support for wildlife and birds.
- Fish farm noise unacceptable – hours of use need to be controlled.

Play facilities

- There is inadequate provision of areas where children can safely learn to ride their bikes.
- Need improved play park facilities.
- Play equipment more suitable for pre-school age and younger (1 to 4 years).

Community buildings and amenities

- I'm happy with the youth club that has started, but disappointed with the lack of numbers!
- Although four villages, we are a single civil parish and have grown into doing so much together.
- More sharing of facilities between the churches and village halls needed.
- The Itchen Valley has a good share of community buildings and open spaces. They need better use, not more buildings. That applies also to people servicing our facilities and community volunteers.
- The Itchen Abbas Village Hall is overused by 'outsiders'.

General comments

- More evening activities, especially for people who are working professionals. There are quite a lot of us, but we don't see/know each other.
- Getting involved is almost a prerequisite of living in a village
- Glass recycle unit nearer to Couch Green?
- We still seem to have a few power cuts – I am writing this during one!
- Any opportunity for a blood donation clinic occasionally in one of the village halls?

Community objectives and actions

Preserve this beautiful stretch of river and countryside

- Prepare a register of landowners and responsible parties for tree and maintenance issues.
Make publicly available on IVPC website
- Identify and implement additional locations for the new combined dog/litter bins
- Establish a community woodland
- Make it an expectation that If you remove a tree then you plant another somewhere else

Make our children's play facilities more fun

- Raise funds for more equipment for a wider age range, particularly for ages 7 to 9
- Better publicise children's activities in the area

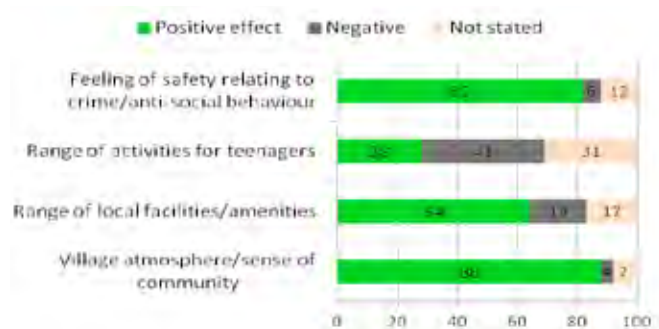
Make more use of our community buildings and other amenities

- Encourage more participation in running and taking part in activities and events.
Approach existing clubs from other areas for ideas.
- Organise film nights in IAA village hall

Improve wellbeing

- Invite GP surgeries to use village halls for mobile health facilities
- Provide comparisons with national averages when giving local crime figures
to ease concerns regarding threat of burglaries. Also warn of scams.
- Liaise with SSE about procedures during power cuts, with extra help for the vulnerable.

Q 31 To what extent do you think the quality of life in the Itchen Valley is affected by each of the issues listed below?



The range of activities for teenagers is the only factor which has a negative impact on the quality of life in the valley. In Q16, a youth club and a film club were two organized activities that some people would like to see.



“Getting involved is almost a prerequisite of living in a village.”



Schedules

First Schedule

Village	Facility	Ownership
Avington :	9-hole golf course open to the public	privately owned
	Fishing lake, open to the public	privately owned
	Open space	HCC
Easton:	Sports field and play area, Old School Field	MacPherson Easton School Field Trust
	Cricket Field	Easton Village Hall Trust
Itchen Abbas:	Play area	Village Hall Trustees
	Boules piste	Village Hall Trustees
Martyr Worthy:	King George V Memorial Playing Field	Trustees/IVPC
	Adjoining play area	IVPC
	Worthy Park Tennis Club	Prince's Mead School

Second Schedule

Houses built since 1990

Avington	10 houses	Chandos Terrace 5; West Hill Dairy 4, plus one other
Easton	14 houses:	The Old Dairy 5, Avington Park Lane 4, Manor Farm 2, rear of Grasmere 2, Church Lane 1
Itchen Abbas	45 dwellings	Little Hayes Lane 27 houses; School Lane 3; Paddock Field 10; Station Close 5; Rectory Lane 2 large houses under construction.
Martyr Worthy	13 houses	Shepherds Field 10; Chilland Cross, 3 houses

And finally ...

Our thanks to all the residents in the Itchen Valley who have taken the time to help us to produce this Plan by attending events, filling in questionnaires and generally getting involved.

Thanks also to the village group members who, amongst other things, collected and delivered the questionnaires. Thanks too to Steering Group members past and present, namely:

Charlotte Appleby
Peter Bell
Zoe Cannons
Penny Flemons
Tony Gaster
Janet Green
Andrew Kennedy
Karen Mahony
Alison Matthews (Chairman)
Andrew Micklefield
Jane Molton
Roy Napier
Garfield Powe
Jacqui Squire (Secretary)

Our thanks also go to Steve Lincoln of Winchester City Council for his advice and support.

Of course, this isn't the end of our Parish Plan by any means, but to paraphrase Winston Churchill, it could be considered 'the end of the beginning'.

Our task now is to take the Plan forward and get some results. Not all at once – some actions will be a lot easier to achieve than others – but we will still need your help to do this.

Parish Councillor Henry Labram has taken on the job for the Itchen Valley Parish Council of managing the following up process. But the actions aren't all for the Parish Council. This Plan has been produced by residents and reflects how we, the residents of the Itchen Valley, want to see our area evolve.

For further information, please visit the Parish Council website at: itchenvalleyparishcouncil.org.uk