



Community Spirit

A number of questions within the survey addressed issues which can be considered under the heading of 'community spirit'. This term is taken to mean the way people feel about the place in which they live – its sense of community, the extent to which people in the Community Plan area feel they are part of a community and the extent to which they are engaged in it.

Introduction

Many factors contribute to the community spirit in an area. They include whether people feel safe, whether they share a sense of identity, whether they are happy in the place that they live and whether they have identified places in which to pursue communal activities – whether a range of amenities and activities are provided within the community for the community. Places providing the opportunity to meet and socialise with others help to build a sense of community. There are many of these in the Community Plan area, particularly within Pucklechurch. They range from public houses (4) and social clubs (2) to a church, a chapel, several shops, many green spaces and a 'community centre' known locally as the village hall, sited in the centre of Pucklechurch.

In addition, the extent to which people feel well informed about what is going on in their community will contribute to community spirit. This includes awareness of the way the community is led, formally and informally. We have not ignored the role of communications in supporting and enhancing community spirit. Communities talk to each other and word of mouth matters to the sense of community. Equally, written communication – whether paper based or electronic – is essential to sharing information in the community and there are a number of vehicles used in our community to do so. They include Pucklechurch News, a free quarterly newsletter distributed to every home in the Community Plan area and funded by the Parish Council. There is also a community website – www.pucklechurch.org.uk – which receives over 20,000 page views per month. Noticeboards, shop windows and a village directory all play their parts.

It is recognised that, within the Community Plan area, there are communities within the total community. It is important to consider any variation between community spirit in the village of Pucklechurch as distinct from Shortwood, Parkfield or Lyde Green. Any distinctions shown by the survey results may mean that actions appropriate in one part of the area are less relevant in others. Throughout the planning activity, and in the design of the survey, the steering group have been conscious that those in Shortwood, in particular, are uncomfortable being labelled as if they were part of Pucklechurch. Shortwood and Parkfield both have separate identities from Pucklechurch and the people who live in these communities will reinforce the fact. It is therefore important that the survey responses are understood in the sub-communities within the Plan area and that the action plan addresses these separate identities and potential requirements.



The Community Plan survey in 2007 asked a number of questions relevant to Community Spirit. The questions relevant to this section of the report are grouped under the following headings:-

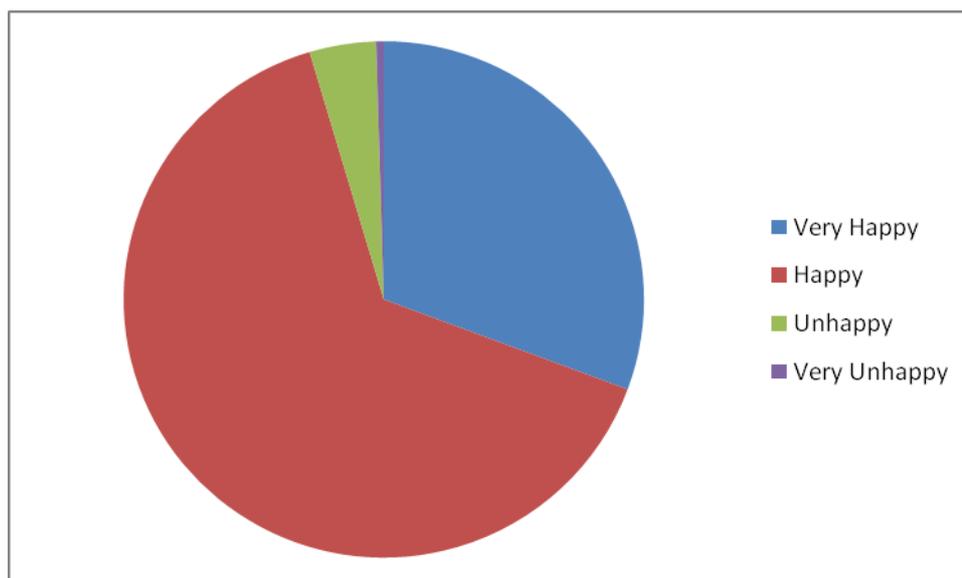
- Attitudes to our community
- Buildings/ meeting places and amenities
- Groups
- Communications

In addition, a survey was conducted by and for the primary school and these results are included as a fifth section.

An appendix to this section of the Community Plan provides the 'as is' statement prior to the community plan activity and lists the public venues within the community and the groups that use them.

Attitudes to our community

Q 5 How happy are you with the general character of the area you live in?



Q5 Key finding

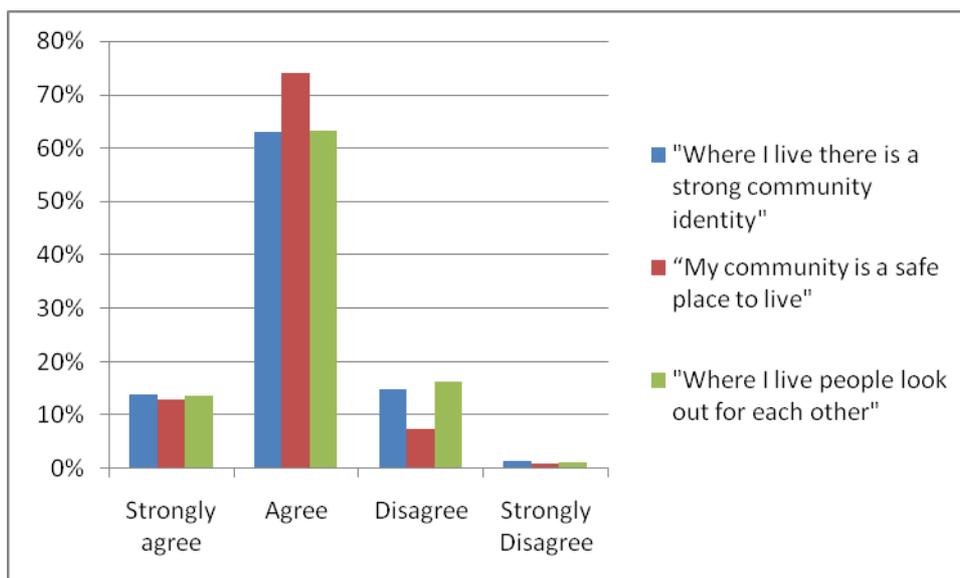
94% of people are either happy or very happy with the character of their area

99% of respondents answered this question.

Of all the survey collection rounds, there were 14 in which 100% of respondents were either happy or very happy. Even in the least happy round, 84% were either happy or very happy with the character of the area.



Q 6 How do you feel about the following statements?



Q6 Key finding

Evidence shows that respondents feel that the Parish has a strong community identity (77%), it is a safe place to live (87%) and people look out for each other (77%).

Q 7 How important are the following aspects to you about where you live?

| | Very important | Important | Not very important | Not at all |
|--|----------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| To be close to family | 27% | 36% | 23% | 6% |
| To be in a well defined community | 27% | 54% | 11% | 1% |
| Recreational opportunities & social life | 32% | 46% | 14% | 1% |
| To be close to work | 9% | 28% | 30% | 15% |
| Other | 4% | 2% | 0% | 1% |

Key finding

The majority of respondents feel it is important that they have a strong family life embedded in a well defined community, with good recreational and social opportunities. The proximity of work is only important for 37% of respondents.

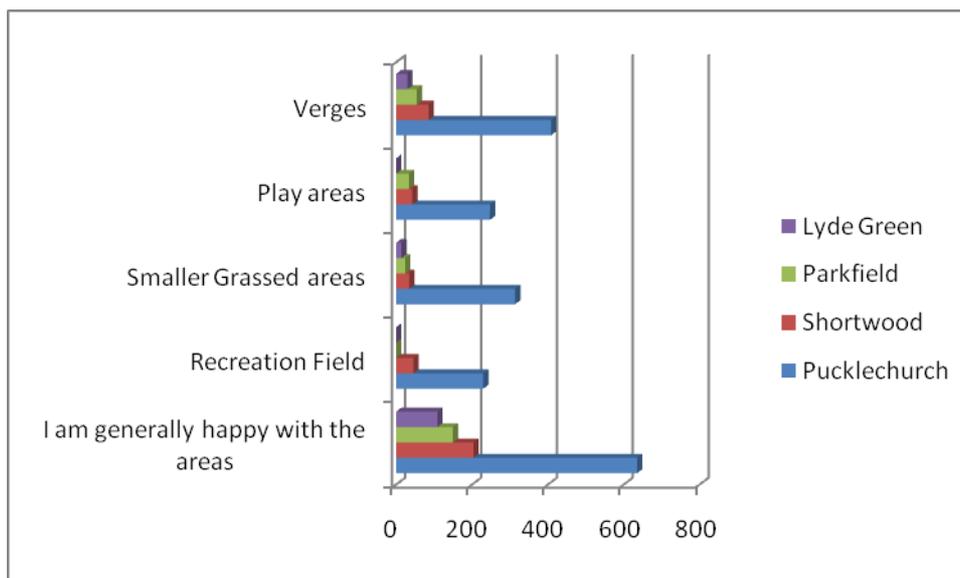
In summary, the majority of respondents are happy living in what they perceive to be a safe, well defined community, close to their families and with good recreational facilities and social life.



Buildings, meeting places and amenities

Q 25 Which of our communal areas should get more attention for maintenance and appearance?

The graph shows the number of people who feel more attention should be given to each amenity from each area. The fourth set of bars show the numbers who were generally happy with the areas.



Key finding

A third of respondents feel that verges in Pucklechurch require more attention. Half the population are generally happy with the areas in Pucklechurch.

Q 26 Do you feel that the Community Centre is adequate for the needs of Pucklechurch?

| Yes | No | Don't know | Did not answer |
|-----|-----|------------|----------------|
| 48% | 15% | 25% | 11% |

Key finding:

Almost half of all respondents feel the Community Centre is adequate. Of those who feel it is not, many comment on it being a 'blot on the landscape' and the need for it to be made more accessible to the whole community.

On reflection, we realise that this question was not worded in such a way as to identify views on how the Community Centre could be improved. Since conducting the survey, meetings have been held to discuss improvements and a group has been formed to identify actions to be taken. This work is in its early stages and it is not yet known what the proposals from the project team will be.



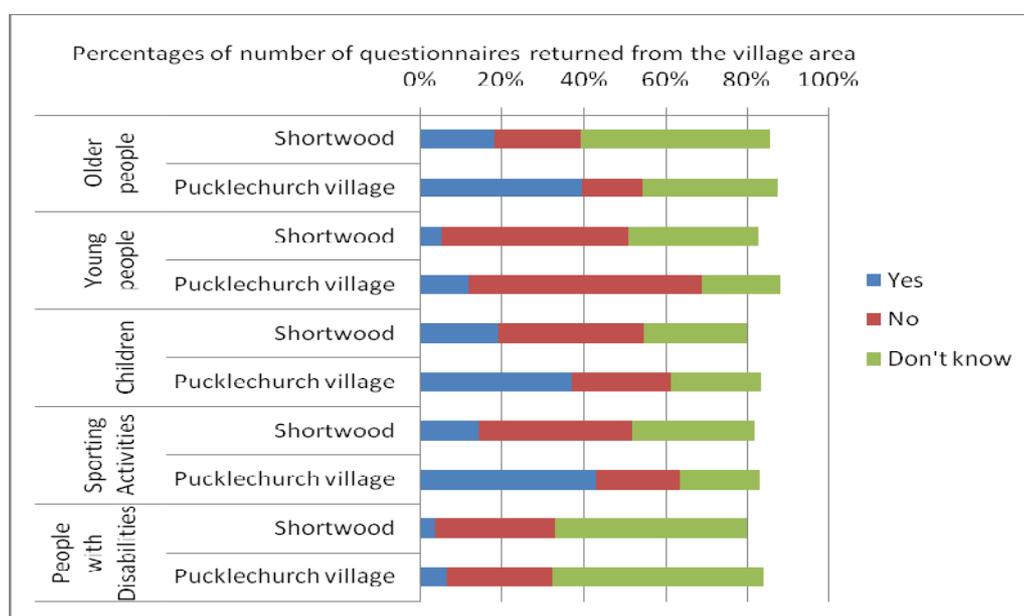
Q 27 Is there a need for a village meeting room in Shortwood?

| Yes | No | Don't know | Did not answer |
|-----|-----|------------|----------------|
| 40% | 18% | 28% | 14% |

Key finding

There is a significant desire for a village hall in Shortwood among Shortwood respondents.

Q 28 Within our community, do you think that there are sufficient amenities/facilities for:



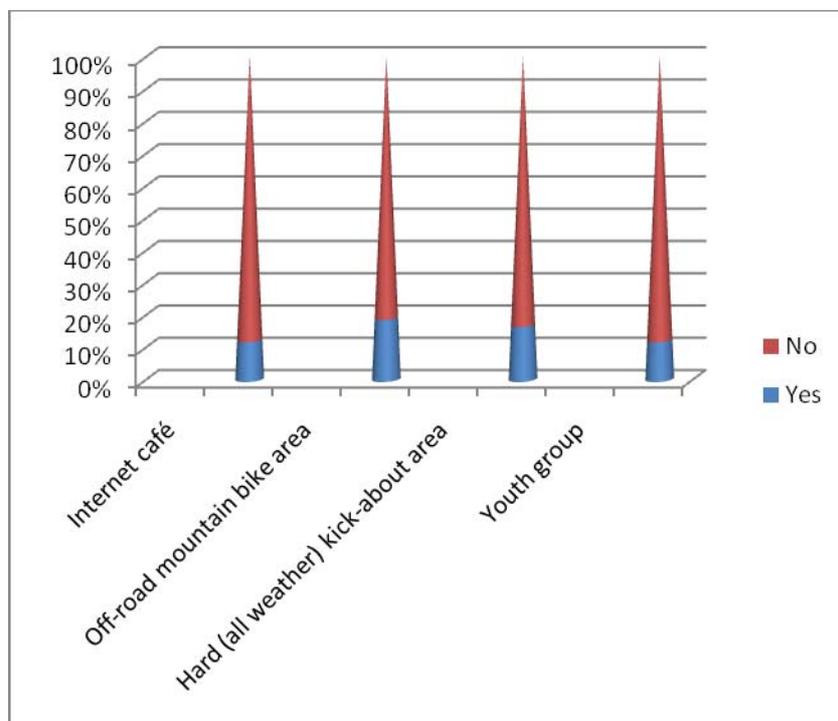
The red sections of each bar show the proportion of respondents who feel amenities are insufficient for each of the 5 groups of people. In each case, responses from Pucklechurch and from Shortwood are shown separately.

Key Findings

- 57% of respondents from Pucklechurch and 46% from Shortwood feel there are insufficient facilities for Young People. This is a much higher figure than those for any other category
- Of those under the age of 25 responding, 65% feel there are insufficient facilities for young people. In this age group, only 21% feel facilities are sufficient
- 42% of respondents aged over 60 feel facilities for older people are sufficient
- 25% feel the facilities for people with disabilities are insufficient. 2001 census data showed there were 408 people, or 15% of population with a 'limiting long-term illness' in the Community Plan Area.



Q 29 Would you regularly (once a week or more) use any of the following if they were to be provided?



The percentages are of the number answering that part of Q29.

Of the 81 who ticked 'other', comments included numerous mentions of the need for sports facilities and many suggestions about food outlets, such as a chip shop.

Key findings

- *The overall percentages are small for all four suggested facilities – maximum 16% support for an off-road mountain bike area*
- *Among respondents under 45 years of age, around a third would support an Outdoor Mountain Bike Area and a Kick-about Area*
- *Of respondents under 18, around a third would support a Youth Group.*

The responses to this question suggest there is support amongst segments of the population for the sort of facilities identified. For example, with 126 people saying they would support a Youth Group, there would be a real prospect of initiating such a project.



Q 30 Is there a particular reason why access to amenities within the community is restricted or a particular concern for you?

91 people have a problem accessing the community's amenities. Their comments are varied, but there are clusters of comments around:

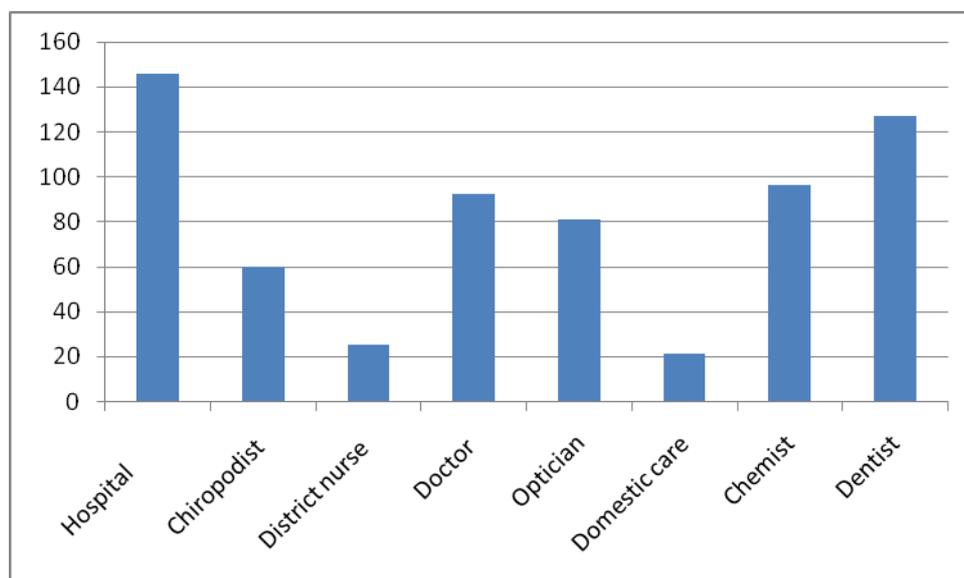
- Wheelchairs and pushchairs having problems due to narrow or non-existent footpaths and cars parked on pavements
- Difficulty accessing specific amenities, with the recreation field, Scout Hut, Doctor's surgery and CA Social Club being mentioned many times
- The difficulty of crossing the road in the centre of the village due to traffic volumes and parked vehicles.

There were specific age groups where the problem was much more significant than for the total population: 10% of 75-84 year olds and 30% of those 85 and over have difficulty accessing amenities.

Key finding 7% of respondents have difficulty accessing amenities.

Q 31 Do you have any difficulty getting to any of the following services?

The graph shows the numbers of people having difficulty getting to the different services.



18% of survey respondents answered this question.

Key finding
The areas within the Community Plan area where there is significant difficulty accessing facilities (more than 20% of respondents having difficulty with more than 1 facility) are Shortwood Road, including the Poplars, Dennisworth, Hawkridge Drive and Dyrham View.



Q 32 What do you feel about the police coverage in our community based on the needs/problems we encounter?

94% of survey respondents answered this question, 51% feel it is poor and 38% feel it is adequate. Only 5% consider the coverage to be good.

Viewing the local crime statistics published by the Police reveals that 'Boyd Valley and Bitton' policing district are an average crime area compared with the district average and have a crime rate of 6.0822 incidents per 1000 population. By comparison, Hanham and Longwell Green for example have an above average crime rate.

(Source:

<http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/information/CrimeStats/index.aspx?lid=30<=3>)

Key Finding

Opinions are divided over the issue of police coverage, with half the respondents believing it to be poor.

Groups

Q 33.1 Do you involve yourself with any local activity groups, clubs or other social organisations? Yes one, Yes several

37% of respondents answered this question to indicate their involvement in one or more local groups. By way of comparison, in Hawkesbury with a population around a third of ours, they have around a third of residents involved in local groups and activities.

Key Finding

Of Pucklechurch respondents, 40% are involved in one or more local groups and 22% of Shortwood respondents, likewise.

Q 33.2 Do you involve yourself with any local activity groups, clubs or other social organisations? No because

The reasons given, in order of popularity, for not getting involved were:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| I don't have time | 24% |
| I don't want to | 17% |
| No suitable group available | 11% |
| Poor publicity | 10% |
| Lack of facilities | 5% |
| Unsuitable times | 4% |
| Access problems (physical) | 2% |
| No transport | 2% |
| Child care problems | 2% |



53% of respondents answered this question to indicate that they do not involve themselves.

Key Finding

The two perceptions that could be influenced by the action plan are that there is 'no suitable group available' and that there is 'poor publicity'.

Q 34 Do you feel that there is a need for adult education classes locally?

88% of respondents answered this question. 31% said they do feel there is a need for these classes; 57% said no.

Key Finding

35% of those responding to this question (or 31% of survey respondents) would like adult education classes.

Q 35 If "yes" what would the best time(s) for you to attend classes?

| Time | Number of people |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Weekday morning | 100 |
| Weekday afternoon | 98 |
| Evenings | 270 |
| Weekends | 86 |

Key finding

The most popular time would be evenings and at any time of day there would be a selection of people wanting Adult Education classes.

Q 36 What subjects would interest you the most?

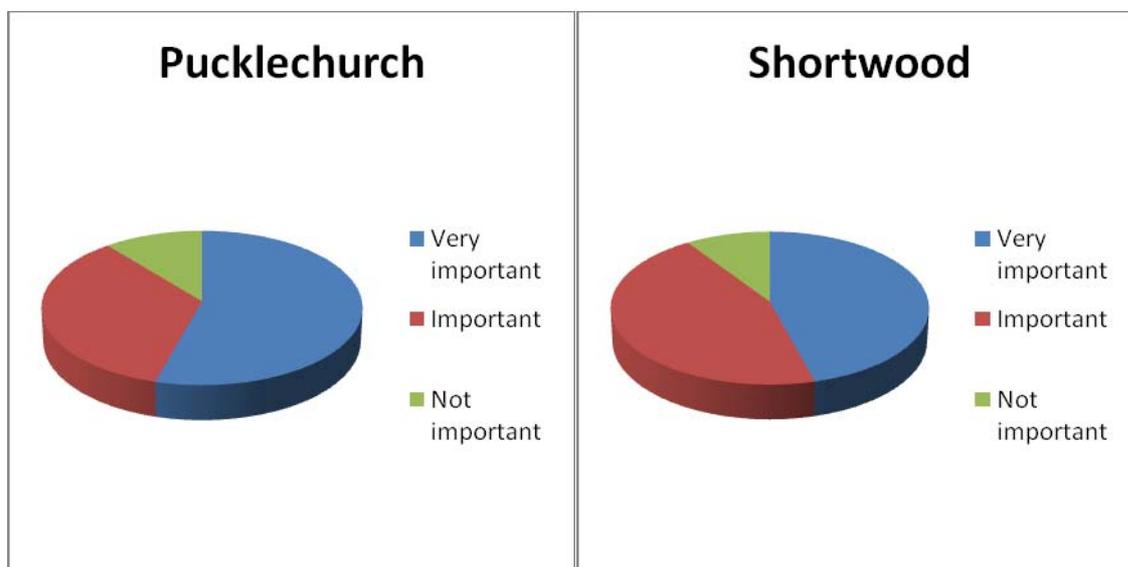
The diversity of subjects was huge covering computing, languages, arts and crafts, local history, woodwork, physical activities and many more.

Key Finding

Of those supporting the idea of classes, the comments suggest that computing and internet use would be the most popular topic (127 people), with language classes coming second (110 people).



Q 39 How important to you and your feeling of community are events such as Pucklechurch Revel and Shortwood Village Fete?



Thanks to the Pucklechurch Local History Society, we know that it is over 50 years since *“Pucklechurch Revel was revived at a public meeting held in the Miners’ Institute in the Spring of 1951 to discuss how the parish would celebrate the Festival of Britain year. However Revels and similar festivities have a much longer recorded history, extending back to early medieval times.... Characteristic of Revel in the last century, as in our own times, was the reunion of family and friends.... It was agreed that the most appropriate way would be to revive the local custom or entertainment and teas for the children. Parkfield and Shortwood were included for the first time, and it was decided by the Revel Committee that the profits should be spent on amenities for the children of the three villages.... Revel has developed from a one-day children’s event to a week-long big business proposition with bank accounts and auditor; but it is still the village people who benefit in the main, bringing young and old together, as well as people from different parts of the village, indeed, different parts of the parish. And it is still very much a social occasion for all the family.”*

Source: Pucklechurch Community Website, http://www.pucklechurch.org/html/revel_history.html quoting Pucklechurch Local History Society pamphlet of 1980.

The responses to question 39 support the view that the Revel is important to respondents, as 89% of them said it is either ‘important’ or ‘very important’.

Equally, 88% of respondents said that Shortwood Village Fete, held in September each year, is ‘important’ or ‘very important’ to them.



Q 40 Did you participate in or attend any of the activities associated with these events in 2006?

Revel is the only Pucklechurch event that has the potential to bring the whole community together. It involves those not involved in other organised events and groups, many of whom attend without volunteering to become involved. Similar comments could be made of Shortwood Village Fete for the population of Shortwood.

762 people said they participated or attended Revel, of which 665 were from Pucklechurch. 83 respondents participated in Shortwood Village Fete, of which 61 were from Shortwood.

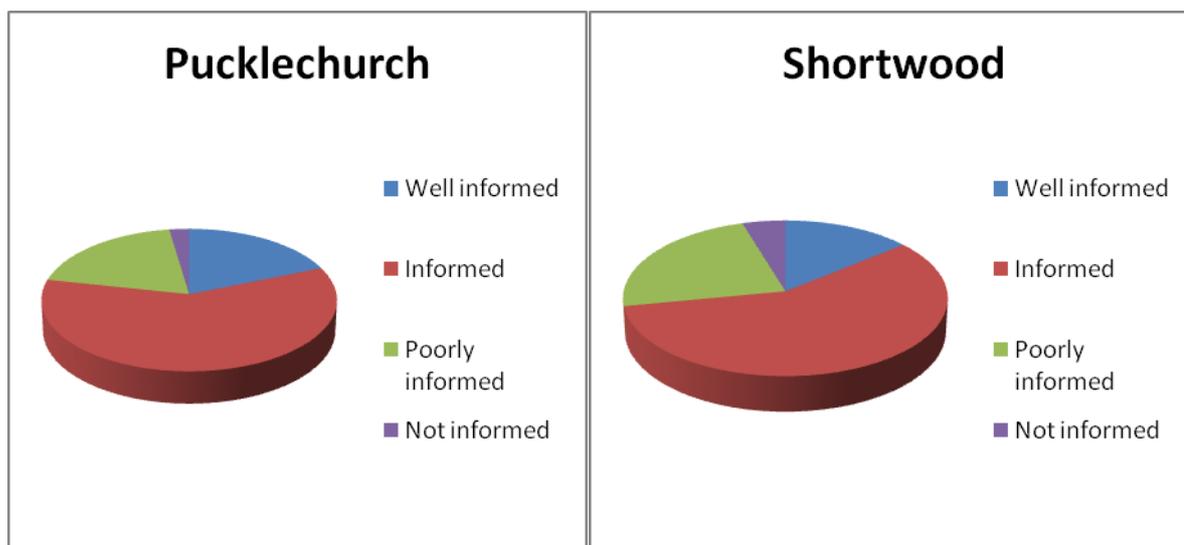
Key finding

Pucklechurch Revel and Shortwood Village Fete are important to the community spirit of the area and well supported by those living here.

Communication

Q 37 How well informed do you think you are about what is going on in your community?

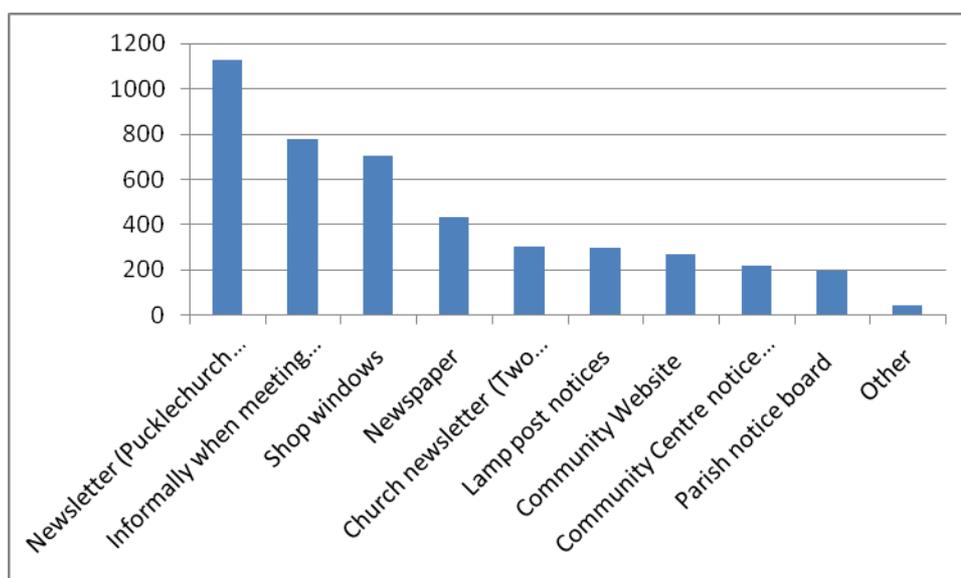
Over 90% of respondents answered this question (1214 people including 107 from Shortwood). There are similar levels of perception about how well informed people feel in Pucklechurch and in Shortwood. The majority of people say they are either 'informed' or 'well informed' about what is going on in their community.





Q 38 Where do you get your local information?

The local newsletter, Pucklechurch News, is the most popular source of local information by some margin. This newsletter has been produced since 1976. It is currently funded by the Parish Council, produced every 3 months by three volunteers and delivered by volunteers to every home in the Community Plan area. As a source of information, Pucklechurch News is cited by 89% of respondents to this question as a source. Informal contacts and shop windows were both cited by over 50% of respondents.



These first three sources of information are confirmed by survey respondents as the three that are most important to them.

The community website, <http://www.pucklechurch.org>, comes 7th in the hierarchy of sources in the survey and is cited by 180 people as being amongst their top 3 sources of information. Nevertheless, the website gets over 20,000 page views per month, which suggests it is being used by people other than those living in the community plan area.

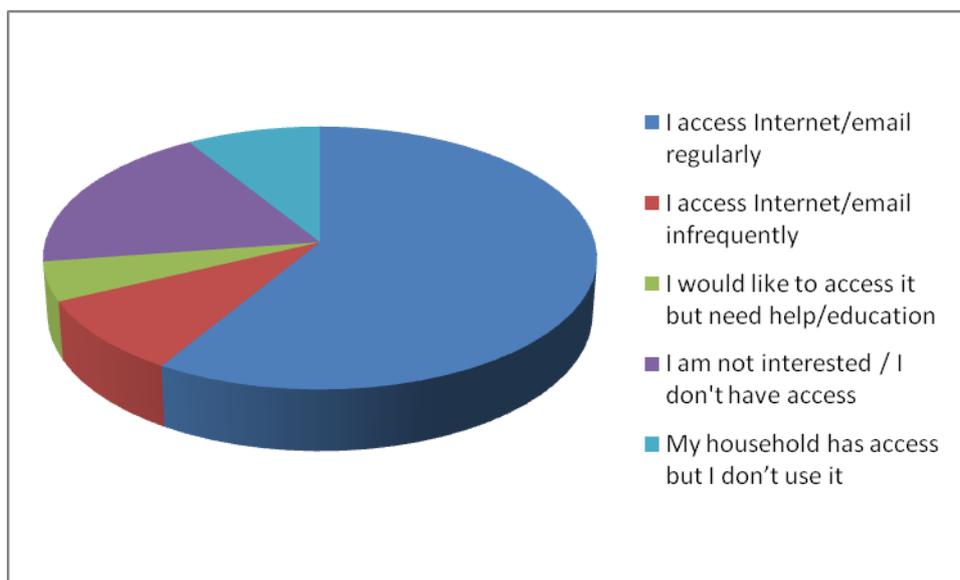
What is clear from the range of responses across the list, is that there is a variety of mechanisms being used to share information about what is going on in the community.

Key finding

74% of respondents say they are either 'informed' or 'well informed' about what is going on in their community. The most popular vehicle for sharing information is Pucklechurch News, with word of mouth and shop windows also proving popular.



Q 41 With regard to using and accessing the Internet and email please tick which of the following statements best fit



1204 people responded to this question and the internet is clearly in use by the majority of them.

There is an obvious contrast with the responses to Questions 37 and 38, above:

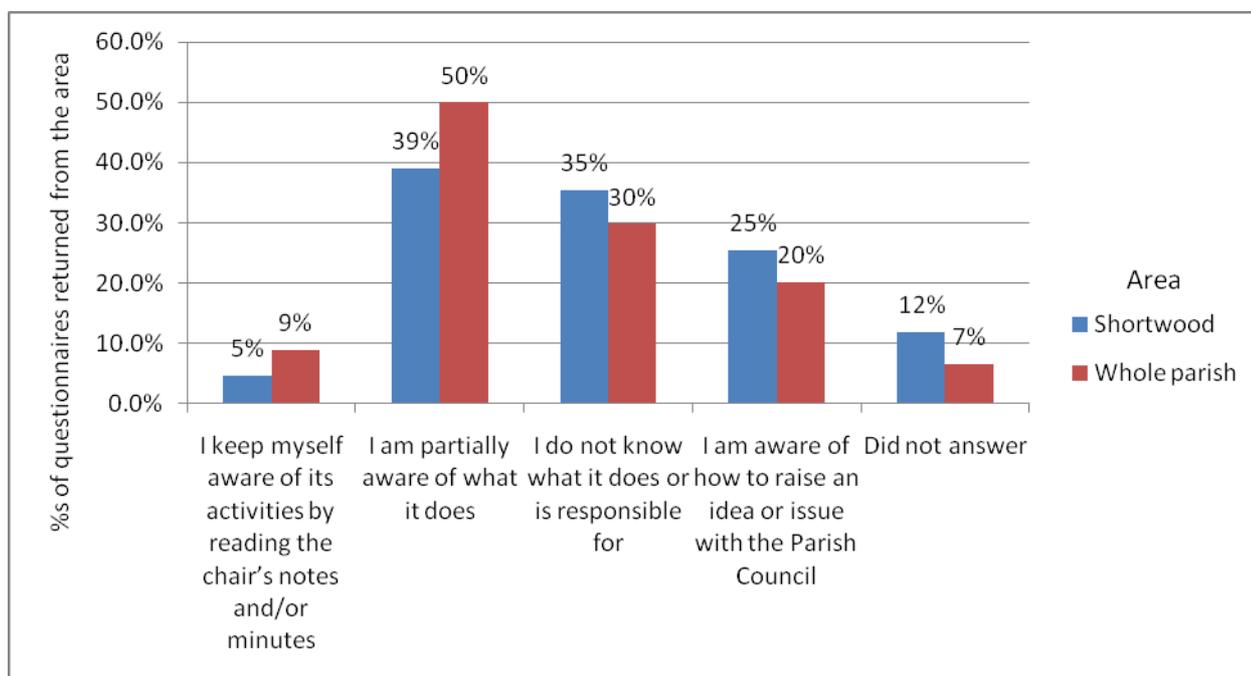
- Cross-tabulating responses on internet use with the extent to which people feel well informed (Q37), we find that by far the biggest proportion of those feeling well informed use internet regularly
- Cross-tabulating these responses with people's ages (Q1), we find that the vast majority of internet users are 64 and under. Only 52 respondents over 65 use it regularly; 17 infrequently, and 25 would like to use it but would need help
- Whereas 706 are using internet and email regularly, only 268 responded to Q38 saying they used the community website as a source of local information.

Key finding

Internet and email are in use by more than half of respondents to the survey. Many of these are not using the community website as a source of local information.



Q 42 Which statement best corresponds to your understanding and awareness of the Parish Council?



Key finding

There is work to be done informing the Parishioners of what the Parish Council's responsibilities are, particularly for Shortwood

Primary School Survey

The primary school located on Castle Road in Pucklechurch is an important element of the local community. As the only school within the Community Plan area, it features in the lives of many families and is part of the childhood of many of the children born and/or raised in the area.

The children on School Council took the main survey and constructed their own based upon it. This survey was conducted, with the permission of the school, as part of the Community Plan activity. Responses were obtained from 111 children between the ages of 6 and 11 (Key Stage 2). Many, but not all, of the children lived in the Community Plan area. By comparison, 61 children under 15 answered the main questionnaire.

Asked their feelings about the area, 69% of children said they were happy and a further 41% very happy (sic) with it. 69% felt that the area felt like a community, but 32% said they didn't know how they felt about this. This suggests scope for informing children about what is meant by community and how to engender community spirit.

83% of children said they felt safe or very safe walking, cycling or scooting to school and over half the respondents did so at least 3 times per week.



As a significant community activity, Pucklechurch Revel was included in the survey. The children were asked whether the Revel was important to them: 46% said it was very important and a further 37% important to them. This, and other findings such as those on litter, broadly reflect responses to the main survey.

61% of children said that they belonged to one or more club or society. Of these, the vast majority belonged to one of the uniformed organisations. The rest were mostly provided at school. Pucklechurch Primary School delivers extracurricular activities to a greater extent than other schools in South Glos.

Of those responding to the survey, 73% felt there was insufficient play equipment on the Rec. 23% felt it was sufficient and the rest said they didn't know. Older children expressed the view that the play equipment was designed for younger children.

Of the suggestions as to how the area could be improved, several suggested more litter bins, more play equipment and less traffic. Some also felt the area would be improved by improved amenities – everything from a swimming pool to an internet café – and a number mentioned their wish for less traffic and a cycle track to Emerson's Green.



Community Spirit: As Is Statement prior to Community Plan Activities

There are many opportunities for people in the community to come together in the community plan area.

There are buildings, such as the Community Centre in Pucklechurch or the Scout Hut for arranged get-togethers and other places where informal socialising happens. The four pubs and two social clubs provide venues for people to meet and socialise. People also do so in other places, such as the Post Office, on the recreation field, in the Doctor's surgery and in shops and bus stops.

The following is a list of the places used and the groups that use them. We hope it is extensive but would not claim it is exhaustive!

Scout Hut

Boys

- 1 Beavers 6 – 8 years
- 1 Cub Pack 8 – 10.5 years
- 1 Scouts 10.5 – 16
- 1 Explorers 14+ (Boys and girls)

Girls

- 2 Rainbow Units 5 – 7 years
- 2 Brownie Packs 7 – 10 years
- 1 Guide company 10 – 14 years (with a waiting list)
- 1 senior Section Unit 14+

Sports Clubs

Some use the Community Centre changing facilities, and use the village Recreation Field, whilst others play on various away fields.

Cricket

- First team
- Reserve team
- Third Team
- Six Youth teams

Football

- Under 8
- Under 10
- Under 12
- Under 14

- First Team
- Reserve Team
- Third Team



Fishing Club

Community Centre (Village Hall)

Administered by the Pucklechurch Community Association, of which a number of clubs are a Section.

Regular users include:

Short Mat Bowls, having two league teams

Badminton – active in a local league

Drama - very active group, but needing proper stage and lights. Stage 2 productions/ year

Folk Dance club

Twining Association – organise 2 exchange visits per year between Pucklechurch & Pringy

Star jumpers for the young children

Playgroup

Happy Circle

Gardening Club

Women's Institute

Pucklechurch Community Association Social Club

Cribbage

Darts

Skittles

Pucklechurch Village Sports and Social Club (Originally the 'Prison Officers' Club')

Darts

Skittles

Public Houses

The Star – including RAOB Hut

The Fleur de lys

The Rose and Crown

The Bridge Inn

Saint Thomas á Becket Church

Sunday Services

Weekday Services

Parochial Church Council

Sunday School

Home Visits

Mothers Union

Choir

Tower Playgroup

Handbell Ringers

Tower Bell Ringers



Shortwood Chapel

Sunday Services
Women's Institute

Pucklechurch C of E School

Staff and students
PTA
After school club

Shops, Stores and Garages

Bakery
Farm Shop
Café
Hairdresser
Local Store
Newsagents
Post Office

Other

Dennisworth Centre
Homefield Centre
Pucklechurch Revel
Shortwood Village Fete