



Oakley Green, Fifield & District Community Action Plan 2009

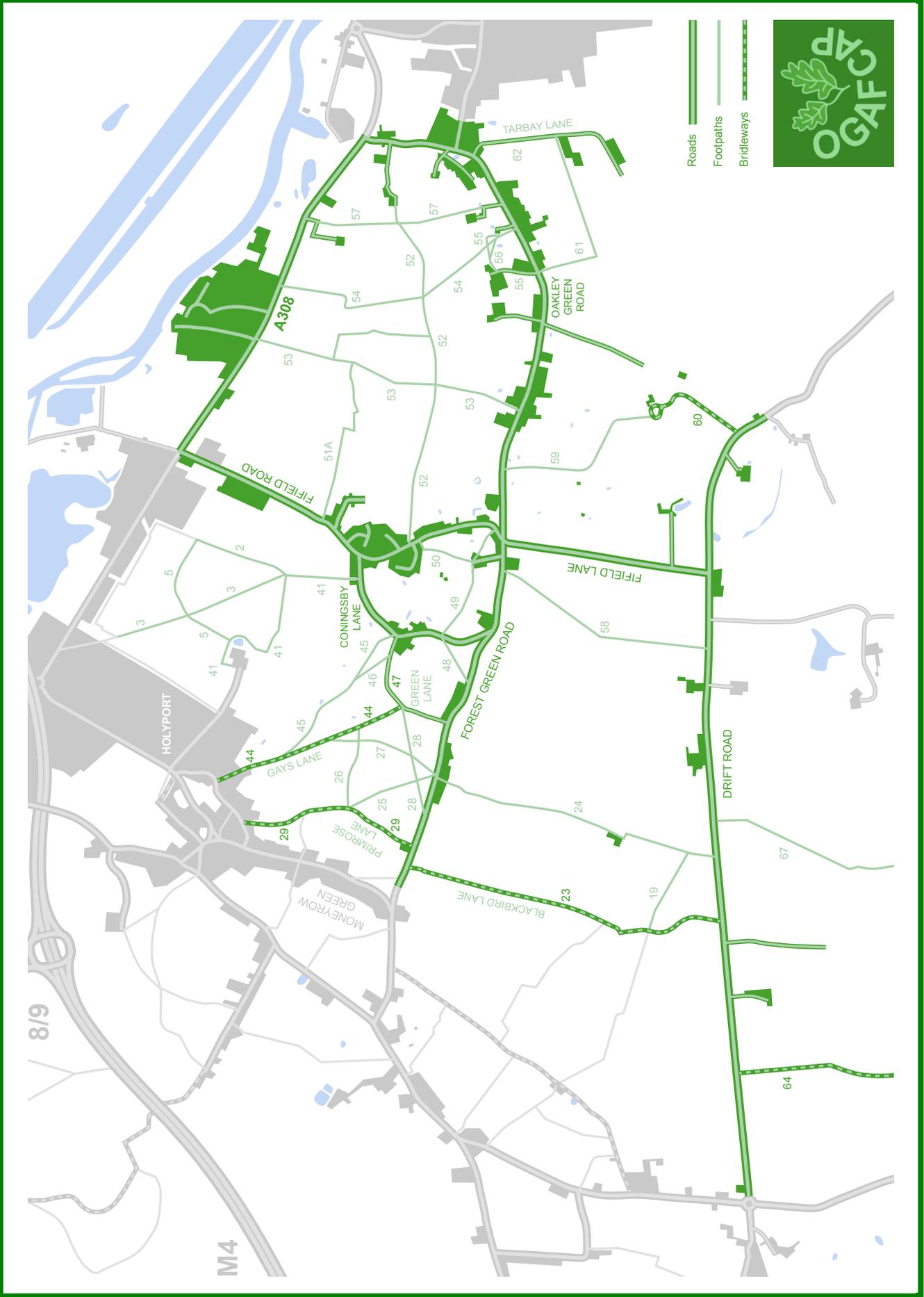


“village life in a rural setting”





- Roads
- Footpaths
- Bridleways



Foreword

Residents and local businesses

We are delighted to present the Oakley Green, Fifield and District Community Action Plan, which is the culmination of many months of hard work by a large number of people.

After confirming that there was sufficient local interest in developing a Community Action Plan, the effort was launched at the end of March 2008. Since then, seven work groups made up of local volunteers have met regularly. They initially undertook a lot of research. They then went on to design, deliver, collect and analyse two surveys in order to establish exactly what you want to see maintained and what you would like to see improved in our area. Further consultation took place to make sure we were on the right track. Contact was made with external stakeholders and service providers to provide an accuracy and reality check. Now at last we have a Community Action Plan which can be published and of which we can be proud.

However, this is really just the beginning; for the first time we now have an Action Plan and a blueprint to enhance our future, based firmly on the wishes expressed by you in the surveys. Now we need to execute the actions identified and monitor our progress in delivery. This will require more hard work and significant understanding, support and cooperation from a lot of organisations, most importantly our three main service providers of The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council, Bray Parish Council and Thames Valley Police.

So the bottom line is that success in implementation and enhancing our daily lives lies with you, our local residents and local businesses. We need more volunteers to come forward and help us deliver. Please note that it is never too late to become involved. If you see something in the plan which particularly interests you or you think you have some experience or skill which may be useful, please do not hesitate to contact one of the work group spokespersons directly or through our website www.ogafcap.co.uk

There are many people to thank for the efforts so far and many are listed at the back of the Action Plan. But all of this was made possible by generous financial support by Bray Parish Council to whom we formally record our thanks here.

The area covered by this Action Plan is substantially the Oakley Green and Fifield Electoral Ward, excluding Hawthorn Hill and St. Leonard's Hill - as depicted on the map on the opposite page and includes the following roads:
Bishops Farm Close, Blackbird Lane, Coningsby Lane, Dedworth Road (to Fairacres Farm), Down Place, Drift Road (from The Bolt to Braywood Cottage), Ferndale Park, Fifield Lane, Fifield Road, Forest Green Road (to Blackbird Lane), Ledger Lane, Manor Grove, Meadow Way, Oakley Green Road, Stewart Close, Tarbay Lane, Water Oakley, Windsor Road (from Fifield Road turn to Oakley Green Road turn).

Content:

Map	2
Local History	4
Why have a Community Action Plan?	5
Preparing the Plan	6
Residents Survey	7
Quick Wins delivered	8
Children & Youths	10
Communications	12
Community Safety	16
Environment	19
Local Business	23
Roads & Transport	25
Social & Recreational	29
Freeform Questions	33
What next?	34
Acknowledgements	35

Local History

The community of Oakley Green, Fifield and surrounding areas was originally located in the province of Wessex. During Anglo Saxon times Christianity came to the Thames valley and the area was divided into parishes. The Parish of Brai (Bray) (low lying land) was founded around 650 AD with the Abbey at Abingdon. By 800 AD the province of Wessex was divided into shires and history shows that in 860 AD Berkshire was known as 'Berroscir'; a berroc being a wooded area. These shires were divided further into 'hundreds' (approximately 12 000 acres), Brai being one and including Hawthorn Hill, Braywick, Moneyrow Green, Touchen End, Stud Green, Holyport, Water Oakley, Oakley Green and Fifield.

The earliest recorded history of Oakley Green appears in 851 AD when the Danes sailed up the Thames and were defeated at the Battle of Acleah. Oakley Green was used by drovers to graze their sheep and the village grew up around the grazing land on the packhorse route from Reading to Windsor. A document dated 1220 AD mentions 'Aukely' meaning 'oak wood clearing'.

Oakley Court Hotel, originally Water Oakley Mansion was built in 1859 on the site of Water Oakley Wharf which belonged to the Queen and where in the 1300's timber from Windsor Forest was sent down the Thames to London.

Braywood is referred to in the Domesday Book; in 1086 Bray had woods sufficient to feed 60 pigs on acorns and beech mash for a year.

There are a number of properties along Oakley Green Road which are noted in historical documents. The Old Malt House was originally the 15th Century Nags Head Inn, Kimbers Farm on Oakley Green Road is mentioned in 1288 and Mills farm, with its ancient moat, was reputed to be an inn for packhorse travellers.

New Lodge on the Drift Road was built in 1857 on the site of a medieval hunting lodge by Jean Silvain Van der Weyer, the Belgian Minister to the English Court and Parliament and a great friend of Queen Victoria. Under the Van der Weyers, the area between New Lodge and Oakley Green was called the Braywood Estate with entrance lodges on the Oakley Green Road bearing the Van der Weyer crest. Other properties, including red brick Victorian houses for the estate workers and a pub, now Braywood Linn, were built along Oakley Green Road in the 1860's, and all bear the family crest.

Madame Van de Weyer had a small church and vicarage built near New Lodge which became a separate parish known as All Saints Braywood. Family members were buried at All Saints and the church was used until New Lodge was sold in 1911. The church was demolished in 1963.

Braywood School and the School House were built in 1857, funded by the Van de Weyers.

Historical evidence shows that in the 1300's Fifield was called Fifhyde, meaning five hides (approx 600 acres). Over time the name changed to Ffield, and then to its current spelling, Fifield. The oldest part of the settlement is probably in Coningsby lane where properties including Old Lodge Farmhouse, Grove Farm and Yew Tree Cottage, date back to the 15th century. In 1442 a hospital with almshouses was founded in Fifield however its location is unknown.

In 1867, Thomas Reynolds who owned Grove Farm founded Fifield Village Mission and built the small wooden chapel which was moved on rollers from his property to its present location on Fifield Road.

Braywood Memorial Hall was built in memory of those killed in the First World War and was funded by Captain Forester Cecil Robin Britten who owned Fifield House. The present day Fifield House does not stand on the site of the original house which is first mentioned in 1479 when its owner John Fowler died and the house passed to his wife. A noted resident of the original Fifield House was John Norreys who was knighted in 1601 by Queen Elizabeth I and was appointed Sheriff of Berkshire.

Why have a Community Plan?

VISION

Build a Community Plan for the future which accurately represents our views and aspirations and enhances our quality of life

What is a Community Plan?

- It is a plan which is developed by and has the buy in and support of local communities and is based upon information gathered by participation in open days, surveys and research.
- It is an opportunity for everyone in the community to make themselves heard.
- It describes a shared vision of the local area for the next ten years.
- It is comprehensive and considers all aspects of local life including social, economic and environmental issues of concern to the community.
- It enables communities to have more control of their own lives, to improve their quality of life and to say what they want doing.
- Once developed and adopted, it can help prioritise resources and provide important information to help influence the policies, decisions and actions of others - including in our case, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council, Bray Parish Council, Thames Valley Police and other service providers.
- It contains detailed action plans to achieve and implement the shared vision.
- It is realistic and has clear statements of what, why, who, how and when?
- It also enhances the ability of communities to attract funds in support of identified community projects.
- The effort often enhances community spirit.
- Typically a community plan takes about 18 months to complete.

Who should be involved?

Everyone in the community should and can have input. Usually the local Parish Council sponsors and supports the early work. Then volunteers come forward to help develop the plan, engaging with the local community at all times so there are no surprises.

Additional support is available from a number of other organisations who have experience and expertise in developing and managing plans. Recently our neighbours in Ascot, Cookham and Waltham St Lawrence & Shurlock Row developed and published their plans. We have also received guidance from The Community Council for Berkshire.

There are many ways to develop a community plan, but it is essential to be transparent and to seek a high level of engagement with residents so that the effort is 'legitimised'.

Preparing the Action Plan

VISION

Engage the whole community in the development of the plan so that it is based on their views and aspirations

The most important thing to do when preparing a Community Action Plan is to engage and consult with the local community.

With this in mind, on 25 February and 1 March 2008, two open events were held to establish if there was any interest in developing a Community Plan for Oakley Green, Fifield and District. During these two events, about eighty local residents took part. More than 200 issues and ideas were captured (many were duplicated) and volunteers came forward. So, given this level of support, the project was launched!

At the first meeting at the end of March 2008, twenty-three initial volunteers confirmed their commitment and areas of interest, and based on the information gathered in the two open meetings, seven work groups were formed; Children & Youths, Communications, Community Safety, Environment, Research, Roads & Transport and Social & Recreational.

These work groups are made up of between two and ten local volunteers from a cross section of the community and have since met on an ad hoc basis, as and when required.

In addition, every five weeks, 'all volunteers meetings' have been held in Braywood Memorial Hall where they discussed the progress of the work groups and agreed direction, actions and next steps for the whole project. To date, fifteen 'all volunteer meetings' have been held and new volunteers have joined along the way. The process evolved and worked well. All volunteers were involved in and kept informed about key decisions by way of meeting notes, so there were no surprises.

Key Events that took place:

- Obtain broad and financial support from Bray Parish Council
- Identify initial external resources available to support project
- Publicise the idea of producing a Community Action Plan
- Hold two public meetings to identify local key issues and gauge level of local interest. Initial local volunteers identified
- Community Action Plan project launched and seven work groups formed
- Undertake some simple local research – identify local stakeholders
- Consult with local community to ascertain their views
 - Develop 49 question survey for all residents 11 years and older
 - Hand deliver survey to all 407 occupied households
 - Collect survey (74 percent response rate achieved!)
 - Create initial database of responses and analyse information
 - Identify key issues raised by the community
- Confirm organisation and scope of work groups and contact new volunteers. Local Business Work Group formed
- Launch of community website
- Launch of new style community newsletter
- Start to engage with external stakeholders and service providers
- Draft Community Action Plan
- Final consultation with residents, stakeholders and fund holders
- Publication of Community Action Plan

Completed by:

September 2007
January 2008
January 2008
March 2008
March 31, 2008
June 2008
August 2008
October 2008
November 2008
December 2008
January 2009
January 2009
February 2009
March 2009
from March 2009
August 2009
October 2009
December 2009

Residents Survey

VISION

Achieve a high response rate in order to underpin our Plan's legitimacy

During the late summer of 2008, the Residents Survey was designed by the seven volunteer work groups and was made up of 49 questions covering a range of areas. There were also opportunities in the survey for residents to raise issues and concerns which were not specifically covered by the questions.

The surveys were hand delivered to 407 occupied properties and then hand collected by volunteers after a few weeks. Responses were kept anonymous. The data was then entered into a database and interim reports were available for analysis in early December 2008. The survey was kept open until February to allow some late runners to be entered. As a result and thanks to all the hard work of the volunteers (who at times really badgered residents to respond), a fantastic response rate of 74 percent of households was achieved!

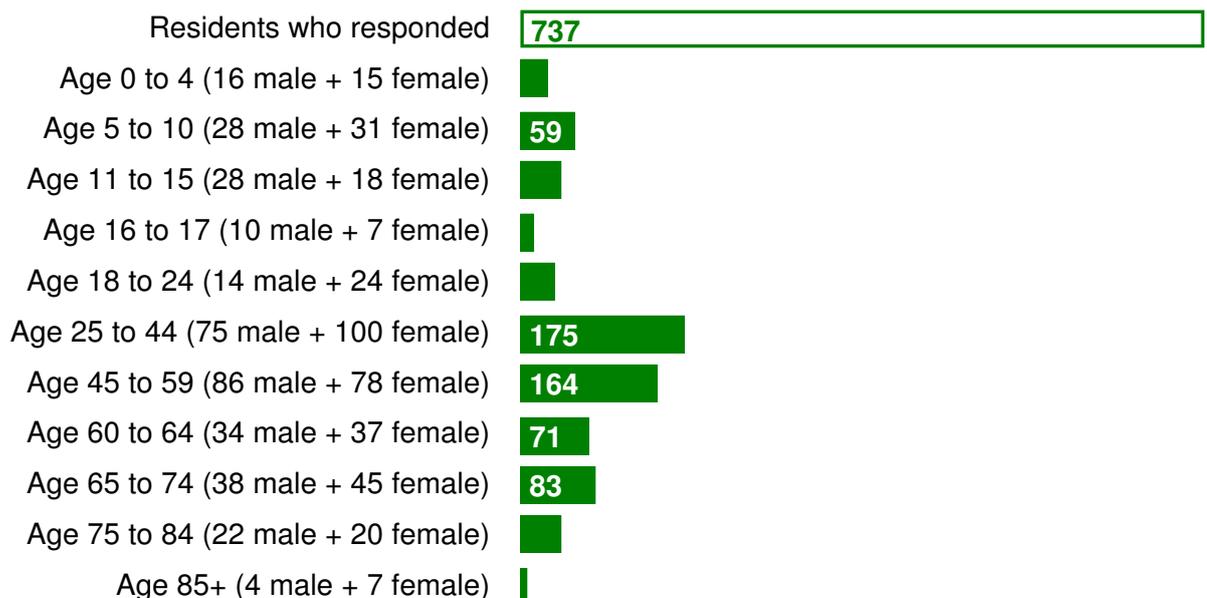
Results

All the results of the survey are discussed under a number of different topic headings throughout the Community Action Plan. Bar charts used to illustrate results throughout this document are to scale and depending on the question, either relate to the number of households (407) or the number of residents aged 11 and older who responded (737). Sometimes in questions with a low number of responses there is not enough room to include the number in the bar chart. The chart below is a good example of this with 6 numbers missing. But as all charts are to the same scale throughout, it is possible to estimate the number of responses to any question by comparing with another bar with a number in it.

Full information is available on our website at www.ogafcap.co.uk

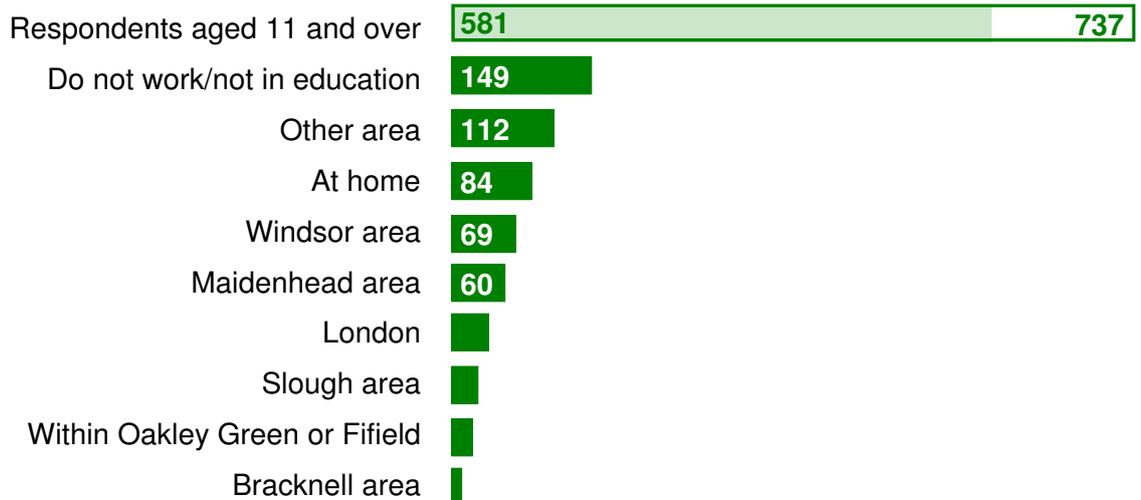
In summary, completed surveys were collected from 297 households; of which 168 were in Fifield, Water Oakley and Down Place, 75 in Oakley Green and 54 from Forest Green and Drift Roads.

Please enter the number of people in your household in each age group.



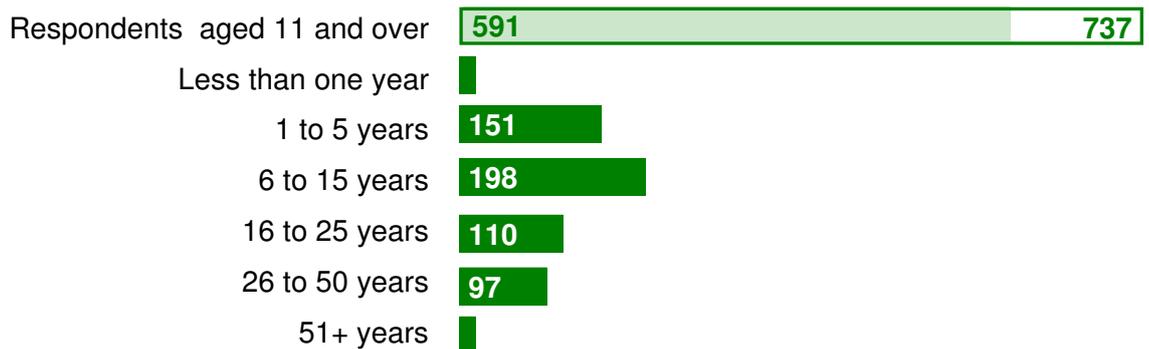
Of the 737 residents who responded to the survey, there were 382 females (52 percent) and 355 males (48 percent).

Where is your main place of work/education?



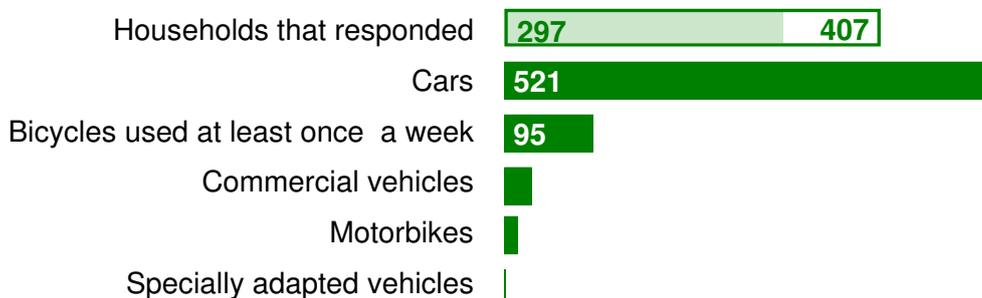
Of the residents aged 11 and over who responded, 25.6 percent do not work and are not in education.

How long have you lived in the Oakley Green and Fifield community?



Of the residents who responded to this question, 33.5 percent have lived in the area for 6 to 15 years.

How many roadworthy vehicles which are regularly used are kept by your household?



We have an average of 1.75 cars per household.

Quick Wins delivered

VISION

Rather than wait until the Community Action Plan is published, work groups have already implemented some Quick Wins

Publication of a Community Newsletter

More than ninety percent of residents who responded said they would like to receive a newsletter. Trudi Knight volunteered to be the Editor and with the help of the Communications Work Group four editions have been published so far in 2009 since the survey.

Development of a Community Website

Almost sixty percent of residents said we should have a community website. The site, developed by Rod Lord, has been up and running since February 2009 and is updated every Friday.

Landshare Scheme

This is where residents with land allow others to cultivate it – perhaps in return for a percentage of the crop. A number of residents are participating in this innovative scheme.

Litter Picking Scheme

Volunteers have come forward and are already collecting litter along a number of our highways – including Fifield Road.

Social Events

The Social & Recreational Work Group organised a Horse Racing evening in July 2008, a Food and Wine Fair at the end of May 2009 and a Hogroast in October 2009.

Ditches and Flooding

The Environment Work Group have worked with RBWM and identified two wet spots for immediate attention; outside the cricket club on Oakley Green Road and near Longlea Nursing Home, Fifield Road.

Liaison with Key Stakeholders

We have been working with various departments in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council to establish contacts and ensure information in the plan is accurate.

Children & Youths Events

Two family rambles have taken place, one in June and another in August, and two holiday activity days have been held in August at Braywood School.

HGVs in Fifield

A successful campaign to report and hence reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) travelling through Fifield Village has been waged. If you see any in the village, please note their registration number and report them to the non emergency Police number – 0845 8 505 505.

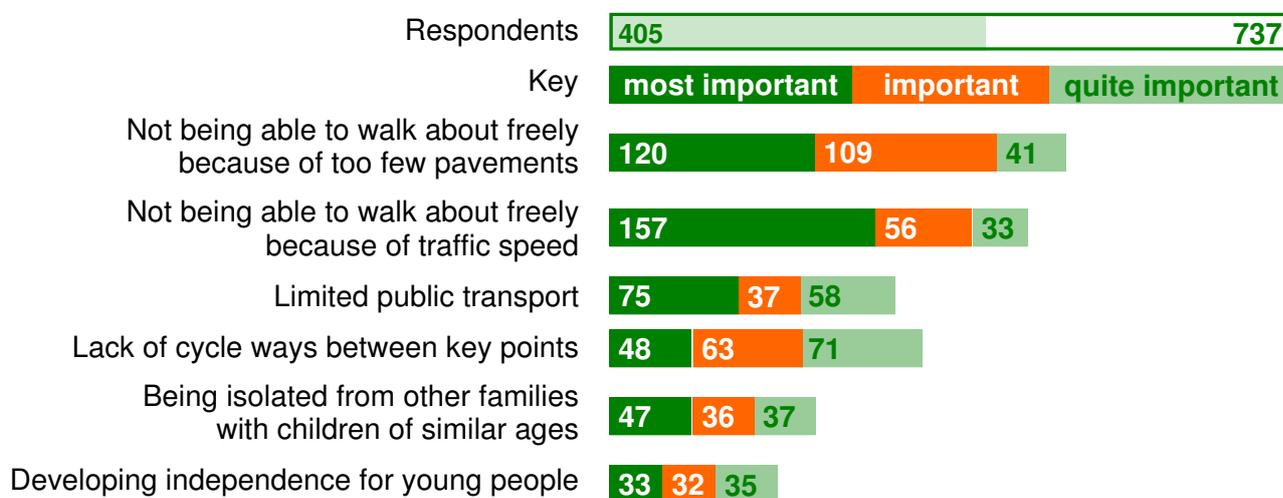
Children & Youths

VISION

Provide a safe environment and facilities to enable children and young people to grow and develop independence

Based on the results of those residents who responded to the survey, there are 153 children and youths under eighteen years of age in our community with about 90 children under ten years of age, and 46 between eleven and fifteen years of age. Children and young people aged 11 and over were encouraged to participate in the survey. Two questions relevant to children and youths were included and here are the responses.

What do you see as the major issues and challenges in growing up and raising children in our community?



The major issue identified was that of not being able to walk about freely either because of few pavements or traffic speed. This restriction affects the developing independence of the young, and limits their capacity to meet other young people other than at school and in the immediate area around their home. These problems of road safety and transport, so relevant to this issue, are discussed in other sections of the Community Action Plan.

Should our community have a children's playground?

A significant majority of the respondents (67 percent) answered 'yes', with the highest percentage being from the residents of Fifield. Any developments in this area would need to involve Bray Parish Council and RBWM, not only to find a suitable place for a playground but to obtain funding to develop and support this activity. The Children & Youths Work Group also felt that a place where youths could meet was equally important. Whilst the responses to a specific question in the Residents Survey about establishing a youth club were not very encouraging, the Children & Youths Work Group feel that it is worthwhile seeing if there is support from local parents to establish a youth club in Fifield on an experimental basis to test what interest there would be from youths in the community.

Having had other feed back from residents since the Residents Survey was completed and also having held a number of meetings to discuss the results and what the priorities should be for the purposes of the Community Action Plan as far as children and young people are concerned, The Children & Youths Work Group set out below the two actions that they consider should be taken forward.

ACTION

Investigate the possibility of a new children's playground and facilities where youths can meet

- Involve local parents to explore options
- Investigate both an indoor and outdoor site which should be accessible to as many residents as possible

Responsibility

Children & Youths Work Group
Local parents

Funding

Self financing
Grants from RBWM
and Bray Parish Council

Timing

Autumn 2009
then ongoing

ACTION

Develop out of school activities for children and youths in our community

- Involve local parents to develop activities
- Liaise with Braywood School and local groups

Responsibility

Children & Youths Work Group
Local parents

Funding

Self financing
Grants from RBWM
and Bray Parish Council

Timing

Autumn 2009
then ongoing

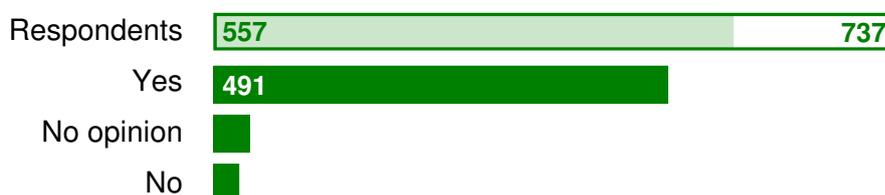
Communications

VISION

Establish good, clear, diverse and regular communication within our community

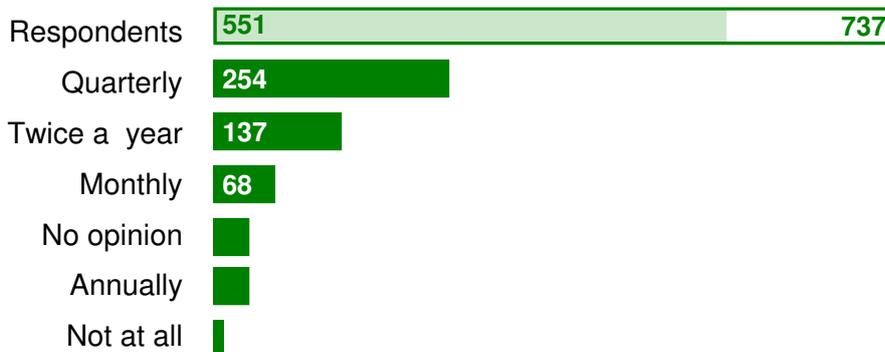
Communication within a small rural community is essential to help build and maintain community spirit. The survey asked residents eleven questions relating to communications and the results show that the residents of Oakley Green, Fifield and District would like to be kept informed about news of events in our area.

Would you like to be kept informed about news, activities and developments within the community?

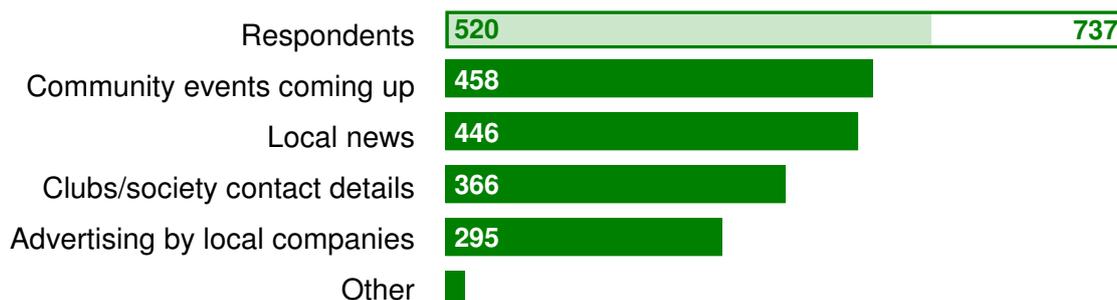


Community Newsletter

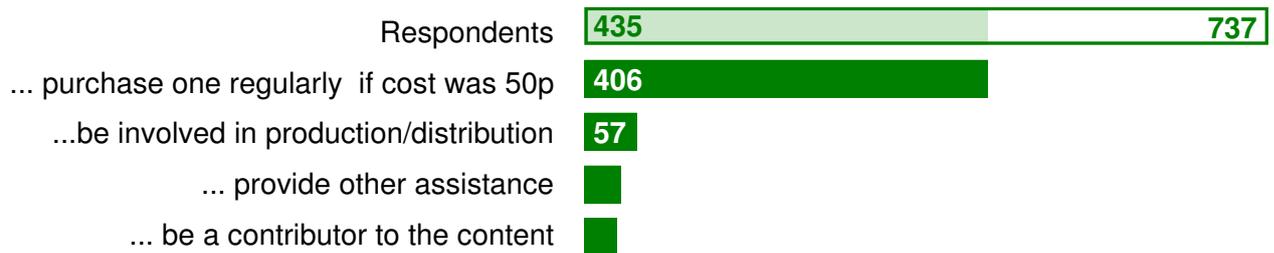
How often do you think a community newsletter should be produced?



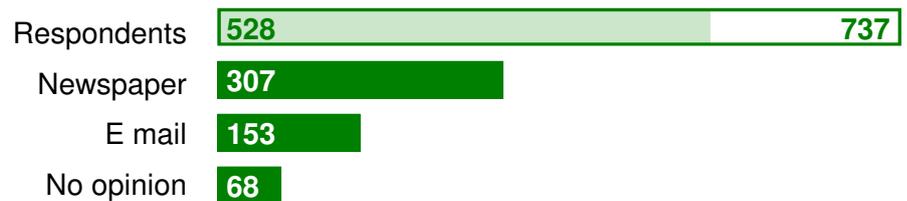
If a community newsletter was produced, what content would you like to see?



If a community newsletter was produced would you be prepared to ...



In what format would you prefer to receive Community communication?

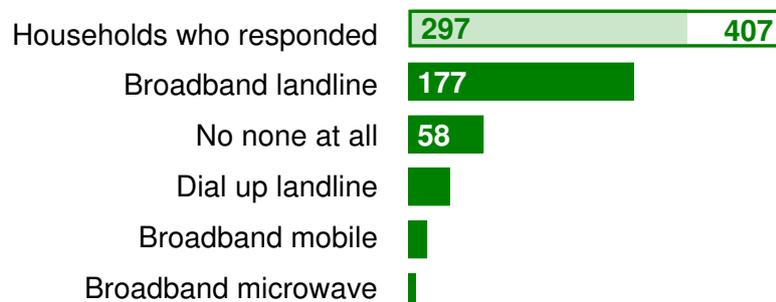


Although ninety-three percent of residents who responded indicated they would pay for a newsletter, we realised that to collect the 50p from each individual household and business would prove too complicated. Plans are in place to increase the size of the publication and obtain funding for printing through advertising so we can continue to distribute a free newsletter to all residents. The Local Business Work Group has approached local businesses offering advertising space and the initial response has been very positive. We are on target to publish the first free booklet style newsletter in December 2009.

Access to the internet

During the open events held prior to the survey, poor broadband connection featured high on the list of complaints from residents. Subsequent research done by the Communications Work Group revealed that our community lies within a broadband 'black spot' and poor broadband speed affects residents of Fifield and those in Oakley Green Road and Forest Green Road who live within about a half mile radius of the Braywood Hall junction and fall under the Maidenhead 01628 exchange. Residents on Oakley Green Road who fall under the Windsor exchange (01753) are less affected. For more information or to register your interest in an improved internet connection, go to our website www.ogafcap.co.uk

Do you have an internet connection at home?



Who is your internet provider?

Twenty-five percent of the 297 households who responded did not answer this question. However from the 297 responses we learned there are thirty different internet providers in our area; 26 percent of residents receive their internet connection through BT, with Sky and AOL each supplying around ten percent of households.

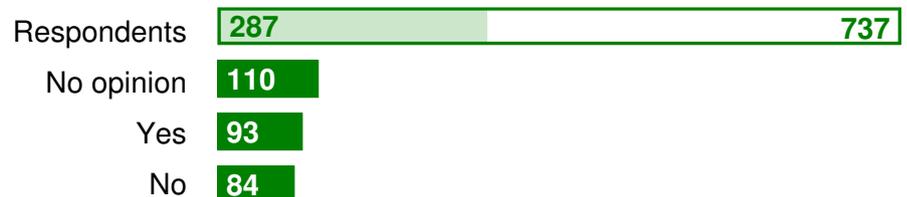
What is your typical connection speed?

Data calculated from answers revealed that residents are dissatisfied and in some cases confused about the connection speed they receive. The poor broadband access within parts of our community is due to the distance from the Maidenhead telephone exchange; the copper cable presently in place cannot supply the desired broadband connection. Speeds of less than 40 kbps are being suffered in some households. Fibre cables have been laid to provide landline broadband connection to the school, however this connection has as yet not been made available to local residents.

If you do not have landline broadband, would you like to be able to receive it?



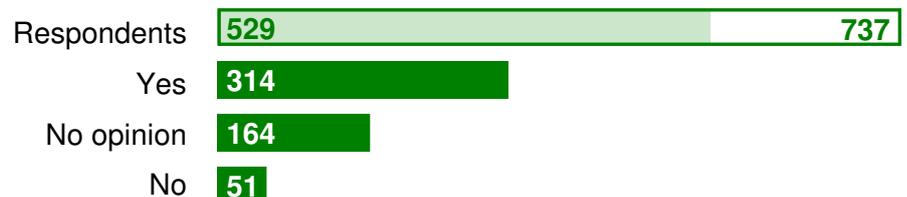
If you are unable to receive broadband, is your home life/business seriously adversely affected?



Forty-five percent of respondents who do not receive landline broadband indicated they would like to receive an improved internet connection, however the level of participation in any new scheme will depend on the costs involved. A work group has been formed to investigate improved broadband access options and costs.

Community Website

Do you think a community website is a good idea?



The encouraging fifty-nine percent of residents who responded in support of a website inspired the Communications Work Group to design and develop an interactive community website which was launched on 20 February 2009.

www.ogafcap.co.uk

Since the survey data was analysed, the Communications Work Group has achieved two of their main objectives; the publication of a newsletter and the development of a community website. In order to ensure the continued success of these and the improvement of internet connection, three actions are recommended.

ACTION**Develop the quality and content of the free quarterly newsletter**

- Obtain funding through advertising
- Encourage residents to contribute content
- Continue to deliver a free newsletter

Responsibility

Editorial team
Volunteer distributors
Residents

Funding

Through advertising

Timing

December 2009
then ongoing

ACTION**Maintain, sustain and develop the community website**

- Encourage residents to use and be involved in the website
- Appoint a webmaster

Responsibility

Communications Work Group
Residents

Funding

Through resident participation

Timing

Ongoing

ACTION**Set up an accessible and affordable broadband service within the community**

- Form a broadband access work group
- Research connection possibilities, service providers and costs
- Encourage residents to sign up to the scheme

Responsibility

Communications Work Group
Residents

Funding

Through resident participation

Timing

Ongoing

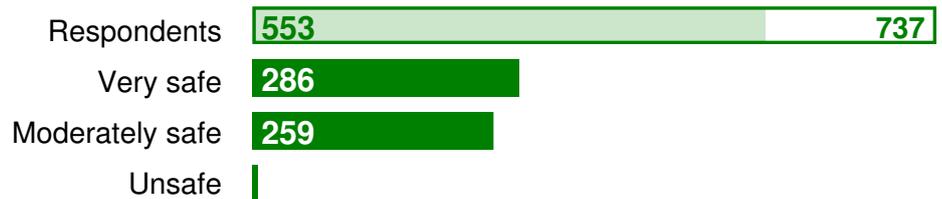
Community Safety

VISION

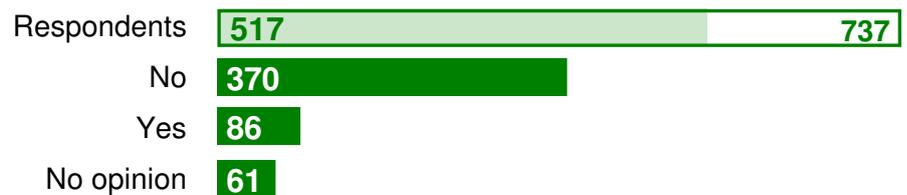
Reduce crime levels and improve the feeling of safety within our community

The results of the Residents Survey show that the vast majority of residents feel safe living within our community and are very satisfied with the performance of the emergency services; a most gratifying result, but one which must be monitored closely to ensure it is retained and ideally improved.

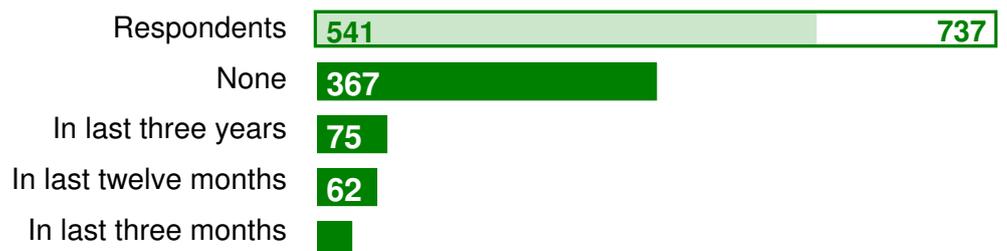
How safe do you feel in your area?



Are there any areas/locations in Oakley Green and Fifield in which you feel unsafe for any reason?



Have you experienced any crime/anti-social behaviour against you and /or your property in the area?



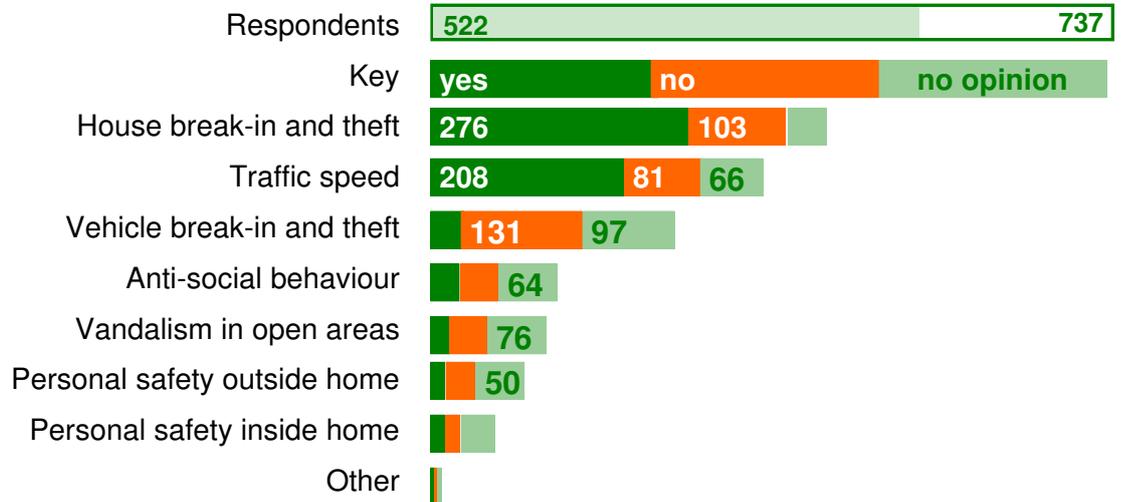
Have you had any reason to call any of the following in the last 12 months and if so what was their service like?



Sixty-eight percent of residents who responded had not had a reason to call any of the emergency services in the previous twelve months.

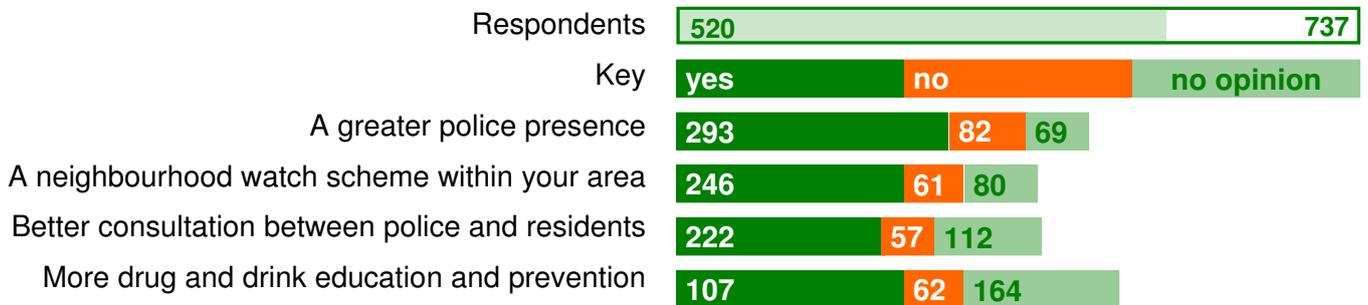
Nevertheless, residents' fears in relation to community safety were of potential house break-ins and theft and also of traffic speed (the latter is dealt with more fully under the Roads & Transport section).

What are your greatest fears in relation to community safety?



On a positive note, residents felt the following would assist in improving the feeling of safety within the area:

Do you think that any of the following measures are needed?



Despite its comparatively small size, the Oakley Green, Fifield and District area is policed by two distinctly separate divisions of Thames Valley Police: Maidenhead (Fifield, Forest Green, Drift Road) and Windsor (Oakley Green). These two divisions have little direct daily contact concerning this area's policing. Initial discussions with the two divisions concerning future liaison have been encouraging, with the ultimate aim to have a single police division for our area.

There are several Neighbourhood Watch groups already set up and we believe that coverage of the whole area will help to reduce crime levels, particularly with regular liaison with local police.

With these findings in mind, the Community Safety Work Group has suggested three actions.

ACTION**Establish Neighbourhood Watch Schemes across the whole community**

- Establish where Neighbourhood Watch Schemes are needed and set them up

Responsibility

Community Safety Work Group
Neighbourhood Watch representatives
Thames Valley Police

Funding

Self funding

Timing

December 2009
and beyond

ACTION**Improve liaison between local police forces and our community**

- Initiate informal meetings with our two local police divisions
- Create a single policing division within our community

Responsibility

Community Safety Work Group
Thames Valley Police
Neighbourhood Watch representatives
RBWM Community Safety Officers

Funding

Self funding

Timing

Two years

ACTION**Increase residents' perception of police presence within our community**

- Continue dialogue with local police divisions and encourage them to promote higher visibility

Responsibility

Community Safety Work Group
Thames Valley Police

Funding

Self funding

Timing

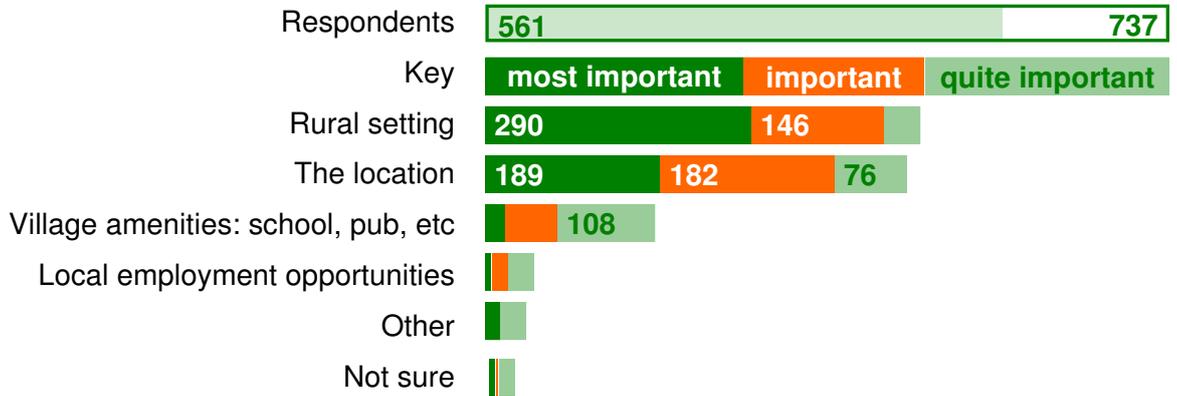
Three months

Environment

VISION

Fulfil the declared wishes of residents for the improvement and maintenance of our rural environment

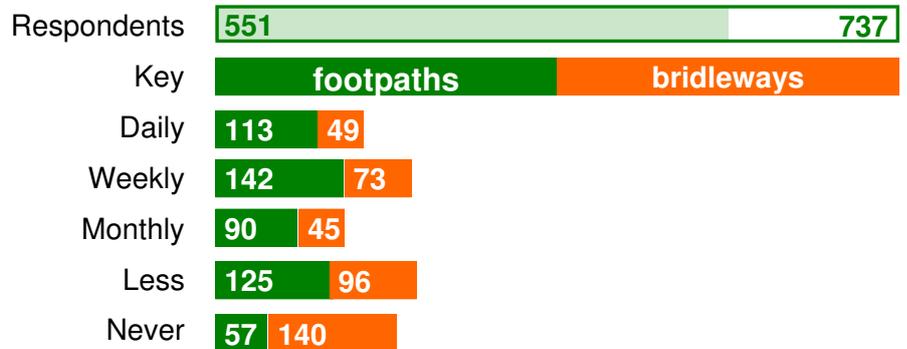
What is most important to you about living in the Oakley Green and Fifield area?



According to the results of the Residents Survey the vast majority of residents consider the rural setting and location as the most important reasons for living in Oakley Green, Fifield and District. We are within an easy commute to London, have the historic town of Windsor on our doorstep and yet we are surrounded by farms and fields.

The Residents Survey contained four questions relating specifically to our environment and the maintenance thereof.

How often do you use the following in the Oakley Green and Fifield area?



The answers to this question serve to highlight just how valuable a resource our rural environment is for local residents. Who would have thought that on an average day as many as 136 people might be walking the footpaths in our area and 60 riders using the bridleways?

Would you like to see an improvement in the footpath and bridleway network in our area that would avoid the need for cyclists and horse riders to use main roads?

Of all the responses to our four questions on environment, this was the most emphatic with 470 positive responses from 547 residents - or 85.9 percent. Of course we cannot hope to entirely avoid the need for cyclists and horse riders to use main roads as the existing bridleways in our area start and end at a road. We have an extensive network of footpaths, but none currently offer possibilities of upgrading to create complete bridleway circuits.

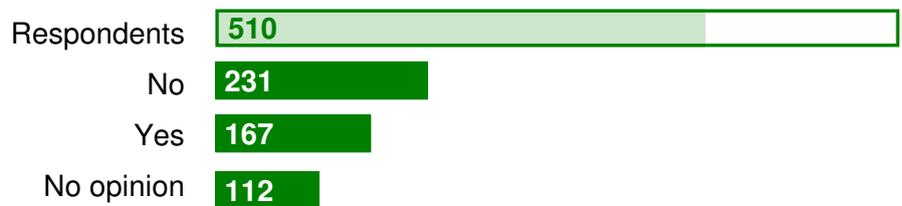
If we are to preserve our rural atmosphere it is imperative that residents should be able to walk, cycle and horse ride with safety. The Roads & Transport Work Group is looking at the issue of road safety and speeding traffic and also at ways to create more footways to make it easier and safer to access footpaths from the roads and walk from one path to another.

In order to encourage cyclists and horse riders to enjoy our area, we must provide a safer environment for them. So to reduce the necessity for riders and cyclists to use roads, the Environment Work Group has identified some possible routes which might be upgraded to bridleway status and are in consultation with RBWM to investigate these possibilities. We are also in the privileged position of being very close to Windsor Great Park which has excellent facilities for cyclists and riders and we are actively exploring the possibility of using the Windsor Forest as a safe off road route to access this area.

Full details of our proposals can be found on the Environment page at www.ogafcap.co.uk or supplied as hard copy on request.

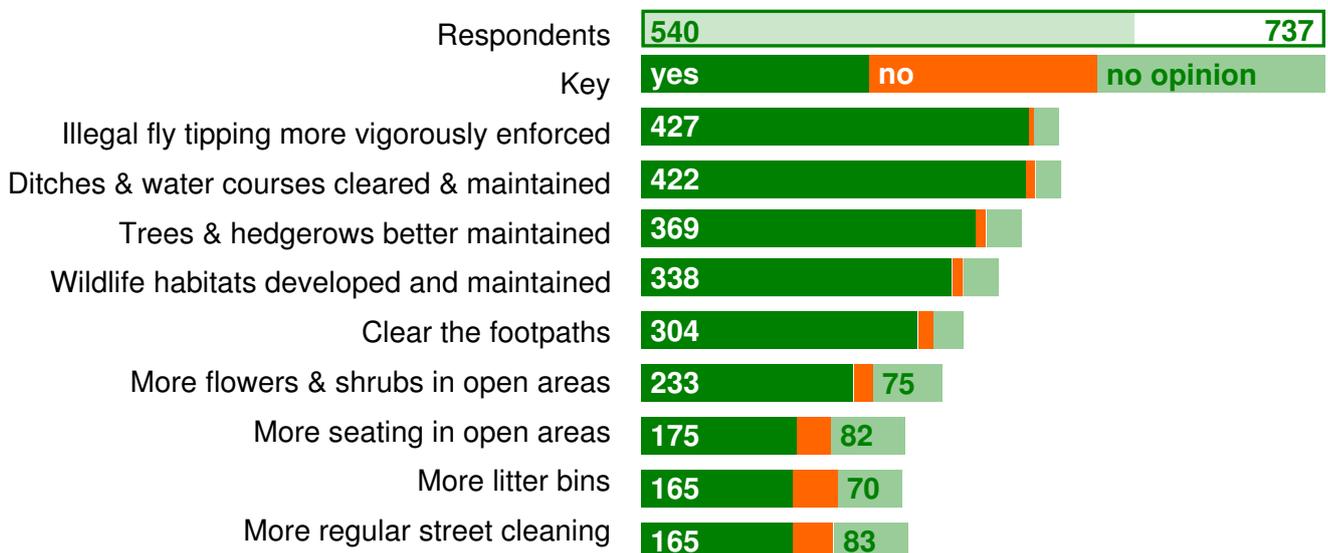
Litter picking

Would you be willing to adopt a section of highway, perhaps near your house or on a route that you travel regularly, and collect any litter that you see?



The few residents already doing sterling work must be congratulated for persevering. Survey returns showed 167 of 510 responders willing to adopt an area, so we launched a litter picking scheme. Unfortunately as the survey was anonymous we have no way to follow up on those willing responders so have had to rely on their coming forward. The few that have now volunteered can not cover the whole of our area but a significant percentage is now well served. Although we do not intend to propose any further special action as part of the Community Action Plan, the scheme will continue as an ongoing project. Full details can be found on the environment page at www.ogafcap.co.uk

Would you like to see any of the following improvements in the Oakley Green and Fifield area?



Fly tipping

Fly tipping is at the top of everyone's list. Unfortunately this is the very thing that offers no viable options for specific improvements. Prosecutions are pursued where possible but they require eye witness evidence and vehicle licence plate numbers. Elsewhere in the country CCTV has been employed but this does not appear to be a viable or economic option in our area. The best we can all do is remain constantly vigilant in the hope of collecting evidence and reporting any incidents. The Royal Borough have responded well to reported tipping and clearance has been prompt. To report fly tipping, contact RBWM Streetcare on 0500 885 055.

Flooding and 'wet spots'

Maintenance of ditches and watercourses is understandably a high priority for residents. It has become clear that not all residents are aware of their responsibility to keep clear ditches bordering their property. Most landowners, particularly those operating agricultural land, take this responsibility seriously. Others seem to ignore it and some are simply unaware. One of the most productive things we can achieve in the short term is to increase the level of awareness, and where this is obviously ignored, make arrangements to carry out the necessary work. This is already being pursued at one location.

In the course of investigating drainage, nine 'wet spots' have been identified where the underlying cause is beyond what can be remedied by simple clearing. At two locations, remedies are already being pursued. A remedy for the third area is proposed as a short term project, and solutions or improvements for the remaining six will be negotiated for the longer term. A detailed report on all of these can be found on the Environment page at www.ogafcap.co.uk or supplied as hard copy on request.

Hedgerows and Wildlife

The maintenance of trees and hedgerows is once again the responsibility of the landowner. There are no specific proposals in this Community Action Plan beyond the recognition that there are some places where maintenance leaves something to be desired, particularly relating to some roadside hedges or those along footways. This is a matter for ongoing monitoring, bringing specific problems to the attention of the relevant landowners, and arranging for work to be carried out if cooperation is not forthcoming.

Footpaths

Maintenance and clearance of footpaths has been found to be generally satisfactory. Responsibility for footpath maintenance on the whole lies with landowners who generally fulfill the requirement admirably as long as they are made aware of problems. Clearance is obviously most in need during summer and we are not aware of any routes where this has not been done. RBWM also carry out clearance where necessary and currently have a project in progress to replace stiles with kissing gates. This is a matter for ongoing monitoring rather than specific proposals and we rely on residents to report problems.

An audit of wildlife habitats, flowers and shrubs and seating in open areas, and litter bins has not shown any obvious shortcomings, missed opportunities, or gaps in provided facilities. We have called for suggestions from residents where they feel there are possibilities for improvement, but none have been forthcoming. Once again there are therefore no specific proposals for the Community Action Plan and these should remain a matter for ongoing monitoring. The Royal Borough has a schedule for street cleaning which appears to have been adhered to within reasonable flexible limits. Specific requests will be made if this does not continue to be the case.

The Environment Work Group has set out four actions, which if followed should help alleviate some of the environmental issues affecting our community.

ACTION

Pursue the upgrade of some footpaths to bridleway-cycle tracks and rationalise others

- Consultation with landowners, Ramblers Association and RBWM
- Upgrade paths 52 and 54
- Upgrade path 59
- Dialogue with Crown Estate about access to Windsor Great Park

Responsibility

Environment Work Group with RBWM

Funding

RBWM

Timing

2010 then ongoing

ACTION

Continue to work towards remedies to reduce flood risk at nine identified wet spots

- Consultation with landowners and Streetcare
- Monitor two immediate locations and carry out volunteer work on one if needed
- Pursue one short term project
- Pursue six long term projects

Responsibility

Environment Work Group with RBWM Streetcare

Funding

RBWM

Timing

2010 then ongoing

ACTION

Increase residents' awareness of responsibility to maintain ditches and hedges

- Newsletter and website content
- Monitor condition of ditches and hedges
- Individual contact where necessary
- Encourage RBWM to use their powers
- Arrange work if needed

Responsibility

Environment Work Group Residents

Funding

Self funding and sponsorship

Timing

Ongoing

ACTION

Continue litter clearance project and ongoing monitoring of footpaths

- Expand adoption of routes by volunteers
- Monitor footpath maintenance
- Arrange works if needed

Responsibility

Environment Work Group RBWM Residents

Funding

None required

Timing

Ongoing

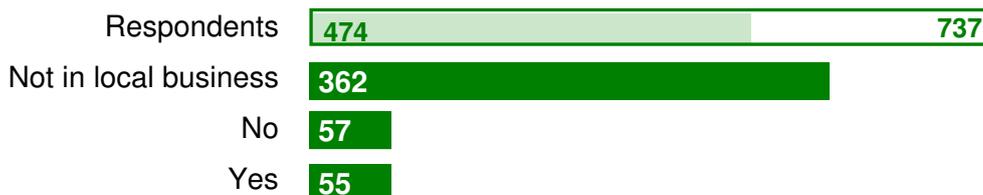
Local Business

VISION

Assist local businesses to improve their working environment, promote their services and become integrated in our community

There was just one question in the Residents Survey which specifically related to local business.

If you are involved in a local business, would you be interested in paying for advertising space in a community publication?



This revealed that there were a significant number of businesses operating in our area, so in early January 2009, a new work group called Local Business was formed.

Initial research was carried out and more than 70 local businesses were identified as operating within the Oakley Green, Fifield and District area - ranging from sole traders to organisations employing more than 100 people. Of these, many are owned by locals, whilst others employ local residents and thus form an integral part of the community. The industries range from agricultural, equestrian to catering, manufacturing, leisure and distribution.

In the Summer of 2009, a Local Business Survey with 18 questions was compiled and distributed, in order to start communication with this significant group. We asked business owners about why they chose to locate in our area and asked them to describe issues and problems they face, as well as their ideas on how these could be resolved or improved.

Some themes emerged which also came out in the Residents Survey – namely issues about public transport, police presence, traffic and poor broadband coverage in some areas.

The full results are published in a separate document and are also available on the Local Business page on the website at www.ogafcap.co.uk

Based on the feedback, the Local Business Work Group recommend three actions.



ACTION**Support the development of a Local Business Network**

- Form a group of local business people who want to promote their services, and discuss and resolve issues of mutual interest

Responsibility

Local Business Work Group
Local business people

Funding

Self financing

Timing

December 2009
then ongoing

ACTION**Involve local businesses within our community**

- Offer advertising in the newsletter and on the website
- Investigate sponsorship possibilities

Responsibility

Local Business Work Group

Funding

Self financing

Timing

December 2009
then ongoing

ACTION**Act on issues arising from the Local Business Survey**

- Collate results of the Local Business Survey
- Publish results
- Draw up action plan based on results

Responsibility

Local Business Work Group

Funding

Self financing

Timing

December 2009
then ongoing

Roads & Transport

VISION

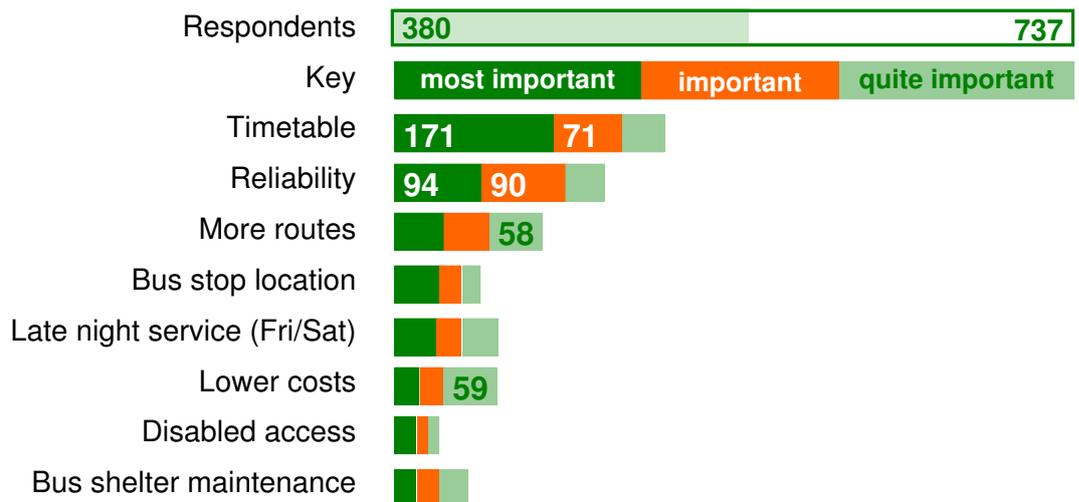
Provide a safer environment for all road users while maintaining our rural surroundings

The results of the survey overwhelmingly indicated a number of areas of significant concern to the residents of Oakley Green, Fifield and District:

- Need for a more frequent, reliable bus service and additional routes
- Need for new lower speed limits on all roads and better traffic speed regulation
- Enforcement of weight restrictions in Fifield village to reduce the number of HGVs
- Lack of footways (pavements in rural areas) and poor, or no, street lighting

Local bus service

Would you use local buses if there were improvements in the following?

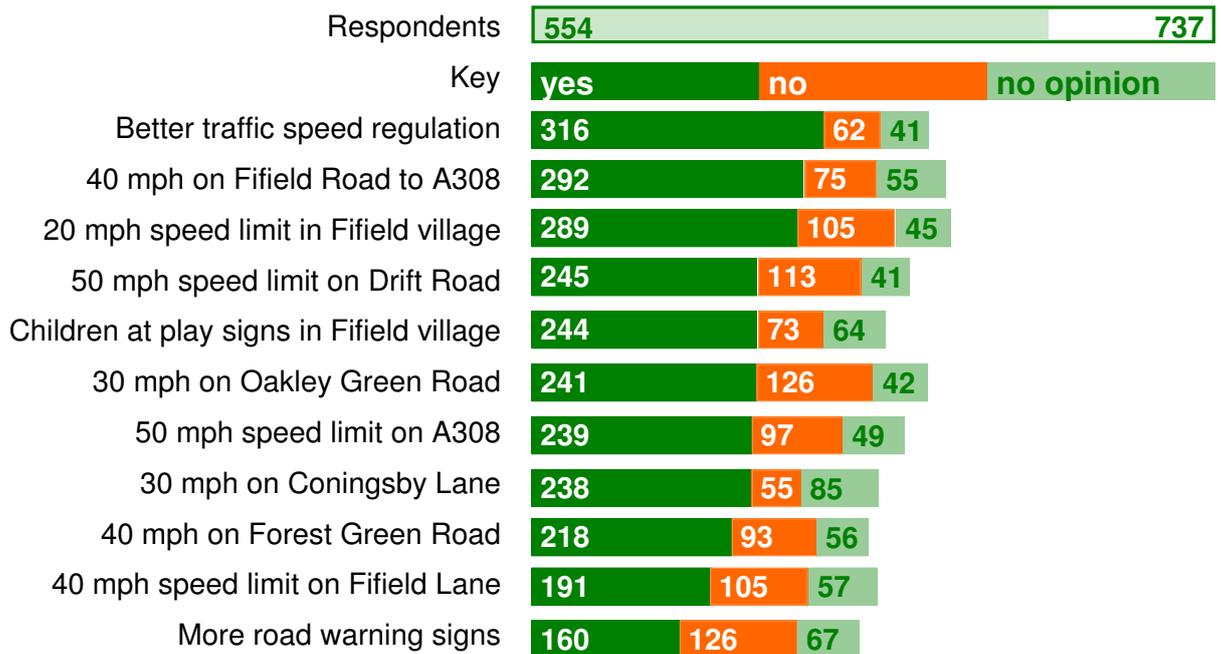


The majority of our residents do not use the bus service, preferring to travel by car. However, the results of the survey indicate that nearly 64 percent of us would use the bus service if there was a more frequent service and services later at night. There is no service after 7pm to, or from, Windsor or Maidenhead. There is no longer a Sunday service and no bus stop on the Forest Green Road between Fifield and Holyport. The fact that there is no service at all on the A308 is also of concern.

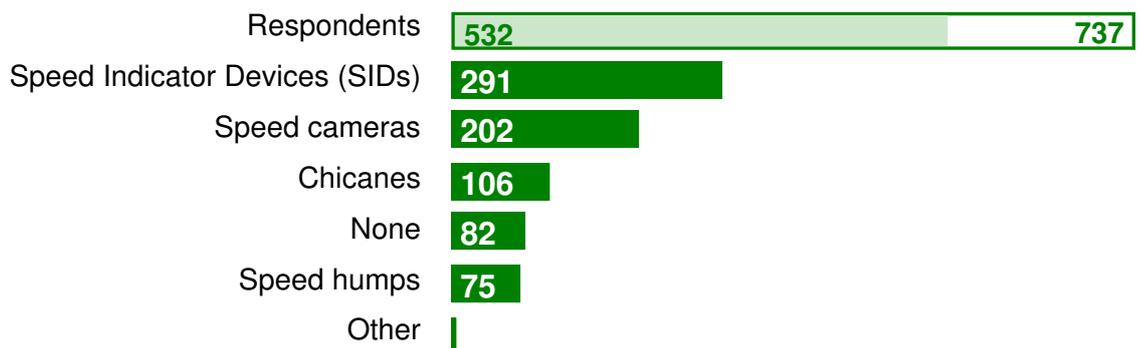
Traffic speed

The survey revealed that residents feel in danger from speeding traffic throughout the area and from HGVs in Fifield Village and there is widespread support for reduced speed limits throughout the Oakley Green, Fifield and District area. The RBWM have agreed to fund a Community Speed Watch Pack, which is to be made available to all the police NAGs (Neighbourhood Action Groups) within the Royal Borough. The scheme enables volunteers to work within their community to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding and to help control the problem. Drivers caught speeding will not be prosecuted but will receive a letter from the local police, which will help to underline the community's commitment to reducing speed. Members of the Roads & Transport Work Group will be volunteering to 'man' the operation locally.

Would you support the following traffic measures in the Oakley Green and Fifield area?



What type of traffic/speed regulation would you like to see in force?



We need to be mindful of the fact that before deciding to change an existing speed limit the RBWM must consider all the relevant factors such as:

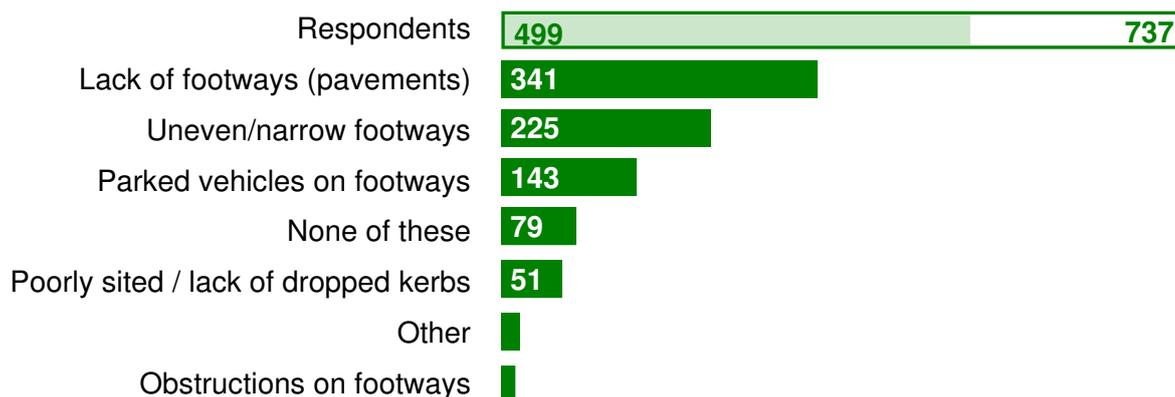
- Expected accident savings.
- Likely improvement to the environment.
- Likely improvement in amenities.
- Likelihood of limit being respected by motorists.
- Costs of implementation.
- Enforcement implications for Police

If it is considered that a change in the speed limit is warranted, then a new Speed Limit Order has to be made. This involves a statutory legal process that can take up to seven months to complete.

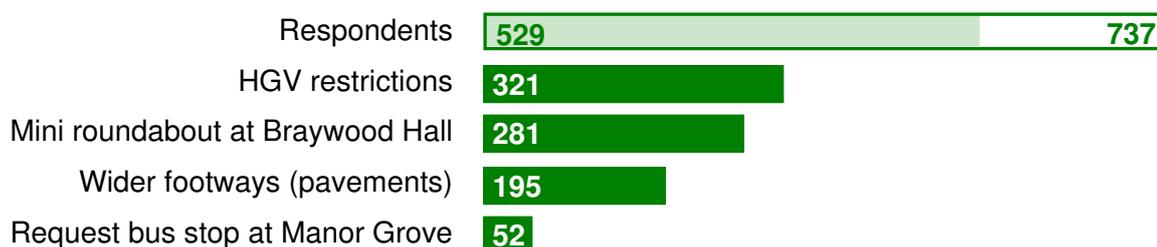
It is also felt that we need more stringent traffic calming measures, however, concern has been expressed about certain methods of traffic calming; SIDs and speed cameras being far more popular than speed humps.

The challenge of how to slow down traffic without a detrimental impact on the look of the area has yet to be resolved.

Do you encounter any difficulties with any of the following in Oakley Green and Fifield?



Would you like to see any of the following in Oakley Green and Fifield?



Footways

The development of more footways (pavements) was supported by a large number of residents as a means by which pedestrians could use our roads more safely. There are various stretches of road where residents are forced to walk along as there are no footways. These are extremely dangerous, particularly at night, where there is no street lighting, and even more so where the speed limit is between 40 and 60 mph. Concern has been expressed in respect of the following areas:

- The bend on Fifield Road, from the new houses (on the old site of the Hare and Hounds Public House) down to Longlea Nursing Home.
- Fifield Road from Longlea Nursing Home down to the A308
- Forest Green Road from Ledger Lane to Forest View Cottages and beyond.
- Oakley Green Road on the bend between Kimbers Farm and Forest Farm
- Oakley Green Road from the junction with the Dedworth Road, north to the A308.

Building footways is not straightforward as there are considerable practical problems in places where the road is narrow and extensive feasibility work needs to be carried out. We also need to ensure that any work carried out is done with care and sensitivity in order to maintain the rural appearance.

Braywood School Travel Plan

Although the majority of parents with children at Braywood School do not live in Oakley Green or Fifield, the problem of parked cars at the school affects us all. We support the efforts being made by all concerned. However, it appears that no single idea will solve the problem and the solution probably lies in a combination of better behaviour by parents, revised processes and some capital expenditure. The idea of removing cars from Oakley Green Road completely during school drop off and pick up times is gathering support but is not universally welcomed; especially from residents who live opposite the school. A meeting was held to discuss the travel plan and was attended by parents, residents, police and representatives from the Community Action Plan, Residents Association and RBWM staff.

In conclusion, the Roads & Transport Work Group have outlined three actions to help improve road safety in our community.

ACTION**Establish a more frequent and wide spread bus service**

- Meet with RBWM officers and the local bus service provider to discuss feasibility plan
- Investigate sources for funding

Responsibility

Roads & Transport Work Group
RBWM
Courtney Coaches

Funding

Rural Transport Grant

Timing

Within one year

ACTION**Imposition of reduced speed limits and reduction of HGVs**

- Continue to monitor and record accidents
- Become involved in RBWM Speed Watch system
- Meet with RBWM to discuss extension of speed restrictions in our community
- Monitor and report HGV movement in Fifield

Responsibility

Roads & Transport Work Group
RBWM
Highways Authority
Thames Valley Police
Bray Parish Council

Funding

RBWM

Timing

Next three years

ACTION**Provide additional footways where required**

- Produce map to show existing footways, density of houses, existing speed restrictions and key locations
- Consult with Highways Authority to establish procedures
- Consult further with residents

Responsibility

Road & Transport Work Group
Bray Parish Council
Highways Authority
RBWM
Thames Valley Police

Funding

Bray Parish Council
RBWM

Timing

Next three years

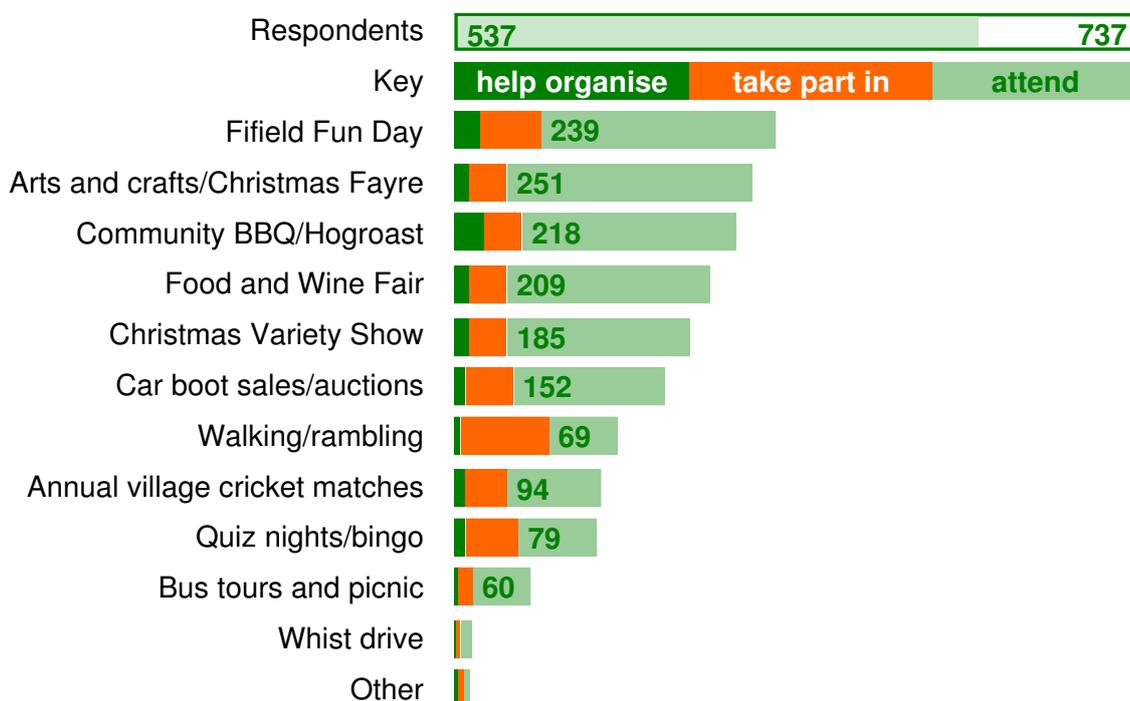
Social & Recreational

VISION

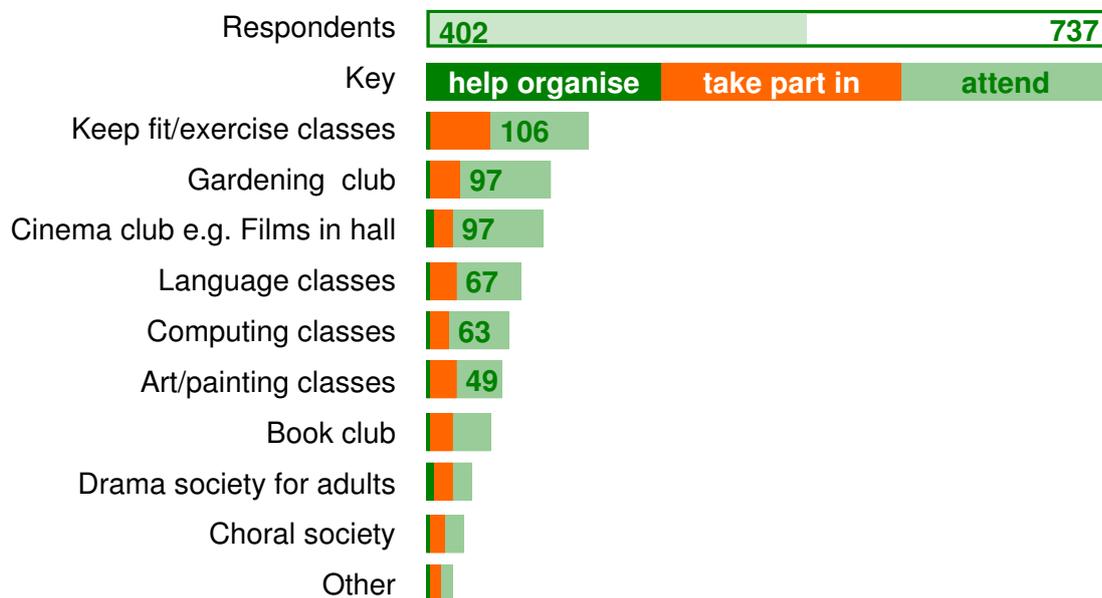
Promote a wide range of activities within our community and enhance community spirit

There are already a number of social and recreational events that take place our area; in Braywood Memorial Hall, Braywood First School Hall, Braywood Cricket Club, at Bray Lakes, the Phoenix Gym and in and around local hostelrys. We are also lucky to have about thirteen miles of public footpaths and three miles of bridleways. The survey asked residents about the social and recreational activities they enjoyed taking part in and here are the results:

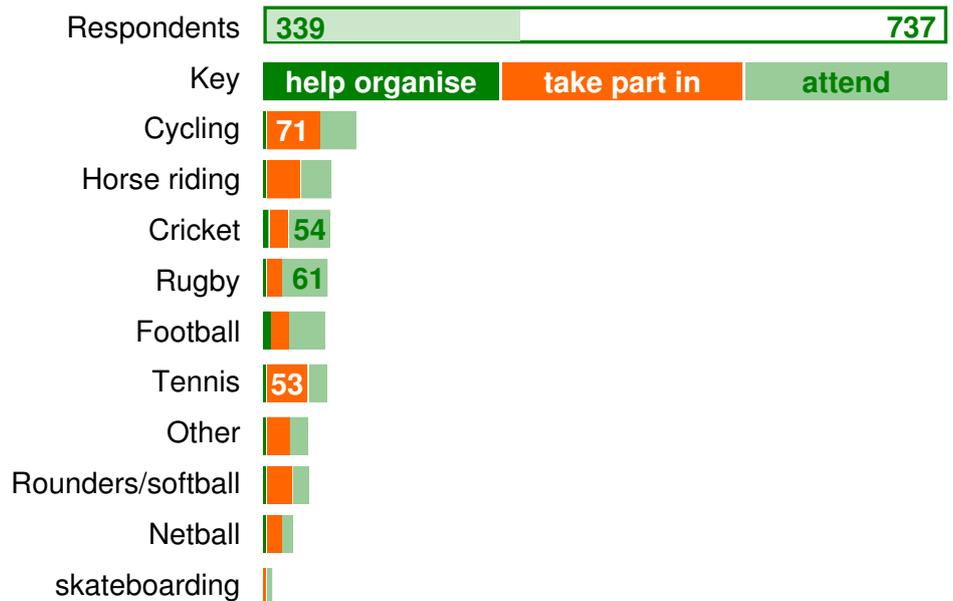
Which of the following village events do you/would you help organise/take part in/attend?



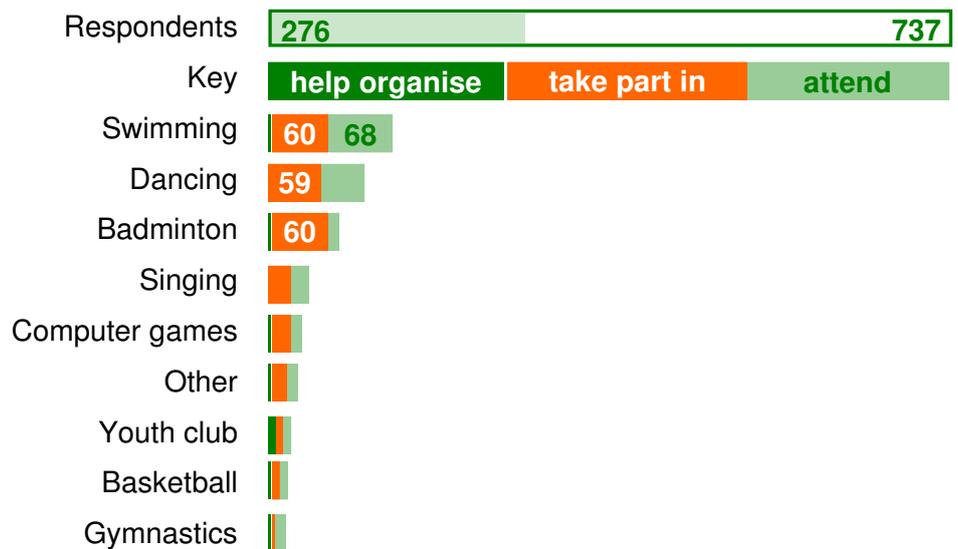
Which of the following clubs/activities do you/would you help organise/take part in/attend?



Which of the following sports activities do you/would you help organise/take part in/attend?



Which of the following sports activities do you/would you help organise/take part in/attend?



Do you feel unable to take part in community events and/or sports activities due to transport difficulties?

Ninety-five percent of residents who answered this question said 'no' and only twenty-five residents said 'yes' which is good news. But we should still be aware that we need to keep the important group of twenty-five in mind when organising events.

Do you think there should be more open spaces for local people to meet, walk, sit, picnic and for local children to play?

Of the 552 residents who answered this question, 355 (64.3 percent) said 'yes', only 71 said 'no' and 126 had 'no opinion'. Since the survey, Bray Parish Council has taken over and created a small open public space in Fifield. There is more work to do to respond to this need and efforts should be coordinated with those identified in the Children & Youths section of the plan.

At the moment there are very few open spaces for use by the community, apart from our footpaths and bridleways (covered under the Environment section).

So overall, it is apparent from the above responses that there is a healthy appetite for growing the number and breadth of social and recreational activities in our community. The Fifield Fun Day is well established as an annual event and is very popular. Some sport and activity clubs exist locally, but there are opportunities to start more given the volume of apparent demand. It is hoped that now the need for further activities and sports have been identified and quantified, volunteers will come forward and organise them.

The Social & Recreational Work Group has already met some of these demands and:

- Organised an 'ice breaker' community event in the form of a Horse Racing Evening in July 2008
- Contacted local clubs and activity organisers and published their information and contact details on the website and promoted them in the newsletter
- Developed a programme of events for 2009 in response to the popularity shown in the survey. A Food and Wine Fair was held in May and a Hogroast in October.
- Also Bill Collier has developed a 'landshare' scheme, where residents with land allow others to cultivate it, perhaps in return for a percentage of the crop. This is an excellent idea given the shortage of local allotments and the recent surge in interest in home grown produce.



In order to promote and maintain community spirit and respond to the views in the Residents Survey, the Social & Recreational Work Group recommends the following two actions:

ACTION

Create open spaces for residents to meet and for children to play

- Support the Children & Youths Work Group
- Approach local landowners
- Research costs and funding

Responsibility

Social & Recreational Work Group
Children & Youths Work Group
Residents

Funding

RBWM
Bray Parish Council
Lottery Grant

Timing

Initially by Spring 2011
then ongoing to 2014

ACTION

Advertise and promote social and recreational activities in our community

- Use the newsletter and website
- Keep information up to date

Responsibility

Event, club and activity organisers
Newsletter editorial team
Webmaster

Funding

Self funding
Through advertising

Timing

Ongoing from 2009



Freeform Questions

VISION

Provide an opportunity for residents to have their say about areas not covered by specific survey questions

The surveys provided a number of opportunities for respondents to make their views known in areas not specifically covered by the other questions.

What is the one thing that you would like to see maintained in our community?

Two hundred and seven or about 70 percent of households responded to this question and there were 304 individual responses. The ten most popular areas which residents would like to be maintained were footpaths and pavements (footways) (45), our rural community (42), traffic speed control (35), maintaining the Greenbelt (32), ditches (25), hedges (18), drainage (18), road surfaces (18), street lighting (11) and bridleways (11).

What is the one thing that you would like to see improved in our community?

Two hundred and sixteen households responded to this question and there were 396 individual responses. The top ten improvements that residents would like to see are in traffic and speed control (88), footpaths and pavements (footways) (65), a new play area (18), and improvements to public transport (14), street lighting (13), cycle paths (12), ditches (11), road surfaces (11), parking outside Braywood School (11) and broadband (10).

If you would like to expand on any answer given above, please give brief details here.

One hundred and fifty-seven households responded to this question and the most common comments were about traffic speed (51), pavements (footways) and footpaths (29), aircraft noise (24), hobbies and activities (10), parking outside Braywood School (9) and street lighting (9).

In Summary - There is a high degree of commonality between the responses to these three open ended questions and this has been factored into the actions recommended in other parts of the plan.

Two further general questions posed to residents were:

Do you suffer from any of the following types of disturbances?

Seventy percent of residents over the age of 11 answered this question and nearly half agreed that traffic noise was the main disturbance within our community. Fortunately more than sixty-one percent of the 522 respondents did not have a problem with noisy neighbours and most were not affected by nasty smells or light pollution.

If suggestions raised by the survey require money for implementation, where should that money come from?

Sixty-five percent of residents (481) answered this question on funding. Fifty-six percent of respondents indicated that money should come from fundraising, 42 percent suggested sponsorship and thirty-seven percent funding through moderate council tax increases.

What Next?

VISION

To put in place an organisation and processes to deliver the actions identified in the Community Action Plan

A huge amount of time, energy and effort has gone into consulting with local residents and businesses and developing and publishing our Community Action Plan. Some Quick Wins have been identified and some have been delivered already. But... most of the time and effort expended will be to no avail if we do not identify who is responsible for making sure the plan is implemented. Looking further into the future, the plan will need to be reviewed and updated as circumstances and needs change over time.

It is therefore essential that organisations and processes are put in place to make sure the plan is delivered, monitored and reviewed at an appropriate time. In order to underpin this, the following actions are recommended.

ACTION

Maintain existing work group structure to focus on the seven areas of interest already identified

- Encourage existing work group members to continue to serve in order to maintain continuity
- Encourage new volunteers to join these groups
- Each work group to prepare regular progress reports

Responsibility

Residents and local businesses

Funding

Self funding

Timing

Ongoing from publication of plan

ACTION

Establish a Community Association to oversee implementation of the Community Action Plan

- Involve work groups and representatives from other important local bodies
- Form a properly constituted association with elected officers which is accepted as legitimately representing the community

Responsibility

Residents and local businesses

Funding

Self funding

Timing

By the end of 2009

ACTION

Ensure the Association continues to address the views and aspirations of the community

- Over time, issues and concerns of residents and businesses may change
- Conduct additional resident and local business surveys after an appropriate amount of time

Responsibility

Community Association

Funding

Grants

Timing

Autumn 2014

Work Group Volunteers

Children & Youths	Alison Brayshaw, Robin Howard *, Cait Kidd, the Leahy family, Phillipa Wilson.
Communications	Paul Bennett, Colin Billington, Eileen Crotty, Chris Knight, Trudi Knight *, Robin Knock, Rod Lord, Nicola Stone, Michael Wadley.
Community Safety	Paul Bennett, Bill Collier *, Paula Grevett, Philip Mortimer.
Environment	Susie Armitage, Shirley Chamberlain, Susan Fielding, Barbara Frame *, Rita Haynes, Susan Holliday, Rod Lord, Val Lord, Philip Mortimer, Michelle Stevens.
Local Business	Bill Collier, Paula Grevett *, Philip Mortimer.
Research	Anne Taylor, David Taylor.
Roads & Transport	Rod Ball, Barbara Frame, Susan Fielding, Susan Holliday, Michael Seagrief, Louise Shenston * .
Social & Recreational	Grenville Annetts *, Mark Armitage, Irene Bulbeck, David Embery, Doreen Embery, Robin Howard , Louise Shenston.
Other volunteers	Sandra Annetts, Helen Billington, Patricia Cuss, Dick Dean, Helen Howard, Frances Knock, Brian Steer, Gaynor Steer.

* Spokespersons for each work group

Acknowledgements

Funded by Bray Parish Council

Advice from Tim Palmer and Tessa Hall - Community Council for Berkshire

Parish of Bray Map on Residents Survey - by kind permission of John Woodcock

Survey and Data Analysis Software - University of Gloucester

Printing of three newsletters kindly sponsored by Uxbridge Press and Floatdene Ltd.

Local History - Ian Blackburn and Luke Over

Photographs by kind permission of Alison Brayshaw, Irene Bulbeck, Barbara Frame,

Nicola Stone, Andy James and Rod Lord

Designed and edited by Trudi Knight

Printed on FSC certified paper harvested from sustainable forests by Print Direct Ltd. Maidenhead



“ safe and friendly rural environment ”

