Herongate & Ingrave Village Appraisal

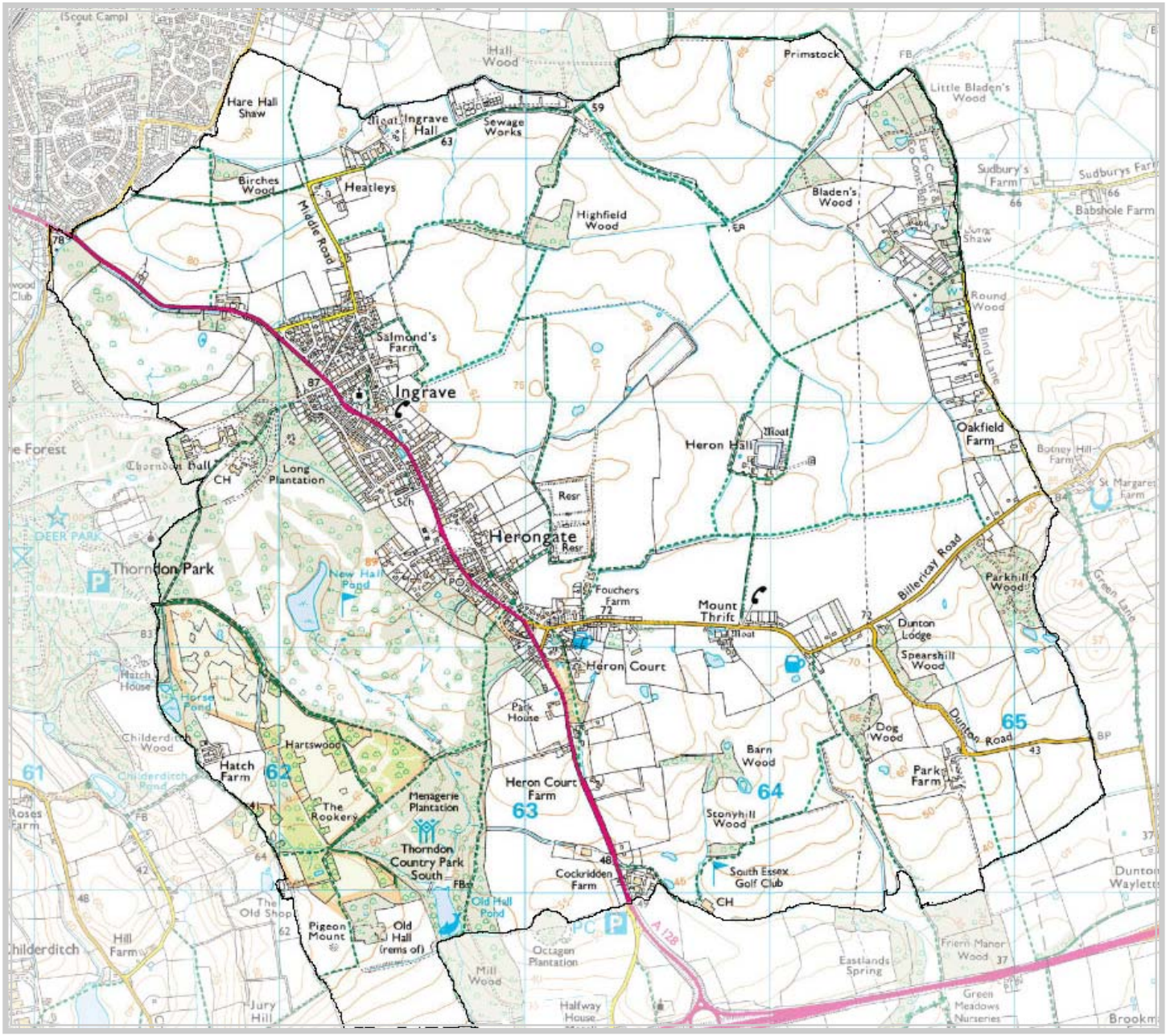


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Incorporating an introduction to the Parish Plan

Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION Bringing you up to date	5
HOUSEHOLD SECTION	6
THE COMMUNITY Local Government Information and Library Services	6
THE ENVIRONMENT What is important about living here? Local Landscape Features Footpaths & Bridleways Litter & Dog Fouling Greens, Park, and Common Land Pavements	8
PLANNING The Future of the two villages Herongate Village Hall and Museum	9
ROAD SAFETY Changes to speed limits Measures to improve safety	10
TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT The Bus Service, The School Bus Service Trains Service	11
TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT Use of Public Transport Cars & Parking Social Car Scheme & Car Sharing	12
LOCAL SERVICES Sheltered Housing & Community Clinic First Response Team	13
LAW and ORDER & PUBLIC SERVICES Police Coverage Ambulance Service, Hospital Transport, Fire Service Places where you feel unsafe Neighbourhood Watch	14
BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT Where we work and what we do Barriers to taking up employment Businesses within the parish	15
LEISURE Facilities available The activities, clubs, and facilities you would like	16
LEISURE Facilities for the disabled Play Provision & Cycle Paths	17
OUR PARISH	18
POINTS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION	20
THE NEXT STEPS	21
APPENDICES	22
TRAFFIC and TRANSPORT Getting to Medical Facilities Bus Service improvements How we get to work	23
MAIN LINE RAIL SERVICES	24
VILLAGE BUS SERVICES	25
BUSINESS and EMPLOYMENT	26

Summary

This report concludes the Village Appraisal which has given us the information needed to begin work on an action plan for the Parish Plan. The process has been led by the Village Appraisal Committee in conjunction with the Parish Council and with the help and support of local volunteers and the Rural Community Council of Essex. We would like to thank everyone who has played a part in its production, you are too many to list here!

Our aim will be to produce a plan that considers the opinions of residents. We will do this by hosting public consultations, liaising with the Parish Council and assisting the formation of sub-committees of interested parties who are keen to become involved. In time and with cooperation we aim to make the parish an even better place to live.

The Parish Plan will give an outline of issues which have been raised by the Village Appraisal stating what actions need to be taken and their aim, how the action will be delivered, their priority, who will be responsible in delivering the action and who the participants in each project will be. Finally it will list the resources required.

How you can get involved, the steps towards a Parish Plan

The issues arising from the Village Appraisal are to be discussed at public consultation meetings. For the dates of these please see the flyer enclosed with this document. Additional consultations may be held in the future so please watch out for further information on local notice boards, in the Brentwood Gazette and in 'The Link'.

We hope that you will be inspired to use this opportunity to get involved in issues that are important to you and to give you a taste of what the Parish Plan will be about we have listed on page 20 the main topics that we anticipate will be under discussion. Please let us know your views and what we have forgotten! You can do this at a public consultation or if you cannot attend one of these then you can contact us via Herongate Village Stores who have kindly offered to act as a drop off point for correspondence between residents and the committee.

Although preparing the Village Appraisal has been more work than we expected we have enjoyed working together to produce it. We would be delighted if you would join us in the next stage.



"86% of us stated that the geographic position of the villages is the most important factor in why we choose to live here. This was followed by the environment with 85% and the community was stated to be important by 62% of us"

Introduction

It seems a very long time since we asked you to complete the Village Appraisal questionnaire. Some two years have passed during which time we have been working on the analysis and beginning the next phase which will be the implementation of a Parish Plan.

When we started out we didn't know that the Village Appraisal would lead into creating a Parish Plan, therefore the work isn't over yet and we very much hope that you will be interested in becoming involved from now on.

Thanks is owed to the committee for the many hours of work they have already put into the project. Also to our helpers and supporters all of whom have given their time voluntarily. Most of us didn't realise what a huge job we had taken on!

We had an excellent response to our Questionnaire, 531 were returned and these were completed by 1,327 residents. Therefore 71% of households responded which is the highest in Essex, where the norm is nearer to 35%. Thank you so much for your time and effort.

This document takes a detailed look at the answers given by those residents who responded. It will enable us to prepare the Parish Plan and the actions to be taken. To do this we would therefore very much appreciate your views and help in putting the plan into action. Although we know that the vast majority of residents are very happy living here there is much to do to make the parish an even better place in which to live.

The Appraisal is not a government led survey similar to a census, rather it has been led by a group of local volunteers backed by the Rural Community Council of Essex which is concerned with the preservation of rural life and ensuring that the future planning for our community is sympathetic to the needs and wishes of residents.

We have been helped and supported by the Parish Council (PC) with two of our local councillors taking a very active part on the Appraisal committee. The process has been funded as follows: Grant from our Parish Council £500, National Lottery Awards For All £3500 and from Rural Community Council of Essex £2500.

To produce the Village Appraisal it was necessary to collect demographic data in order to understand the nature of the two villages. This also provides a background against which the questions can be interpreted. All information has been treated as confidential and there is no link between the identity of individuals and their responses.

We included a Faith Questionnaire and a Business Survey with the Appraisal.

The Faith Questionnaire will be returned to our two churches for their own analysis. Information from the Business Survey will be used to support the Parish Plan.

The analysis of the Village Appraisal questionnaire follows. We have grouped the answers into sections to make it easier to follow. Raw data for each question and the written texts from the questionnaires is available in full on the Parish Council website:

http://www.herongateandingravepc.org.uk/

Bringing you up to date

Since we received the completed questionnaires a number of changes have taken place within the parish.

Herongate Village Hall is now closed due to its condition, it not being financially viable to make repairs and the fact that it suffers from a lack of use.

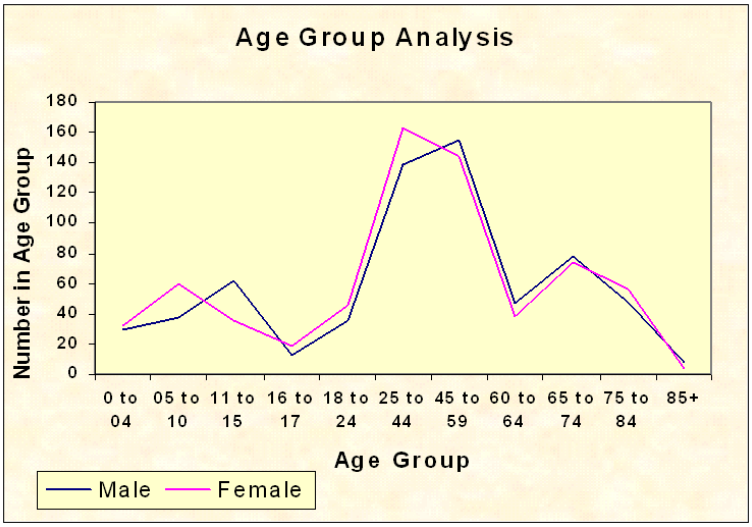
The Parish Council have managed to secure two new speed signs, located near the cricket green and at the entrance to Ingrave on the A128. The PC in conjunction with Neighbourhood Policing have also set up a Community Speed Watch with trained volunteers who regularly monitor the speed of traffic on our roads.

The Building of the Multi Use Games Area and the new play area is underway and negotiations have been started regarding the provision of cycle paths. The cricket club is hoping to rebuild their club house.

The possibility of the construction of a permanent site for travellers close to the parish boundary near All Saints church and the Half Way House has raised concerns for many locals.

Household Section

This part of the appraisal was answered by an adult member of the household.



The graph shows the distribution of peoples' ages within the villages. Approximately 65% of those who replied live in Ingrave and 35% in Herongate. This response corresponds closely to the numbers of homes in the two Villages. 54% of respondents said that their home is in a Neighbourhood Watch area.

531 households responded to the question about the number of private cars or vans. We found there is an average of 1.3 cars or vans for each household.

The sections of the report which follow were completed by all members of the household over the age of ten. Every individual was invited to express their personal opinion on each topic raised.

The Community

In this section we collected some basic information about village residents. The questionnaire was answered by an almost equal number of males and females.

We wanted to know how long people had lived in their homes. The graph suggests that on the whole people tend to stay once they move into the villages.

As we made the questionnaire delivery and collection we were surprised to find that some 10% of properties were empty at the time or were in the process of changing hands. We also learnt that movement either to downsize or to move to more spacious accommodation is popular within the villages.

Our next group of questions were about local government. We wanted to find out if you feel that our locally elected representatives on the Parish Council, Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council are aware of our concerns and feelings.

For this question we have given detailed data directly from the appraisal. Unsurprisingly our Parish Council comes out best, followed by Brentwood Borough Council with a high percentage of us feeling that Essex County Council is unaware of our feelings.

Parish Council

Fully aware 37%
Quite Aware 51%
Not Aware 8%
Unconcerned 3%
No Comment 1%

Brentwood Borough Council

Fully aware 8%
Quite Aware 59%
Not Aware 18%
Unconcerned 8%
No Comment 7%

Essex County Council

Fully aware 5%
Quite Aware 27%
Not Aware 29%
Unconcerned 29%
No Comment 10%

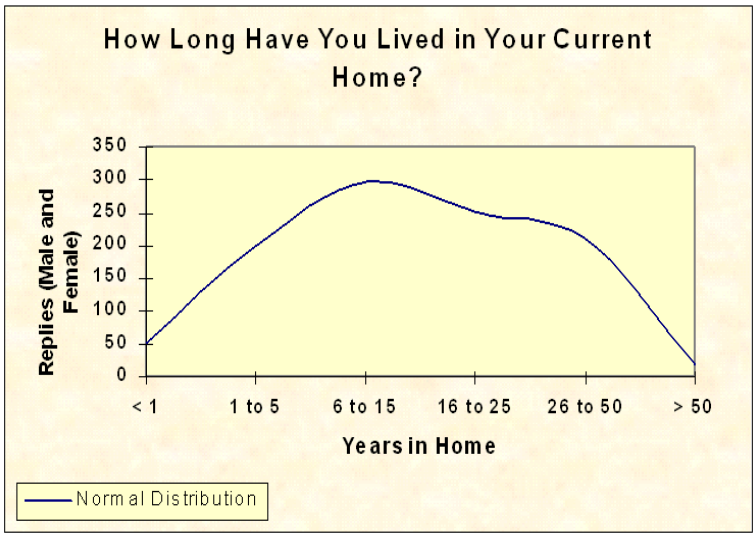
Only 15% of us have attended a Parish Council meeting with more than 50% of us not being aware of how our money is being spent. The following data shows how we feel about the way our money is spent by the Parish Council.

Very satisfied 5%
Quite satisfied 29%
Quite dissatisfied 9%
Very dissatisfied 4%
Don't know how it is spent 53%

We also wanted to know what you thought about the way in which the Parish Council publicises its decisions and activities.

14% of you thought they do this very well, 59% thought it is done reasonably well and 26% thought publicity is done badly by the Parish Council.

70% of the 634 people who responded would like more information about the activities of the Parish Council. For example, it was felt that planning

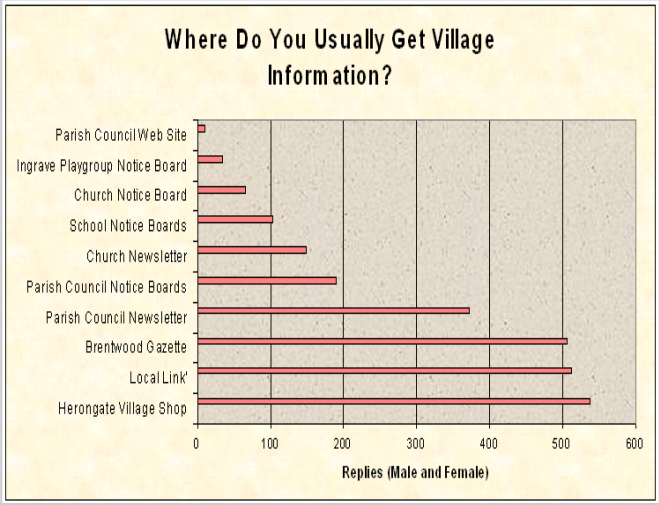


applications could be more widely publicised.

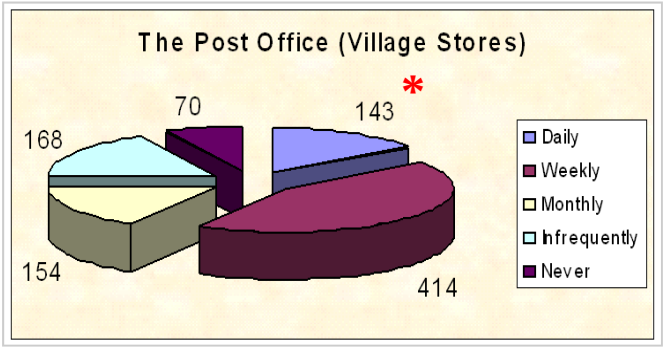
Communications are therefore important to us all and one of the ways in which the Parish Plan will aim to improve this is by looking at where Villagers currently get local information.

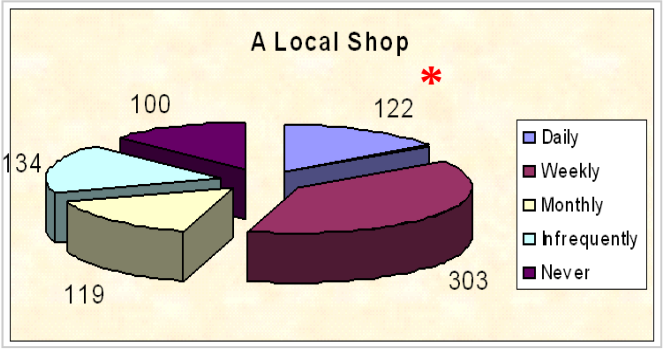
The graph below shows clearly that we have a preference for getting our information from the Herongate Village Stores, closely followed by the Village Link publication and the Brentwood Gazette.

The Appraisal showed the importance of Herongate Village Stores and Post Office.



The following two pie charts show how frequently we use our local facilities. Please read the charts clockwise, starting with the red asterisk.





We also asked about our use of the mobile library service which visits the village once a week. It is used by a small proportion of residents. Only 7% of us use it. Difficulties accessing this library service due to its time and location are an issue.



St. Nicholas Church
Erected 1734-1736



St. Andrews Methodist Church
Erected 1881



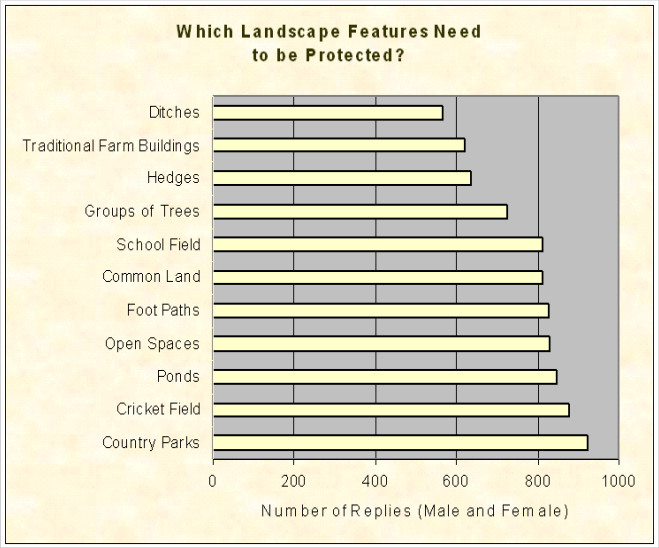
Herongate Village Stores and Post Office

The Environment

In this section of the Appraisal we asked what is most important to you about living in the villages. We also wanted to identify which features of the environment were a cause for concern.

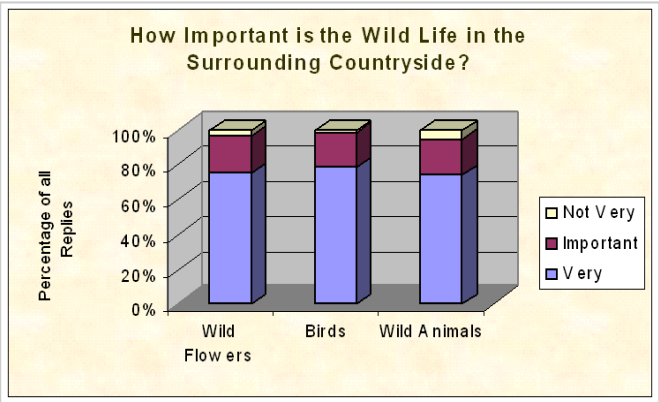
86% of us stated that the geographic position of the villages is the most important factor in why we choose to live here. This was followed by the environment with 85% and the community was stated to be important by 62% of us.

The vast majority of residents felt that we should be protecting our local landscape features; those deemed to be in most need of protection appear to correspond closely to those that are most used. Features that define the appearance of our local landscape such as ditches and hedges are felt to be less important but still have significant support.



Our Country Park scored the highest at 92% with the Cricket Field following at 89% and Ponds at 87%.

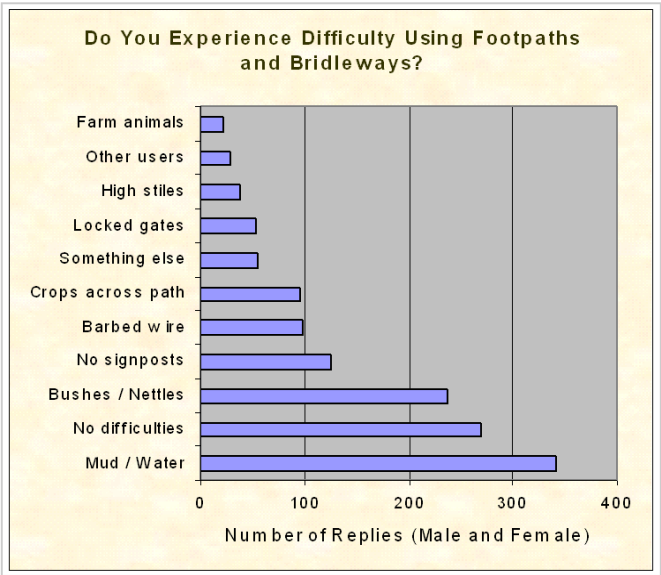
Living as closely as we do to the countryside, we are very conscious of the flora and fauna around us.



Only a tiny minority of respondents have little interest in the wildlife of our villages and this was reflected across the age range; including our consultations with the under-eleven age group, many of whom expressed a strong appreciation and concern for the open spaces we share.

When asked about the condition of footpaths and bridleways some 20% fewer people responded; possibly reflecting the fact that some residents are not fit enough to use local footpaths.

Mud, water and overgrowth were the main problems reported by those who had experienced difficulties. Happily a third of respondents did not have any trouble.



Many people were concerned about litter and dog mess around the villages. All our roads were mentioned as being subject to littering by passing traffic. Green areas in the villages, particularly the cricket ground and school playing field, were listed as being often badly affected by litter.

Button Common, Park Lane and the reservoir road, Cricketers Lane and most foot paths linking roads in our area were mentioned as being regularly fouled by dog mess. This is also a major concern of the under eleven age group, many of whom complained about dog mess and litter, the former especially on the school playing field and footpaths near the school.

Two thirds of respondents were generally satisfied with the number of litter and waste bins but the remaining third felt that some areas are poorly served. It was mentioned that a number of bins are not emptied often enough.

Locations listed as being poorly served with dog bins included: all of Herongate, Middle Road, Common Road and Priests Field. Many contributors mentioned the footpath behind St. Nicholas Church as an important site. The Park Lane and Thorndon Gate entrances to Thorndon Park were also mentioned in many comments.

The majority (62%) of us feel that the condition of pavements in the parish is reasonable, 12% feel that the pavements are good, however more than a quarter of you (27%) feel that they are in poor condition.

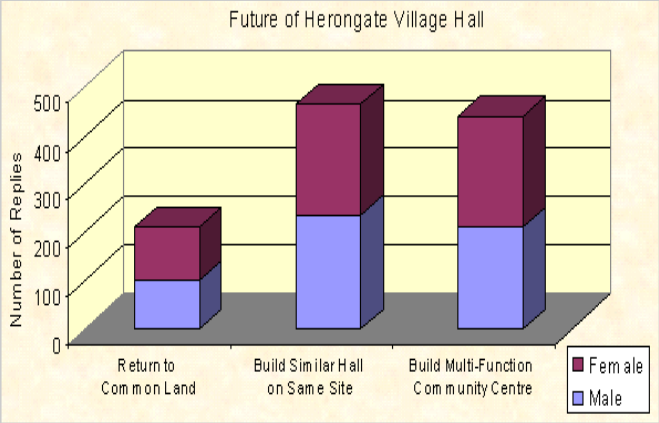
Planning

In this section we asked your views on the future of the villages. The majority (92%) feel that the villages cannot accommodate additional development and two thirds of respondents had concerns about the lack of publicity given to planning applications.

We have given detailed data, showing age and gender responses to this topic on the Parish Council Website. Your comments will give valuable evidence of local views when local planning matters are reviewed. The Parish Plan will take a more detailed look at the future of the villages.

At the time of preparing the Village Appraisal the question of the future of Herongate Village Hall was being considered. For this reason we asked your views, giving a number of possible options.

52% of you wanted the hall replaced with a similar hall on the same site, 43% wanted a replacement hall with a multi function community centre on an alternative site and 19% would choose to demolish the hall and return the site to common land.



The question generated 59 comments including concerns about the economic implications of any future plans, limited parking in the village hall area, potential noise nuisance generated by a hall and the proximity of the existing hall to the road.

Several people suggested making better use of other existing halls within the villages. We have included a selection of your comments.

'Relocate Village Hall further away from the road.'

'Rebuild Village Hall incorporating a farm shop, youth club and coffee shop.'

'Ingrave school has a hall large enough for functions.'

'Consider combining a new hall and museum.'

'Relocate the museum to the existing hall.'

'A new hall would attract more visitors making the parking problem worse and causing more disruption to our lives late at night.'

'Make use of Ingrave Hall (Church Hall).'

'We could use the money improving and expanding the hall in Ingrave and make this the community centre.'

'Voluntary work by residents could assist in making project economic.'

''New site' means church building. Build only on concrete footprint already existing, not on the field next to the school.'

'If the existing hall is replaced there is insufficient parking, if a new hall is built we are concerned about its location.'

'Why is it uneconomic to replace the existing hall? What are the costs involved?'

'We have four halls in the villages, i.e. School, St. Andrews, Football Club and St. Nicholas Church Hall. We do not need any more, these are not used to full potential.'

'Any new build should be in keeping with the village.'

Although we did not ask a question about the village museum, during the course of analysing the question about the future of Herongate Village Hall it became apparent that a substantial number of people did not know that there is a village museum.

The ongoing preservation of the resources held there, the need to continue to record our local history and greater publicity for the museum will form a part of the Parish Plan.



The Village Hall Herongate

Road Safety

This area of village life attracted many passionate responses especially in the comments sections where you expressed concern about safety, traffic and potential changes.

There was strong evidence supporting an extension of the 30mph speed limit from Ingrave to Running Waters (69%) and a reduction in the speed limit between Herongate and the A127 (78%).

We also gathered information about your support for speed control measures. 56% of us favour stricter enforcement of speed limits, 37% more road warning signs and 35% children at play signs. However a substantial number of you opposed further interference and change.

This was particularly evident from your comments: 72 people made comments about speed reduction, 45 of them objected to limits being reduced.

Reasons given for this include: rare pedestrian use on stretches of the A128 where changes were suggested and an increase in congestion caused by slow traffic. People also doubted that enforcement of lower speed limits would be possible.

There was more support for the idea of speed reductions or speed limits in the vicinity of the school and shop. A speed camera in Billericay Road was a popular suggestion.

As we entered the comments data we came to appreciate how many residents are concerned about particular road features, you listed specific areas of concern where you feel our roads are dangerous.

Many comments were repeated and in no particular order: road safety around Ingrave Johnstone School, the Thorndon Gate / Middle Road and St. Nicholas Grove junctions, Billericay Road, Cricketers Row / A128, difficulties for pedestrians especially crossings for children and the disabled to the Brentwood bound bus opposite the top of Middle Road.

All your responses and comments are valuable evidence for those who campaign for improved safety in our community and will be fully taken into account in the preparation of the Parish Plan. Each comment has been recorded and is available to view on the Parish Council website. See Page 5.

Your Comments:

'Vehicles speed around the bend entering Ingrave so it is difficult to drive safely in or out of Common Road or to cross to the opposite pavement. The path is narrow so the draft from fast lorries can knock small children off balance.'

'At the school where people park close to the crossing blocking everyone's view.'

'Children crossing from the Cricket Green to get to the bus stop.'

'Junction at Thorndon Gate / St. Nicholas Grove very dangerous especially for pedestrians.'

'I am concerned about walking my young children to school along Billericay Road due to dangerous speeding traffic.'

'Too many accidents on the bend towards Running Waters roundabout. We are concerned at the speed of traffic along the A128.'

'The speed limits are not a problem. The drivers need to heed them which is a problem.'

'Fantastic idea for a speed camera in the Billericay Road, there is always speeding.'

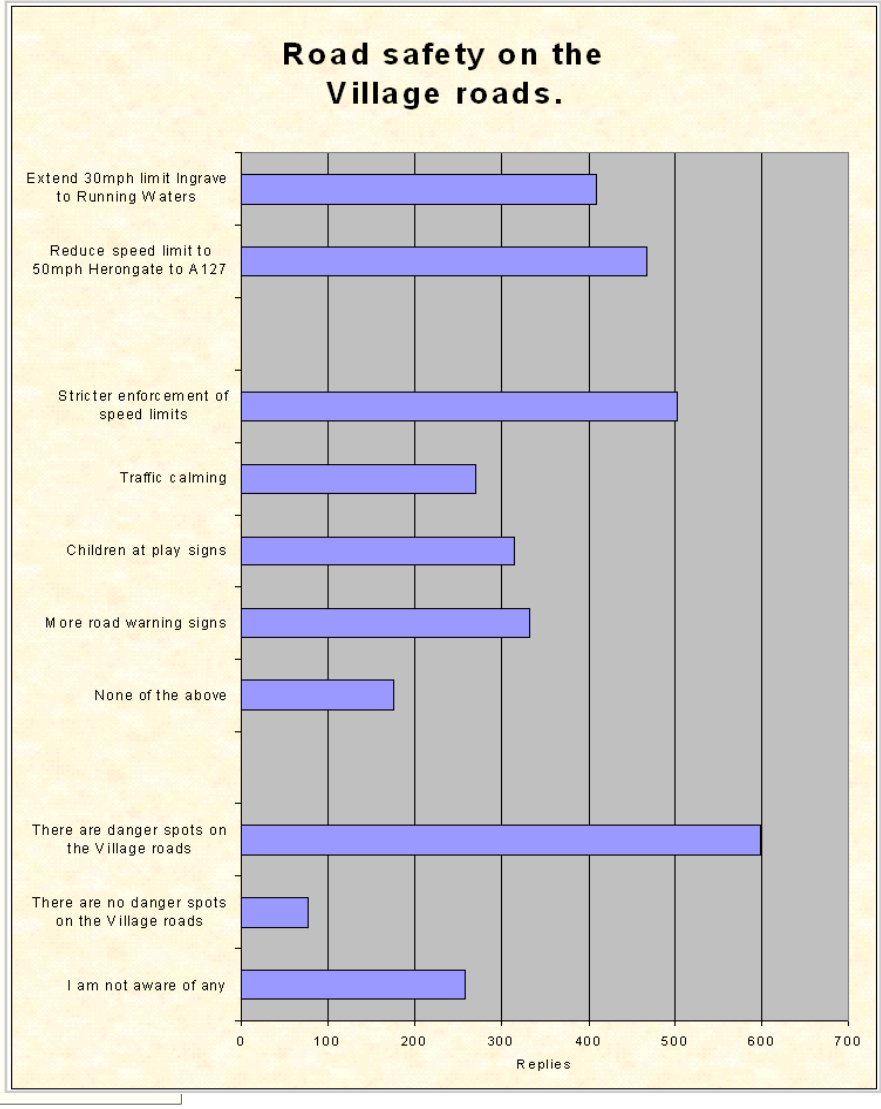
'Install speed display screens and reduce speed limit signs this has proven to work in London.'

'Neither the Council or the Police appear interested.'

'No more speed restrictions please.'

'Changing the speed limits would make no difference so would waste valuable resources.'

'Speed cameras are not flexible enough, they should be movable.'



Traffic and Transport

This section gave us a wealth of information which we hope will provide support for improvements to local public transport services. The detailed graphical data can be seen in the appendix at the back of this publication on pages 21-23.

Bus Service

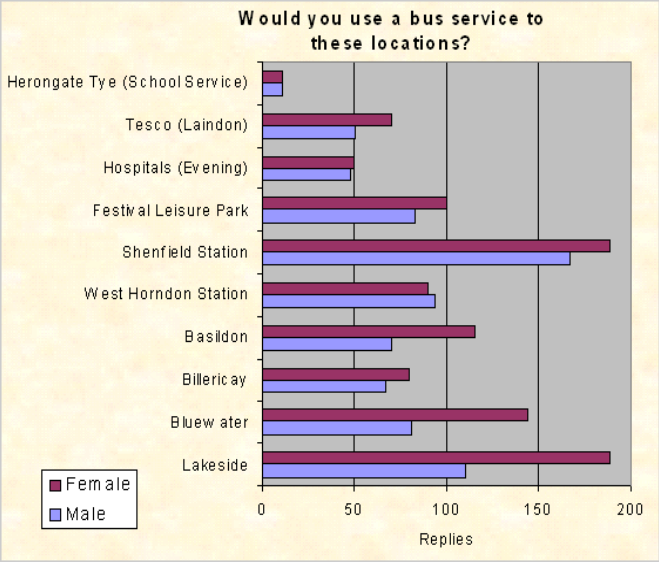
It is apparent that very few of us use the local bus service; shopping is the most popular reason and few of us depend on the bus for travel to work or education.

The 565 bus runs to Brentwood Station and provides three services a day to West Horndon and Bulphan. The majority of the 476 respondents to this question do not use this service.

Of those who answered 21% felt the timetable is poor, with the other four concerns of route, cost, reliability and access for those with disabilities all scoring close to 10%.

38% of those who responded feel that the bus timetable needs improvement. 29% feel that routes need improving and 23% would like to have a more reliable service, however of the 491 people who answered the question more than half (53%) have no experience of the bus service.

We asked where else you would like to travel to by bus. Shenfield Station and Lakeside were particularly popular.



A deceptive result on this graph is the response about the school bus service to Herongate Tye. Of course this would only be relevant to a small number of young people who live in that part of the parish. Currently there is no bus or school bus service for over elevens from Herongate Tye. Therefore school age children who travel to St. Martins in Hutton or other Brentwood Schools have to walk to the nearest bus stop which is opposite Herongate Village Hall.

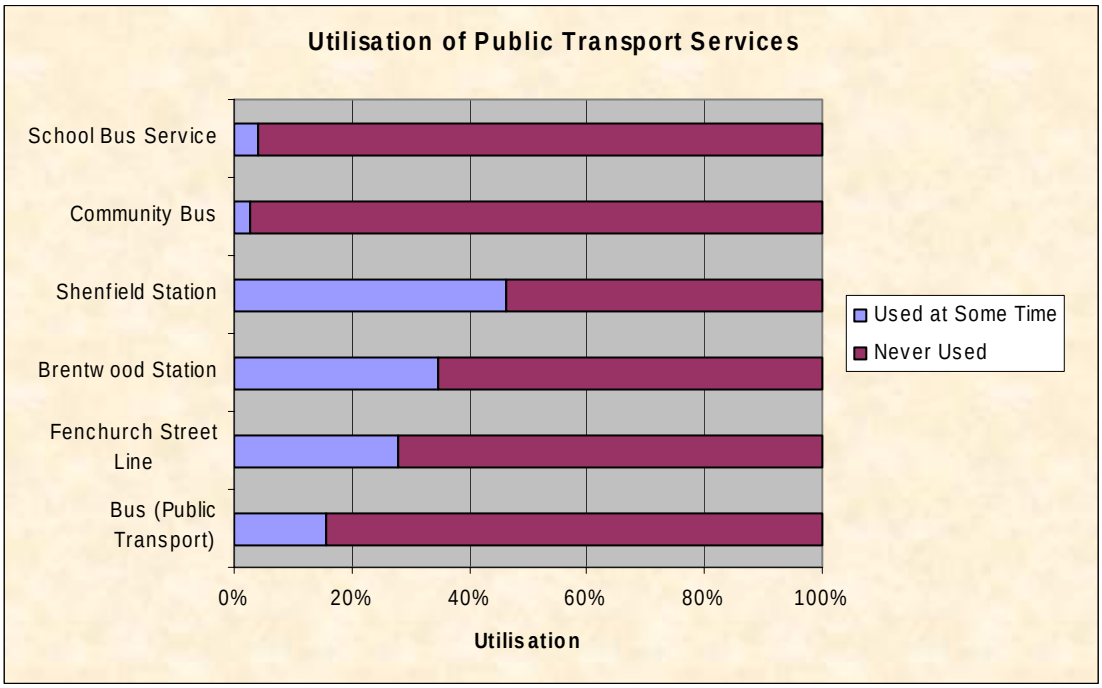




Train Service

For Village commuters using public transport the Fenchurch Street service is the most popular with 5% of respondents travelling daily, 3% use Shenfield and 3% use Brentwood Station.

Shenfield Station is more popular for less frequent travellers with 30% of us travelling from that station on a monthly basis against 23% travelling from Brentwood and 18% using Fenchurch Street services. People wanted better links between rail and bus services.



Cars and Parking

Residents generally use their cars. Even those in the age range 11-15 are more likely to travel to school by car than by bus or the school bus service. We have a clear preference for the car.

31% of the young people who responded said that they are prevented from taking part in after school activities because of a lack of transport home.

Travelling to essential services caused difficulties for a few of us with 89% of those who replied having no difficulties. Where there is a problem it is mostly due to routes and timetables of public services.

90% of us have adequate off street parking. However within the comments there were issues raised about parking difficulties in particular areas, mostly around the area of the Green Man and the Old Stock Yard.

Just 1% of respondents felt they would use a social car scheme weekly with 0.2% saying they would use it monthly and 9% stating they would use it occasionally.

Car sharing wasn't a popular choice either. For shopping, social and leisure less than 2% said they would use this scheme if it were in existence.

4% of residents would use car sharing for school journeys and we know from the comments that a number of informal sharing arrangements for school journeys are already in existence,

We also asked about cycling provision which was a very popular issue; details of this are in the leisure section.

'The walk to and from existing bus stops is very hard on those who need to use the bus service, especially when returning with heavy shopping.'

'Rush hour bus to Brentwood Station / High Street, also from village to St. Martins and on to Shenfield.'

'Change the 565 second bus to run ten minutes earlier to miss the rush hour traffic jams.'

'Trips to shopping or entertainment complex would be much appreciated by younger people as there is little to do in Brentwood!'

'If the bus service to West Horndon ran more frequently and after 6.00pm I would use it.'

'I was unaware that a school bus is available.'

' I have no access to buses because of our location.'

'The (school) bus is too loud and often runs late which means I would arrive late at school frequently.'

'We live in Ingrave and have been told that the school bus is unavailable to us. We would use it if we could.'

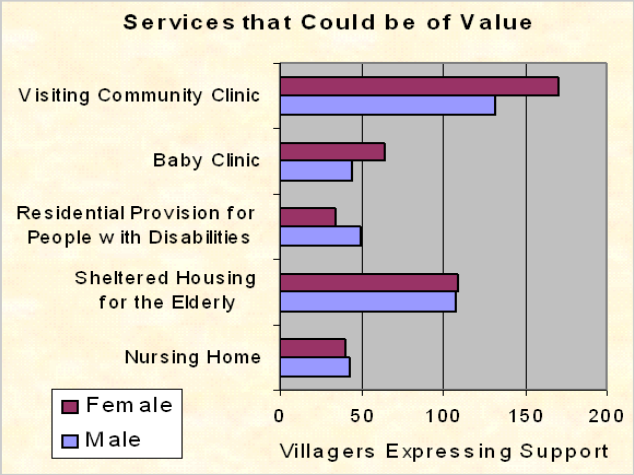
'The cost of bus services is too much to use regularly into Brentwood from Ingrave, if there was a price reduction I would certainly use it often.'

'Buses do not run late enough to go out in the evening to Brentwood.'

Local Services

There are a number of existing health-related services within the parish. We wanted to know if you thought others would be of value. The following graph shows that a visiting community clinic would be a popular addition with 57% of those responding expressing support for the idea.

Sheltered housing for the elderly was also a popular suggestion although a number of you pointed out that we already have a residential home for the elderly at Heron Court.



First Response

Finally in this section we asked you about the introduction of a First Response team for the parish.

This is a scheme run by Essex Ambulance Service where local volunteers are trained in the use of life saving equipment such as a defibrillator and oxygen equipment which are used in the event of cardiac and breathing emergencies.

This received a very positive response with 85% agreeing with its introduction. The Village Appraisal committee see this as one of the most important parts of the implementation of the Parish Plan. In accordance with this, we have already been working towards the introduction of this important and potentially life saving scheme.

We will shortly be hosting a public meeting where we hope to recruit volunteers for this scheme. If you are interested in getting involved please look out for further information in the local press, village notice boards and at local shops.

Each volunteer takes it in turn to be 'on call'. They carry basic First Aid equipment and a simple to use Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The Ambulance Service controller sends them to Category A (immediately life threatening) medical calls; they are dispatched at the same time as the ambulance crews but because they are often in more rural areas, can often arrive more quickly than the ambulance service.

The scheme can be incredibly rewarding as you could well end up saving someone's life. Many villages where schemes exist show great community spirit knowing that there are people there who can assist in life threatening situations.

The groups of volunteers receive training in Basic Life Support and are given an automatic defibrillator (machine to shock the heart) by the Ambulance Service. The 999 emergency control room is then able to send the First Responders to life threatening calls within their local community to provide the care and comfort necessary whilst the ambulance is on the way.

First Responders are not a substitute for the ambulance crew, but a timely added bonus for the patient who may be suffering from a life threatening condition. In working with the Ambulance Service, First Responders can 'buy time' for the patient until the ambulance crew arrives. Over 700 patients throughout Essex have already benefited from the intervention of the First Responders.

Volunteers attend a one-day course, taught and assessed by IHCD (Institute of Health & Care Development) trainers, which covers all aspects of emergency first aid and basic life support including the correct use of a defibrillator.

Q: Will I have to undergo lots of training?
A: No, the Basic Life Support course is delivered in a four hour time slot. The use of a defibrillator is taught over the same time frame.

Q: Will I have to be assessed, and how often?
A: Yes, at your initial training you will be assessed, after that we recommend assessment every six months. These are done at a time to suit your group, usually an evening or a weekend.

Q: How will I be sent to an emergency call?
A: We will first dispatch an ambulance immediately and then we will contact you via the mobile telephone we give to your group.

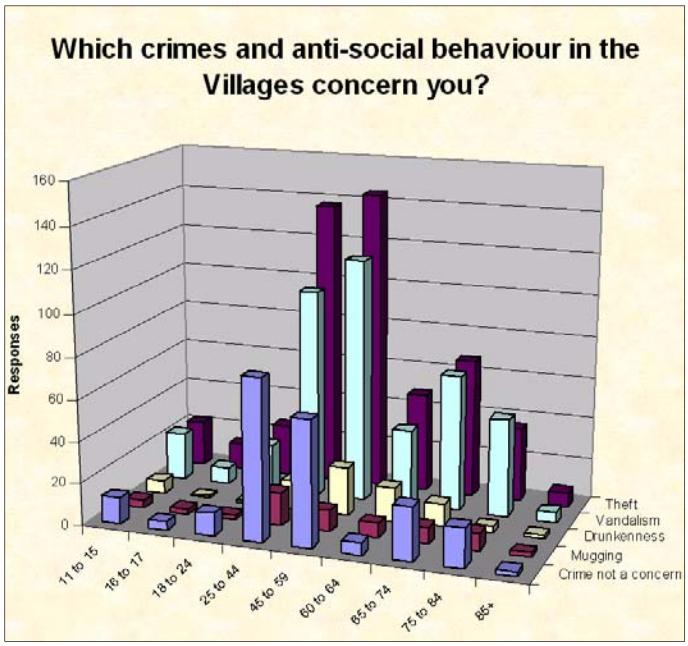
Q: How often do I have to be available?
A: That is dependant upon you and the size of your group. The more members of the group (12 - 20 is the optimum number) the less of a personal commitment to you. Most groups provide 24 hour cover because emergencies occur throughout the 24 hour period.

Q: How do I get to the incident?
A: That is up to you, some people drive, some cycle. Obviously we would like you to get to incident as quickly as possible. However, we would not want you to break any speed limits or put yourself or other road users at risk.

Q: What about personal insurance?
A: Essex Ambulance Service provides insurance cover for you, providing you are acting on their behalf i.e. they have sent you to a particular incident.

Law and Order

23% of those who responded to the Law and Order question were not concerned about crime within the villages; however theft (57%) and vandalism (50%) were concerns.



We asked about feelings concerning police coverage. 7% of us feel it is good, the majority (48%) that it is reasonable, and a substantial percentage (45%) feel that it is poor.

For the service provided by our Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) 17% feel it is good, 42% feel it is reasonable and 24% feel it is poor. 18% of you made a written comment about our PCSO service, many stating that you did not know we had a PCSO. At the time of the appraisal our PCSO had not been working actively within the villages for long and we could conclude that as time has passed, increasing numbers of residents will have come to know him.

The graph on the right shows that our satisfaction with ambulance services is the highest, closely followed by the fire service. For emergency police service we were fairly evenly split between stating that the service was good, reasonable and poor.

However for Police and PCSO services people were less satisfied.

Along with the Village Appraisal questionnaire we delivered a separate leaflet asking if residents would be willing to take part in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. We had an excellent response to this with over 40 people volunteering to help with Neighbourhood Watch and a further group who wanted to be included in the scheme.

We also looked at your personal safety and have taken note of the places where you feel unsafe. These comments are available to be viewed on the website. All will be taken into account in the preparation of the Parish Plan.

Areas where you feel unsafe

'I feel very isolated on the school field.'

'At night sometimes at Ingrave Church Hall car park.'

'Pathway between The Meadows and the school.'

'At the area in the entrance to Thorndon Park South and the road leading to the Halfway House.'

'When there is vandalism by youths leaving local pubs.'

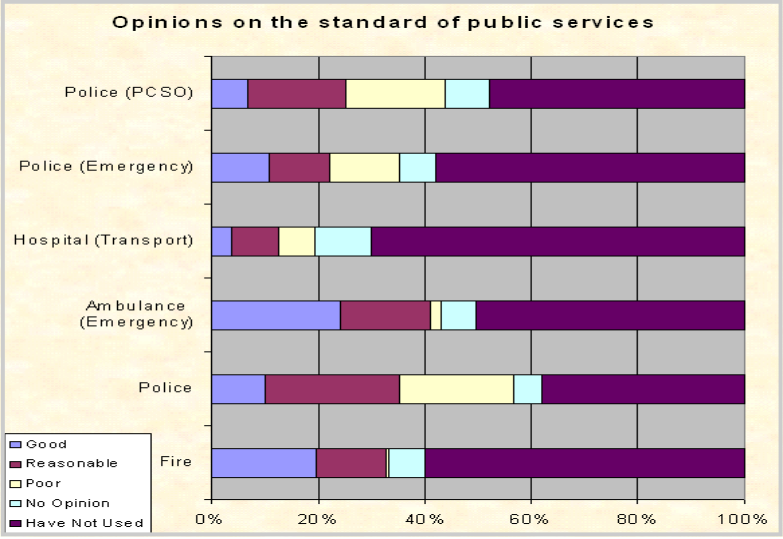
'Walking down Billericay Road at night.'

'Alleyways with inadequate lighting.'



Our village PCSO George Shepherd can be contacted on : 0775 7044898 (not '999' calls)

He writes a regular feature in The Link, the local free magazine and is currently helping to coordinate a new scheme aimed at spreading information throughout the parish via the internet.



Business and Employment

In this section of the report we will look at our business and employment; where we work and what kind of work we do. Then we will report on information gathered from those who run businesses.

This will provide us with valuable information for future planning and give us a snapshot of employment trends of Parish residents in 2006. Further graphs are in the appendix on page 24.

317 people responded to the question about place of work. 88% of them work outside the villages.

Twenty people responded to the question about barriers that prevent them taking up employment. Of these, seven reported transport as a problem, a further seven felt that they lacked information and six felt that they didn't have the right qualifications.

Ninety three people answered the business questions. Those of us who run a business mostly employ a small number with 36% being sole traders. The majority of businesses are financial and professional services (35%). Construction, electricians and plumbers account for 18% of business with people running retail businesses numbering 15%.

As would be expected the majority (70%) of businesses owned by village residents are located outside the village

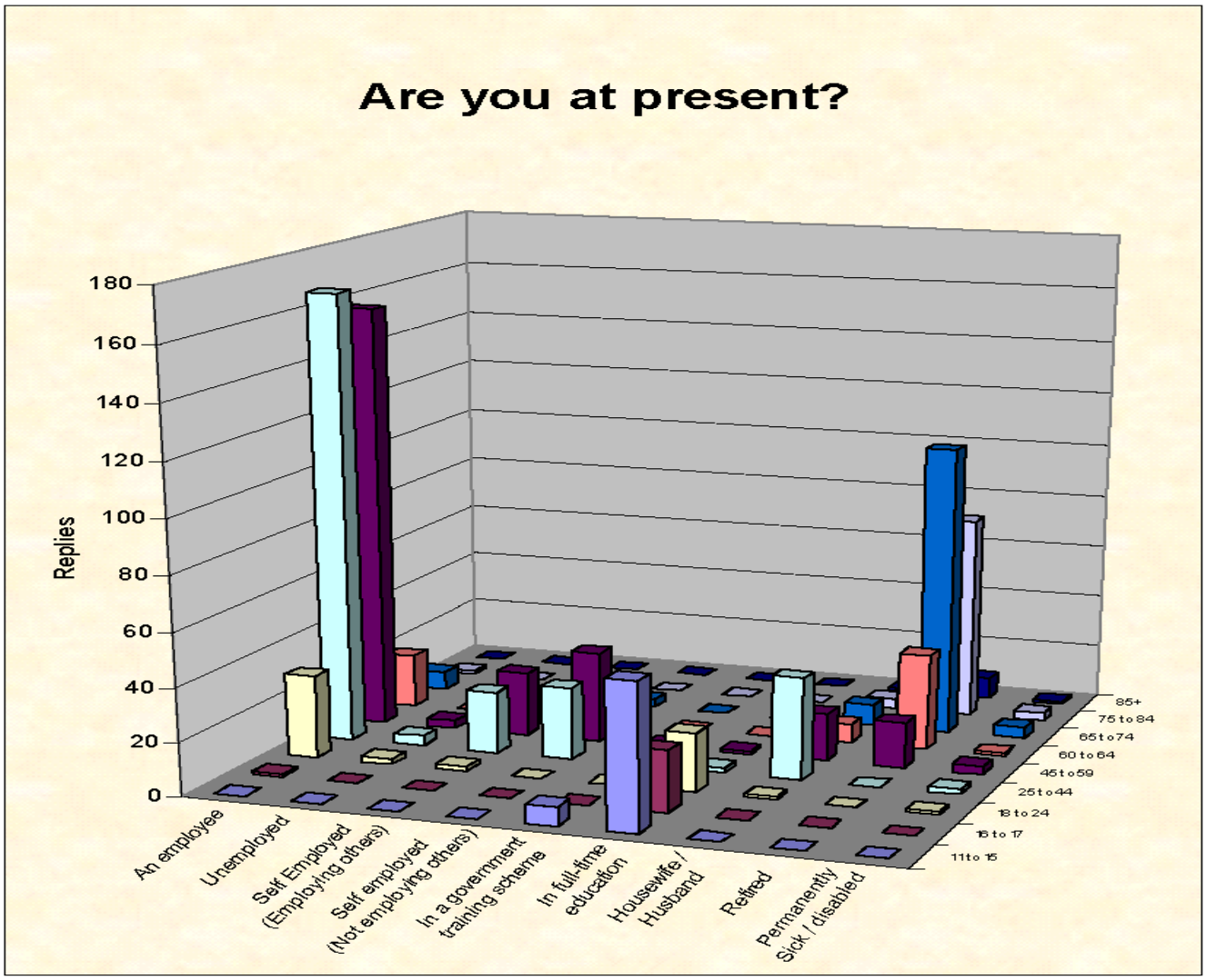
The majority (71%) of those who responded are in full time work.

We delivered a separate confidential business questionnaire which was completed by 14 businesses operating within the parish. 12 of these were operating from business premises and two from domestic premises.

The majority had been operating for ten or more years from the same site and felt that the proximity of the M25, A127 and A13 are the most important benefits of being there.

Many businesses liked the rural location but they raised the issue of lack of public transport to Cockridden Farm and the need for better cycle paths on the A128.

We have given further results in the Appendix. All data can be viewed on the Parish Council website.



Leisure

Although we are fortunate to live so close to the open spaces of Thorndon Park and the network of footpaths that cross the local countryside, there is more to leisure than that.

On our early visits to Ingrave Johnstone School it soon became clear that even our youngest residents have a sense of how important the proximity to the park and the wealth of open spaces is to them. We asked you about various leisure facilities and activities.

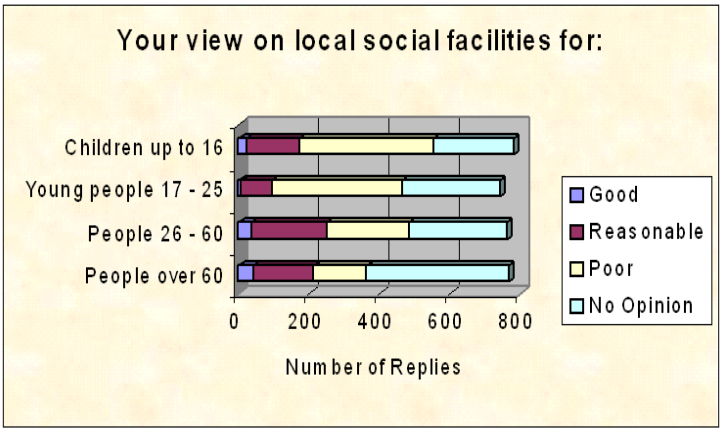


Ingrave Johnstone May Fete 2008

580 of you answered the question about views on local sports facilities for various ages, however in each section more than a quarter of you had no opinion.

Most respondents feel that facilities for the under sixteen age group and young people aged 17- 25 are poor: only 20% feel that facilities for under sixteen group are good or reasonable and 11% for the 17-25 age group.

Overall the view was that social facilities for the 26-60 age group were better, nevertheless these were by no means good with just 29% stating that they found facilities either good or reasonable.



We asked what leisure facilities, clubs and groups you would like to see in the villages.

We identified that there are existing activities taking place which residents are unaware of.

As well as the choices we gave you, you suggested the following:

Angling, Art, Athletics, Crafts, Basket Ball, Book Club, Bridge, Brownies Scouts Guides and Rangers,

Carpet Bowls, Cross Country, Cycle Club, Dance, Fencing, Gardening Club, Keep Fit for the retired,

Luncheon Club for the Elderly, Martial Arts, Men's Club, Ramblers, Reading Club, Rugby, Running Track,

Youth Club, Youth Drama, Salsa, Self Defence for Women, Snooker, Squash, Tai chi,

Theatre trips for the Elderly, Trampoline, Under threes activities, Weight Watchers and Writers Group.

Thank you for your suggestions which will be taken into account in the preparation of the Parish Plan as will the issue of lack of information about existing activities.

'Dance and Keep fit and sports for the under 16's.'

'A daytime self defence club for housewives etc. and a night time one for workers.'

'Adults should be able to take care of themselves. Keep youngsters busy then they will not get into mischief. Do NOT demonise the young.'

'Run a reading group from home, I would love to run a village group for craft making etc.'

'A 'men's club' like the WI and Mothers Union for the ladies.'

'How much urbanisation do we want? If I wanted any of the above I would have moved to Basildon, Keep the villages as they are.'

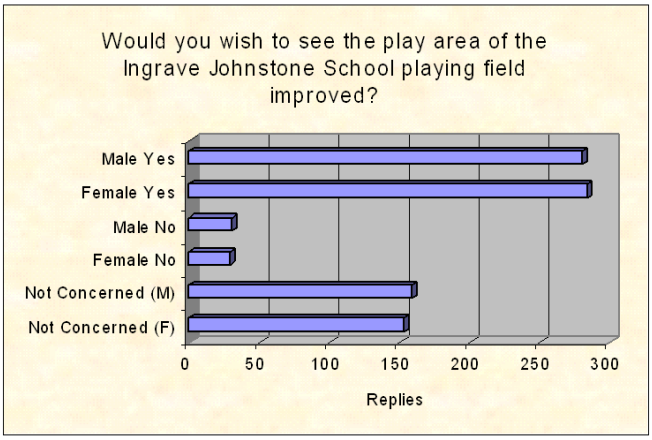
'I do not drive and am slightly disabled but would welcome and pay a fare to such places as Brentwood Theatre or even Brentwood Centre during the evening, if a minibus could be provided to take elderly people to these locations and return them later in the evening. We do not have any transport from or to Ingrave after 5.30pm. and taxi fares can be expensive.'

'There is already keep fit, but badminton was closed due to lack of demand. Local youths do not seem interested in these types of activity.'

The provision of play facilities is a requirement of the Parish Council and / or local authority.

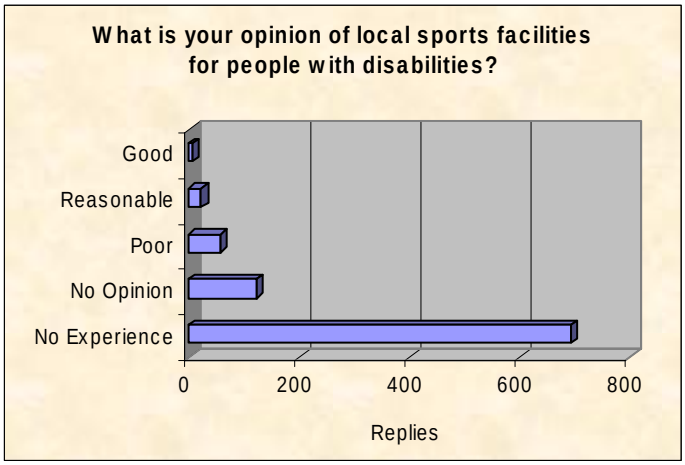
Although in the questionnaire we used the term "The play area at Ingrave Johnstone School Playing Field" it is important to note that the field is the Ingrave Playing Field which is in fact owned by Essex County Council and is managed by a committee drawn from the local authority, the parish council, and school governors who act as trustees.

We found that 60% of people wanted improvements to Ingrave Playing Field.



Since the distribution of the Village Appraisal questionnaire the Parish Council has planned new play facilities at Ingrave Playing Field. The old area is cleared and in a short time we will have a wonderful new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) on the site of the old play area and a new play area for younger children built alongside it.

The vast majority of us have no experience of local sports facilities for people with disabilities, of those who expressed a view most felt it was poor.



Below are some of the comments of the year six children we interviewed at the School. All comments from the school, from year three to year six, will be available to be viewed on the Parish Council Website.

'I think there should be a basket ball court.'

'Enlarge the play area.'

'I would like to play rounders on the field.'

'More cycling paths around the village.'

'I would like to have more leisure activities put in the village.'

'A club for 10-15 year olds.'

'Have more Hog Roasts and Flower Shows where you get to know the Parish Council better.'

'Put some cricket nets on the side of the cricket hut.'



The Village Hog Roast

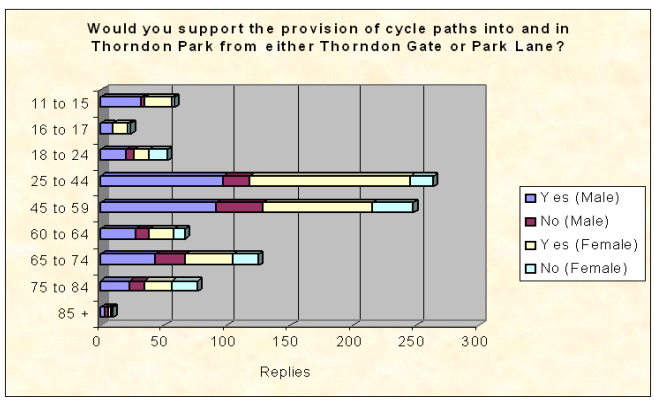
Cycle Paths



A possible cycle route at Footpath 42 linking to Thorndon Park

When we started the Village Appraisal one of our first tasks was to visit the children at Ingrave Johnstone School. One of the popular suggestions the children gave us was being able to safely cycle into Thorndon Park from the villages.

The response that we received concerning the provision of designated cycle paths within the Parish was very positive. 74% of you were in support of this idea.



Our Parish

As many of you have pointed out, we are very fortunate to live here. There is a sense of community which was expressed by many who responded to the questionnaire and was also strongly felt by our youngest residents interviewed by us at the school. They value the events that bring us together, such as the Hog Roast, the May Fete and the Bonfire night event on Button Common.



Bluebell Wood: Thorndon Park

The map on the cover of this report shows the boundary of the parish which is marked with a thin black line. You can see that there are just a few access points to the parish. Most of the traffic runs along the A128 but those who live in the Billericay Road area find that traffic is a concern there also.

Our environment is also special; we are surrounded by a wide diversity of landscapes which we can easily access. There are many footpaths crossing the farmland and the park is open for all to enjoy. There are new cycle paths and bridleways linking to Thorndon North and wonderful plantations of woods and untouched ancient woodland are to be found within the parish. Natural and man made ponds and lakes are scattered across the land.



Blind Lane

Quiet backwaters still exist, such as the ally that links the bottom of St. Nicholas Grove to Middle Road which many of you call 'Glow worm Alley' or the leafy and secluded Blind Lane.

Herongate and Ingrave are unusual in that much of our open and common land within the boundaries of the built area is generally not owned by Essex County Council. Here we have a manorial court with Lord Petre being the owner of much of the common land; this is an unusual feature of our parish.

The common land also forms a valuable feature of the parish and includes not only the green areas you know, such as Button Common and the land near the Old Stock Yard and the Green Man but also the two main village ponds at the Boars Head and Peartrees Pond, both of which are owned by Lord Petre.



Thorndon Hall

The parish has a wealth of history, ranging from ancient churches to moated and important buildings and humble cottages dating back centuries. We have ruins of the Old Hall in Thorndon Park along with Pigeon Mount and the ruins of the old church close by, now almost lost from memory. Thorndon Hall now contains some 90 homes where a number of residents expressed in the questionnaire a feeling of being a long way removed from the hub of the parish. But those residents also wanted to feel a part of this process and we had an excellent response from the community living there.

Within the parish are almost forgotten and almost untraceable roman ruins, along with two ancient burial sites both within the park. We have leafy lanes, open farmland, two golf courses and the spectacular Thorndon South right on our doorsteps. There are probably few such villages in Essex and we know that the preservation of all this is extremely important to our residents.

We invite you to become involved in the Parish Plan; we would greatly value your views and help. The next stage will be a process of public consultation. The "Issues Arising" offer a framework for the further discussion.



Herongate Conservation Area



As we were—*Edwardian Herongate in the direction of St. Andrews church*



As we are—*100'ish years further on!*

Points from the report for public consultation

First Response
Setting up an active first response team serving our parish with life saving equipment; in particular a defibrillator and oxygen.

Planning
Developing a planning strategy for the villages. Increasing communication about planning applications etc.

Road Safety and Transport
Danger spots and measures to increase safety for road users and pedestrians. Improving public transport links and service, ideas such as a 'Walking Bus' to Ingrave Johnstone School and cycle links to schools and surrounding towns.

Law and Order and Public Services
Improving communication and ensuring that the parish is best served by local services.

Neighbourhood Watch
Improving communications between residents and our local Police services.

Emergency Strategy
Exploring what would happen and who we would be able to turn to in an emergency.

Communication
Improving communications between our Parish Council and residents. Finding ways of getting information into every household. Ways of finding out about services and activities within the parish.

Youth and Play Provision
Clubs and other youth activities. Places for young people to meet and activities for them including the possible provision of a visiting youth bus.

The Environment
Litter and dog mess. This issue would also include problems with access to footpaths and rights of way and our environmental impact.

Local Facilities
Visiting Clinics: what is needed, where it could be located, and when would it be possible to run such facilities, perhaps including blood donor days.

The Elderly, Disabled and Vulnerable in our Parish

Personal Safety
Addressing areas in the Parish where residents have reported feeling unsafe.

Leisure
New clubs and groups, set up and publicise.

Cycle Paths
Access to Thorndon Park and other routes within the village, links to Brentwood and to schools.

History and the Museum
The preservation of the existing historical data in the museum and recording new history in the making.

A New Neighbour Scheme

Herongate Village Hall

Library
Investigating the best time and place for the Mobile Library Service to visit the villages, possibly to link with school times and encouraging an increased awareness of the service.

The next step after public consultation……

A Community-led Plan!

Community-led plans such as a Parish Plan are produced at a local level with a high degree of community inclusion. They enable local community groups to become actively involved in the decision making processes that affect the future of their own parish. The process involves extensive survey work to establish local needs and aspirations, highlight priorities and develop an action plan and vision for the future of the community.

Parish Plans address a range of social, environmental and economic issues and produce two main types of outcome; actions which can be undertaken by local groups, and proposals to influence actions, decisions and policies of larger organisations.

The priorities highlighted in a Parish Plan can influence the direction of overall policy in the Community Strategy which is where decisions are taken at Borough Council level. For example if a significant number of parishes raise the same issue then the Community Strategy would need to address it. Parish plans can influence the planning and delivery of services within the borough and hence improve the quality of life of local people.

Each Parish Plan is unique as there is no standard format and layout. However Herongate and Ingrave will endeavour to follow as closely as possible the suggested template supplied by the Rural Community Council of Essex.

Actions listed in the Parish Plan will be arranged under three headings:

-actions that can be undertaken by the community,
-actions requiring help from specific service providers,
-actions and proposals that relate to wider strategic objectives.

The Village Appraisal Committee

The members of the appraisal steering committee:

Lee Bishop	Keith Bradfield	Councillor Vic Davis	Grainne Donnelly	David Gladman
Councillor David Harman	Brian Harrington	Elliot Mount	Eunice O'Brien	Jennie Penkul

Appendices

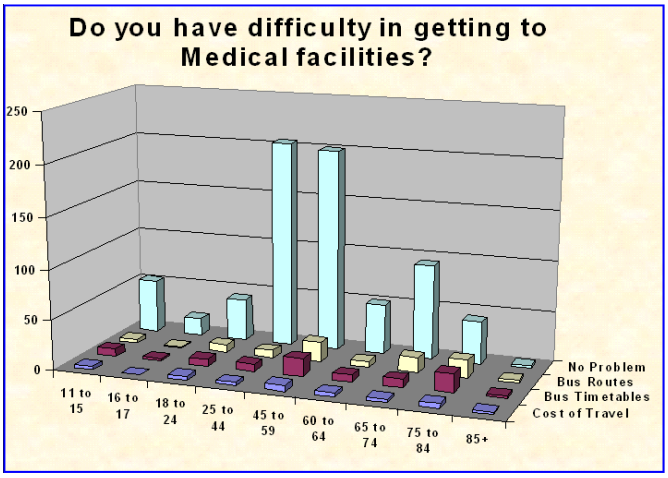
In this section we include examples of a more detailed analysis of particular data that was undertaken for completeness

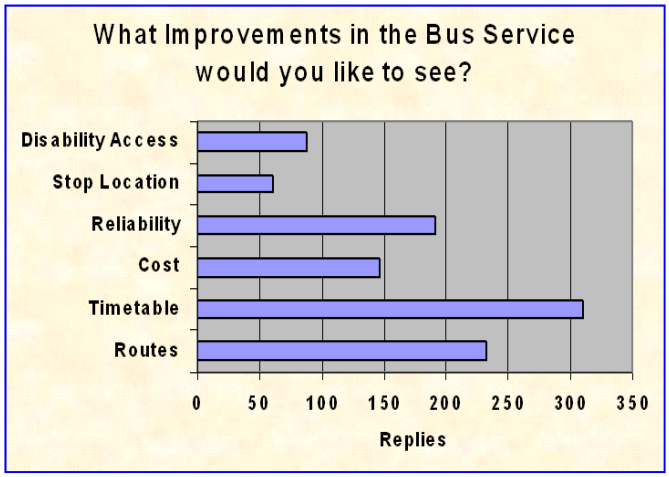
Traffic and Transport

At first sight it would appear from the results that the greater number of our villagers have no difficulty in reaching medical facilities.

However the emphasis in the data is on that age group that have access to private transport. Disregarding this significant data there is good evidence among our older villagers, and the youngest, that in particular the bus routes and timetables are not ideal for their needs.

Cost is important to particular age groups, but not as significant as Routes and Timetable in the desire for improvements to these services.

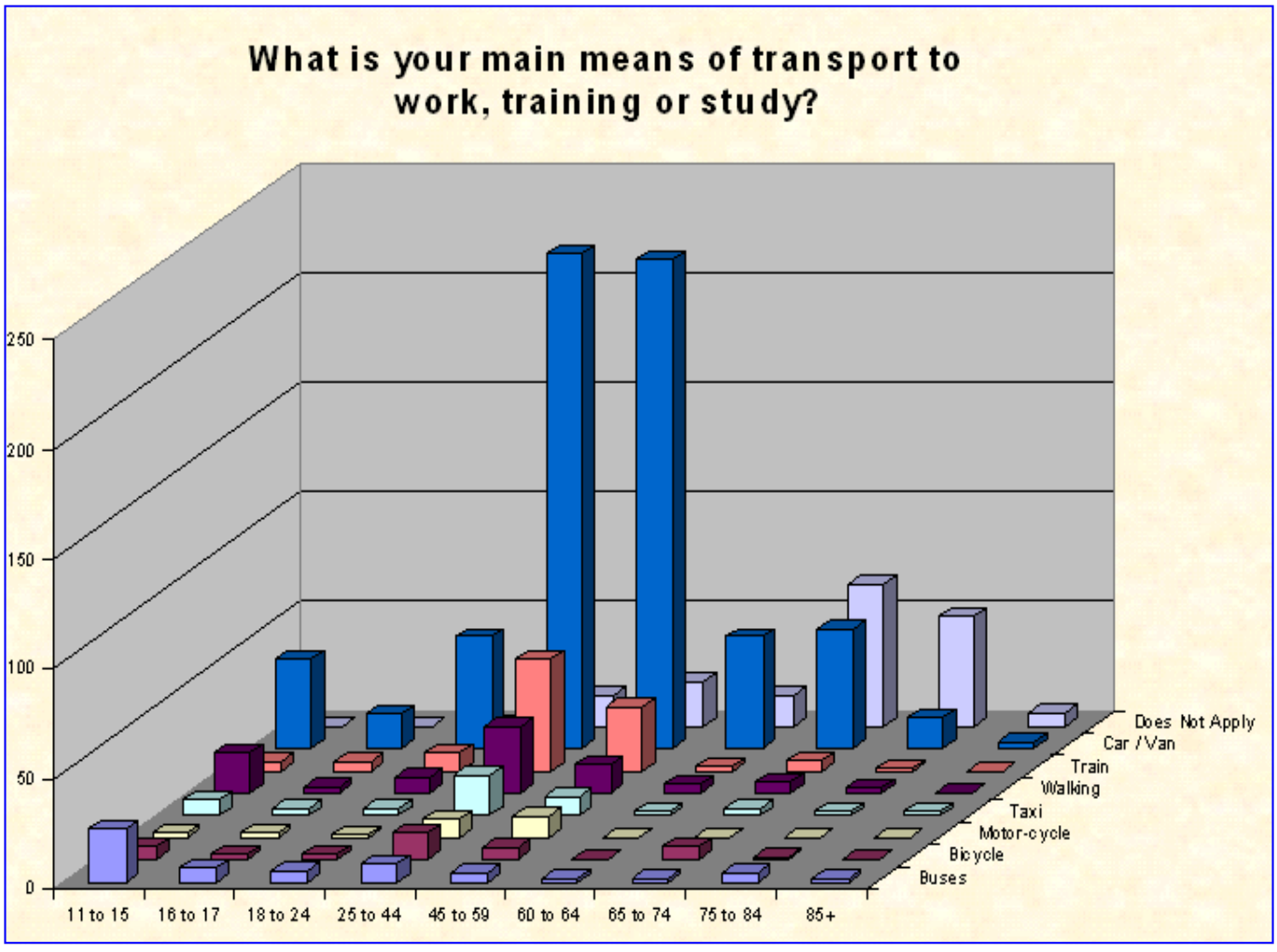




As reported in the Village Appraisal our main means of transport to our place of work, training or study is the private motor car or van.

Among the main 'in gainful employment' age group the train is second in significance. However, we are able to, or perhaps are obliged, to walk in many instances.

The Bus is an essential means of school transport for our younger villagers, but the Taxi is also thought to be a regular alternative to the bus for school.



Main Line Rail Services

We established early in the Appraisal that the geographic position of the Villages is an important consideration in the reason why people choose to live here.

We have analysed the data so as to understand how the local and wider transport links are used; and to see how these might be better coordinated.

The major road links such as the M25 and A12 are essential transport arteries and it is apparent from the analysis that the car and van are the predominant means of transport to work.

The effect on the Villages when the M25 and A12 are closed is well appreciated, but a more detailed study of how we use these major road links is outside the scope of this appraisal.

We have looked more closely at how the local rail and bus links are used.

The results shown by the graphs indicate that Shenfield is the railway station most used by us 'at some time'.

From our analysis we believe that poor transport links from the Villages to all stations is an issue.

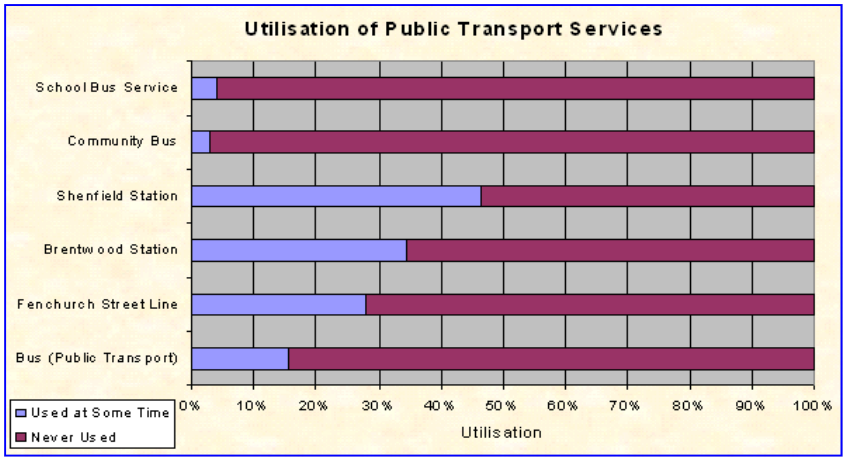
It appears that because West Horndon is less well served by the frequency of bus links to and from the Villages we are less likely to use it for commuting.

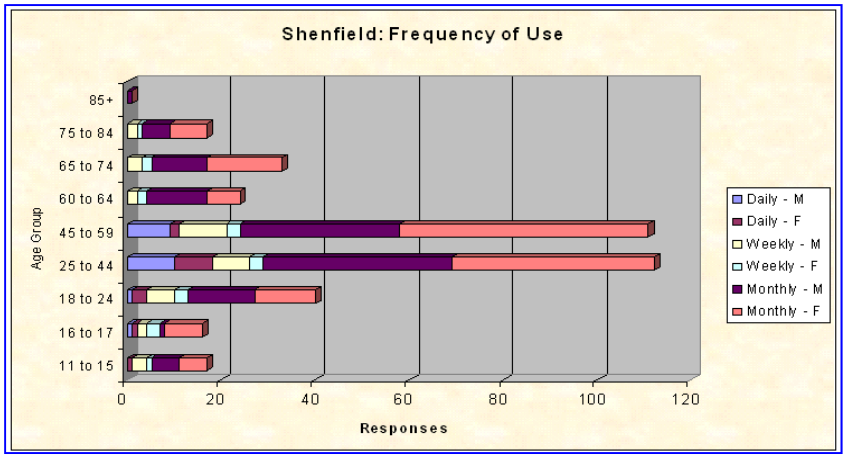
It is clear that Villagers have a keen interest in having improved access to both Shenfield and West Horndon rail stations where it is known that car parking is restricted.

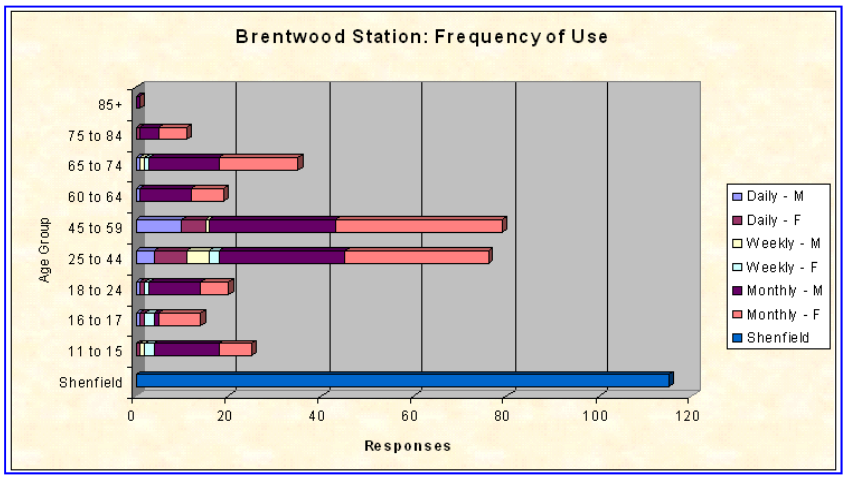
It may be reasoned that this frustration with lack of access to these services contributes to the 'route' and 'timetable' criticism made against the 565 service.

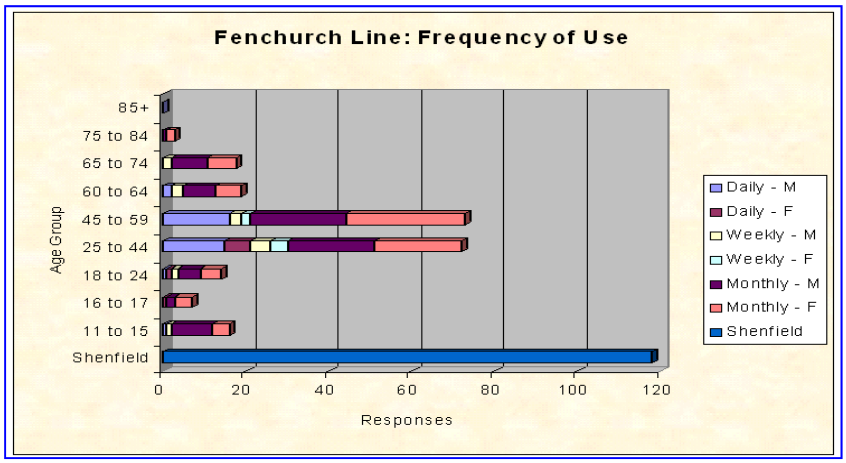
The 565 service does of course provide a critical lifeline to many of our villagers and it does give a service to Brentwood Station. The 565 is also being increasingly well used.

Transport links will be an important part of the study and village plan that will follow on from this report.









Village Bus Service

The graph on the right is shown again and is a statement of the ideal service that villagers would like to have available to them.

Clearly a service to the major shopping locations such as Lakeside and Basildon is attractive to many of our Female villagers. Similarly, our neighbouring town of Billericay is now more difficult to reach by public transport.

The desire for a direct link to Shenfield Station is clearly shown. It is the access to West Horndon Station where the Male response is greater than the Female. This presumably will relate to work and business interests.

A deceptive result on this graph is the response about the school bus service to Herongate Tye.

Of course this would only be relevant to a small number of young people who live in that part of the parish. Currently there is no bus or school bus service for over elevens and therefore school age children who travel to St. Martins in Hutton or other Brentwood Schools have to walk to the nearest bus stop which is opposite Herongate Village Hall.

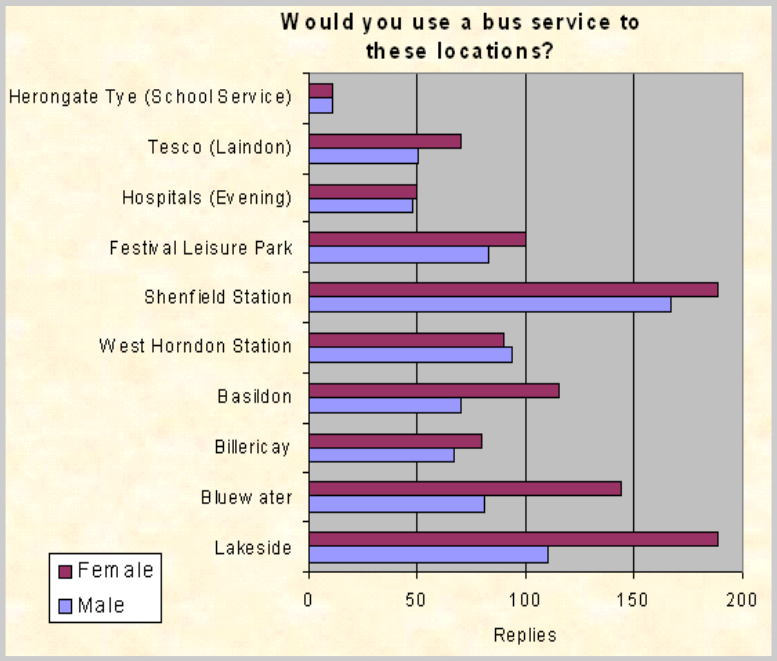
The graphs concerning 'frequency of use' show that the local bus service becomes increasingly important with the onset of age; and is known to provide a critical lifeline for many members of our community. This is also so for the younger members of the village.

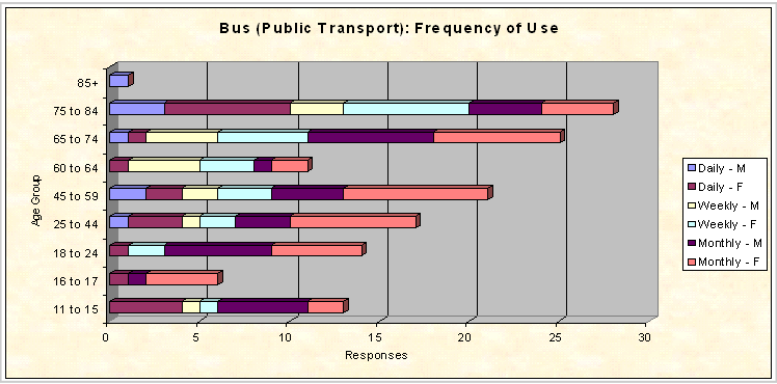
The last graph generated more responses. It seems that timetabling, reliability and costs are issues for potential users and that this may indicate why more people do not currently use the 565. People were generally happier with the route, than with other issues.

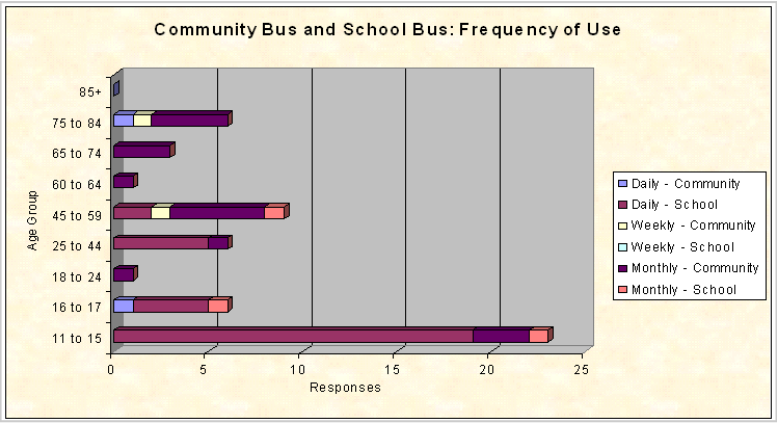
It would be quite incorrect to gain the impression from this last result that the 565 service is poor and unreliable! It generally does what is intended well and the bus staff are helpful and friendly; although it has been withdrawn without notice on occasions.

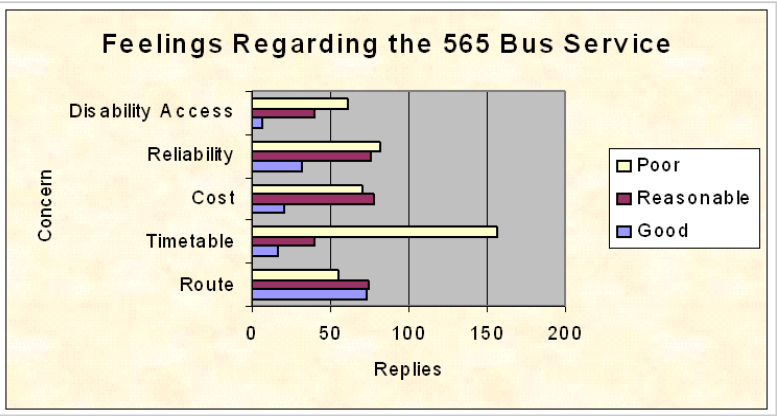
There is obviously a difference of expectations between the 35 or so villagers who have offered their first hand experience of the service and the 300 to 400 villagers who might make more use of the service if it better matched their own requirements.

This concern for a better utilisation of the local bus service will be addressed in the Village Plan.









Business and Employment

A separate questionnaire was produced for businesses in the Parish and was taken to the local businesses for completion. However, in the Appraisal we invited Villagers to indicate their various business interests to us. A broad report on what was found is included for completeness.

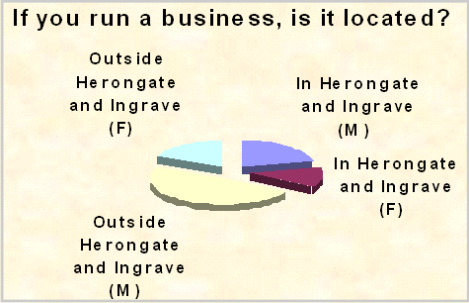
Ninety three people answered the business questions. Those of us who run a business mostly employ a small number of persons with 36% being sole traders.

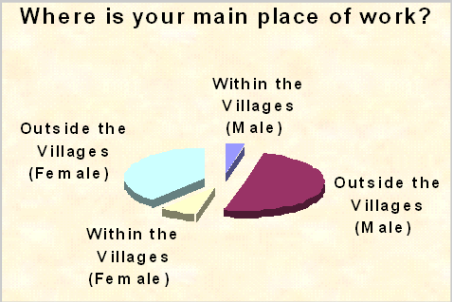
The majority of businesses are financial and professional services (35%) and construction, electricians and plumbers account for 18% of businesses with people running retail businesses numbering 15%.

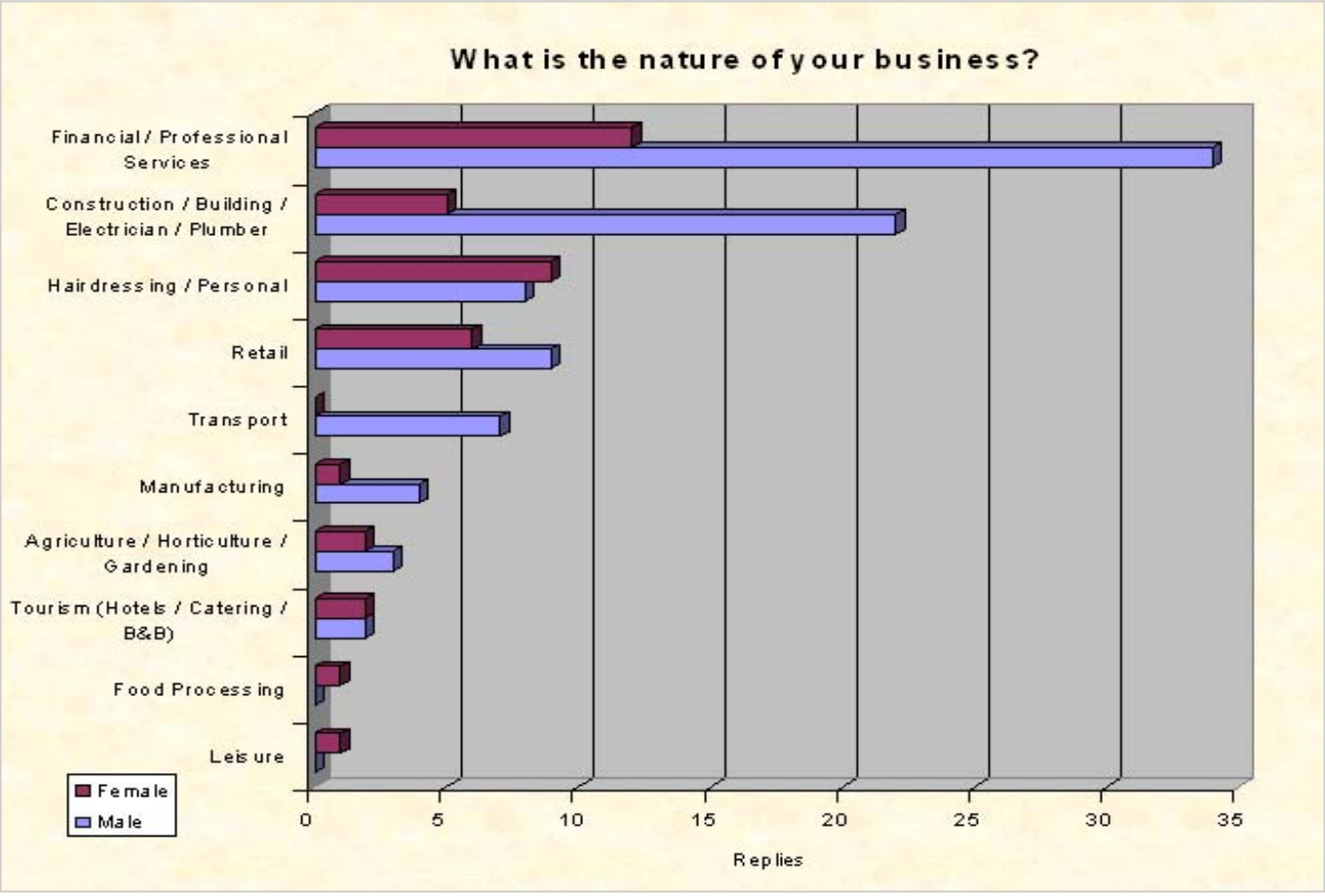
As would be expected the majority (70%) of businesses owned by village residents are located outside the village. The graphs shows age and work status. The majority (71%) of those who responded are in full time work.

Some 25% of us are fully retired.













Cricket has been played on Ingrave Common since the time of Napoleon: for over 150 years

Contact Details

Written comments concerning this Appraisal can be sent to:

“Herongate and Ingrave Village Appraisal”
% Herongate Village Stores
156 Brentwood Road
Herongate
Brentwood CM13 3PD

We would appreciate your normal contact details