

Ref: 10-24/190516

Whatlington Parish Plan 2015 Survey Results

Report by Councillor R Fisher

NB - unless otherwise specified, figures in brackets represent results of the 2010 survey . Other statistics quoted are derived from the East Sussex in figures website(ESIF) .Comments have, generally, not been included where less than 3 respondents had made a similar observation.

1. Introduction

- a) Whatlington Parish Council is the 4th smallest of 32 Parishes in Rother, with a population representing. 0.5% of its total. This is the second survey to be undertaken, the first being in 2010.
- b) As a result of the first survey, the council was able to identify a number of issues that parishioners had concerns about and these helped to direct the Councils' activities and policies whilst providing guidance to District and County Councils on the concerns of Whatlington residents. It is the intention of this second survey to build upon these outcomes for the continuing and future benefit of parishioners.

2. Response

There were 32 (25) returns made out of a possible 133. Of these one was a letter and another was largely incomplete, giving a usable return rate of 23%. The comments included in the letter have been “recognised” in the analysis of comments but not included in the statistical elements.

3. Household Information

- a) The demographic of the Parish has changed over the last 5 years. It is now predominately populated with those over 65 at 46%(21) and those of school or working age being 52%(75) with a drop in preschool children at 2%(4). For Rother District and Nationally the figure for those over 65 is 28% and 18% respectively. The response represented 18% of all Parish residents (based on 2011 population statistics)

3. Household information continued

- b) The average household size (from survey returns) is 2.4 persons in Whatlington, whereas ESIF shows an average 2.2 for Rother as a whole.
- c) It is of note that ESIF indicated (for 2011) that the Parish had 18% of the population over 65, but that a cohort of some 40% was in the age range of 45-64. This would appear to have coalesced into the current demographic breakdown rather than the survey having a particular bias of older respondents.

4. Transport

The number of residents using public transport was 48% (36) - possibly a further indication of the changing Parish demographic. Of these 25%(25) experienced problems. (For the sake of clarity this mean 25% of the 48% responding as using transport) and commented that greater frequency of services and improved connectivity (to other bus and train services and facilities such as hospital/doctors) would resolve problems currently being experienced.

5. Road Safety

- a) A significant proportion of respondents agreed that speeding was an issue throughout all roads in the Parish with 86% (86) believing this to be an issue with comments being particularly about the A21 as well as its junction with the C293 and the C293 itself. A further 10% cited speeding problems in Riccard and Stream Lane as well as issues with the bridge narrowing at the Village Hall.
- b) Generally, the majority of residents 66% (68) did not see an issue with parking. Of those who did, parking at the Church, was identified as being an area of difficulty.
- c) Of those identifying speeding, 45% (21) voted for speed cameras with a further 25%(4) selecting more speed signage, specifically on the A21.

6. Walking

The support for more footpaths in the Parish was 66%(43) with the A21 being cited as the main area requiring this facility (cited by 80%of respondents) followed by C293 to Ricards Lane(cited by 30% of respondents). Comments by 20% were concerned with poor or overgrown signposting of existing footpaths.

7. Health

There was significant support for local health services with 93%(100) considering the service provide what was required.Of the dissenters, issues regarding transport and more proactive health advice were mentioned.

8. Housing There has been movement in Parishioner views in that 38% (11) thought there was a need for more houses in the Parish. Of these 39% looked for houses for sale and 44% Housing Association properties. But 62%(89) did not see any need for further housing in the Parish.

9. Public Safety

There has been little change in views on PCSOs in the village with 48%(43) being aware of their presence. With 52%(54) believing there to be sufficient policing in the area and 48%(71) saying insufficient visibility was an issue. Additionally 20% of all respondents expressed concerns about vandalism (Village Hall and Church) and burglary.

10. Environment

The majority of respondents ,62%(39), considered the Village to be tidy. For the remainder, litter and verge damage were cited as causes for concern with litter at 72%(32) on the A21, Riccards and Stream Lane (fly tipping).

11. Services

- a) There was significant support for Village activity
 - * 76%(75) Support for local business:
 - * 83%(93) attended a village event
 - * 90%(93) would support or use a community shop
 - * 76%(68) were satisfied with their utility suppliers.

- b) Additional services sought were faster broadband - in addition to a community shop.

12) General

- a) There was widespread support for the communications of the Council at 90% (90), with 59% supporting greater use of digital technology and 13 respondents providing email addresses(These being provided, separately to the Parish Clerk for the Parish Records).

- b) Overall satisfaction with the performance of the Parish council was (gratifyingly) 100%(90).

- c) Final comments were overwhelmingly about the value of the Village newsletter with request that it be issued more often.

13. Conclusion

Councillors are invited to note the results of this survey and to:-

- i) Determine if the reported survey outcomes require any changes to existing Council policies

And

- ii) Identify any targeted actions that Councillors would wish to see delivered during the current Councils' tenure.