

Barrowden & Wakerley Neighbourhood Development Plan

Summary of the results of March 2016 Questionnaire



The aim of the questionnaire was to expand the eight key areas introduced and commented on at the Neighbourhood Plan Open Events held last Autumn. The questionnaire was the next stage of public consultation and the questions we asked reflected the areas of importance highlighted by the responses at the Open Events. Supported by recommendations drawn up in the Village Design Statement, the results have given us the objectives of the key areas and will form a starting point for the drafting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. We received a 70% return of questionnaires.

1. Conservation:

Results indicated strongly that residents would like to secure and maintain the conservation areas of Barrowden and Wakerley, preserving and protecting the character of the villages through local architecture, building materials, landscape, open spaces and vistas, both publicly and privately owned for present and future generations.

- **New Developments:** alterations or extensions - 94% felt these should only use materials and architectural styles in keeping with the character of the village.
- **Future Development:** 94% felt the views, landscapes and open spaces must be preserved.

Some comment was made about the diversity of existing architecture and building materials and suggested too prescriptive a plan could stifle new exciting innovations.

2. Our Surroundings:

Preserving and protecting the rural nature of Barrowden and Wakerley, whilst improving access and enjoyment is essential. The existing environment is fundamental to the appeal and way of life.

- **Footpaths & Rights of Way:** These were thought to be sufficient, but more circular routes and a bridge over the Welland at Tixover were suggested.
- **Roadside Verges:** Overwhelming support for their preservation and protection.
- **Wildlife habitats:** Strong support for the creation of additional areas and a hide; also suggested was a Community/Children's allotment.
- **Trees:** Overwhelming support for well-maintained and suitably sited trees.
- **Views & Open Spaces:** The importance and preservation of these had the strongest support of any question (98%).
- **Best comment received:** The water supply feeding the duck pond be diverted and a ford created on main street: visual attraction and traffic calming in one. Genius!

3. Recreation, Leisure & Community Facilities:

All current village facilities valued with the highest value being given to the village shop. A large number of individual comments were in favour of the redevelopment of the village hall on a new site which could also be used for indoor sports e.g. badminton. St Peter's Church was also highly valued as a village resource with improvements needed in facilities and parking.

A very wide range of comments were received regarding the further development of outdoor play and recreational facilities for all ages including the establishment of a bowling green.

4. Housing:

There was a clear view that there are sufficient larger houses (3,4 and 5 bed) in the village but a desire for smaller (2 bed) homes where existing residents can downsize. Some starter homes would also be acceptable. Opinion on sheltered housing was split with a small majority rejecting it, private rented accommodation was considered about right and social rented housing was again considered to be about right with a majority not wishing to see it increased.

Results indicated that the location of any further new houses should be retained within the existing Planned Development Limits and the respondents also indicated (81%) not within gardens, with social housing being preferred to be developed, if required, alongside the existing houses in Drift Close or within a mixed development.

5. Transport:

There was strong support for managing speeding through the villages, primarily using signage rather than barriers such as speed bumps and the majority were in favour of a 20mph speed restriction in all, or part of the villages.

Monitoring of traffic relating to the quarry behind Wakerley was highlighted as requiring vigilance.

In Barrowden, it was clear there is an issue regarding car parking particularly for residents who do not have a designated parking space on their property and also visitors to the village. However, only 28% were in favour of establishing a village car park, most expressed preference for individual smaller parking sites in different locations. Encouraging use of garage parking where possible and seeking solutions for safe pedestrian movement around the villages was highlighted.

Opinions were mixed on expanding the bus services but the Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider public transport provision. As an alternative, to provide access to nearby towns, there was strong support for the establishment of a car sharing scheme.

Protection of vulnerable green verges was seen as a highly important issue and linked to the erosion by vehicles, a majority were in favour of protecting some areas with kerbing.

6. Rural Economy:

There was desire for tourism to be encouraged but no additional retail space to be created, with home working being the principal source of employment within the village. There was only a small number in favour of the development of light industrial units or workshops and little support for the further development of retail outlets. There is, however, strong support for The Shop. There is also strong support for growth within the agricultural sector.

7. Utilities:

Suitable infrastructure is crucial to housing and economic development in our rural villages and we must ensure it is place for any future development.

- **Foul water drainage:** viewed as adequate by most, however a few comments revealed severe problems.
- **Surface Water drainage:** Opinion was split - which may reflect where respondents live. We will be analysing the answers further by postcodes and mapping these to plans of the drainage infrastructure. Clearly there are serious issues in parts of the village.
- **Water quality and pressure/ Gas & Electricity** - no issues
- **Broadband** - only a third of Barrowden village felt their service was adequate. The NDP group will work with the Parish Council to identify problem areas and explore solutions.
- **Mobile Phone mast** - there was a small majority support for a mast - again this may be related to areas where signals are poor. Difficulties will be explored.

8. Healthcare:

From the feedback at the Open Events it was evident that the local doctor and nurse led clinics at Barrowden surgery are greatly valued and 77% of respondents use Barrowden and/or Uppingham surgeries. The dispensing service is also held in high regard. The majority expressed that they are able to attend the Uppingham Surgery without difficulty if asked to do so. There was support for additional services such as Physiotherapy, Chiropody, Osteopathy and a commercial pharmacy.

This summary of the questionnaire results has been based on the return of 170 questionnaires out of a total number issued of 240. If you wish to view the results in full (figures) these are available on the Barrowden Parish Council website: Barrowdenpc.org.uk and follow the links for NDP Questionnaire Results.

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