

Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan - Summary findings from the November 2020 Household and Business surveys

Introduction

As part of the work to build the evidence base for the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan, questionnaires for a household survey and separate business survey were delivered to every household and known business in the Parish along with the November 2020 issue of the Haydon News. Both surveys were also available for completion online.

The parish council is delighted with the level of response received to the household and business surveys and would like to thank everyone who responded. We received 173 responses (17%) to the household survey and 28 responses to the business survey. The full survey results of each survey, as well as other information on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, are available on the parish website <http://www.haydon-bridge.co.uk/community-plan.php>

This report provides a summary of the key findings from both surveys.

Household survey

86% of respondents live in Haydon Bridge and 14% in other parts of the Parish. Although those responding were slightly skewed to older age groups there was still a wide age spread of respondents - 44% of respondents were aged 65+ and the remaining 56% aged from 16-64.

Living and working in the parish

The top 5 things people value about living in the parish are:

- Lovely countryside and wildlife
- Local shops and services
- Green spaces and walks close to the village
- Access to major routes/transport links
- Village/community unity of spirit

Generally people feel that Haydon Parish is a great place to live. Nobody said that Haydon Parish is not a good place to live.

By far the biggest area for improvement relates to more and better parking, damaged roads, traffic speed and better road signage. Other areas for improvement relate to: shops and services (in particular a café/coffee shop); better community provision for younger and older people; better access to high school facilities out of hours; and improving the general appearance of the village.

The kind of place residents would like Haydon Bridge to be in 10 years' time, is: friendly; safe; attractive; affordable; tranquil; and accessible.

94% use the internet for social contact; followed by 43% working from home – speed of broadband was a limiting factor for one third of respondents (same level in business survey).

In terms of employment: 51% are retired; 26% in full-time and 16% in part-time employment. 14% of people in work are self employed. Just over a quarter of people in employment work in the parish, highlighting the importance of the local economy.

There is a high level of support (nearly 71%) for the Neighbourhood Plan seeking to allocate land for different types of business use (similar level of support in the business survey).

Sustainability and the Natural Environment

As a Parish we are very reliant on fossil fuel (more than 70% of households - 58% on oil and 13% on liquid gas. There is a very positive attitude to developing renewable energy, but a big knowledge gap about renewable energy options e.g. air source heat pumps.

There is strong support for other environmental initiatives, including: community tree planting scheme (including help with planting, and gifting/loaning land) and community orchard; small-holdings and habitat creation projects (e.g. wildlife ponds); and enhancing wildlife corridors.

The riverside area is the most valued area to residents from both wildlife and landscape points of view. Other areas are valued too including Haresby Lonnen; Tony's Patch and Springwood/Threepwood.

Community facilities and services

All community facilities and services are viewed as important to protect. The top ones selected are: newsagents; GP surgery; pharmacy; post office; garage; community centre/village halls; supermarket; pubs/clubs/restaurants; schools; butchers; library; churches.

By far the biggest gap identified is a café/coffee shop, followed by facilities and services for young people, a Saturday market, an indoor gym (also support for outdoor gym facilities), community learning, and facilities for older people.

Mobility and transport

Over two-thirds of residents like Haydon Bridge's good transport systems/links to major routes. The main issues for improvement are: lack of and unsuitable parking; dualling the A69; better cycling routes within the parish and cycling routes to other centres (e.g. Hexham); better train services. 41% said they would like Haydon Bridge to be more accessible – easier for people with limited mobility to get around.

Other initiatives people would like to see are: electric charging points; car sharing; active travel routes (to school/work/service hubs); and better maintenance and accessibility of footpaths, including an 'adopt a footpath scheme'.

Business survey

The 28 responses covered a wide range of businesses (some based outside the parish), with: 70% working from home; and 20% having separate business premises. About half are single person businesses; others have between 2 and 10 employees. The customer base is mainly local or regional, but there is a proportion of national and international as well.

There are a range of challenges faced by local businesses including: premises (1 in 5 will new or additional premises in the next 5 years); parking; external factors such as Brexit and Covid; sustainability and funding; and lack of time to market and scale up.

The main ways in which the Parish Council can support business retention are: promotion of a business forum (businesses indicated interested in talking and working with each other); developing planning policies that support different types of business development in the parish, including allocating land for business use; and supporting the development of a business hub.

Next steps

The key task, which we expect to complete in spring 2021, is to prepare a draft Neighbourhood Plan. This will be based on community feedback, including the findings of this survey and the business survey, and other evidence gathered for the plan. The plan will include both planning policies which will guide future development, and community actions for other issues for which formal planning policies are not required. The Parish Council will consult the community on the draft plan when it is published.