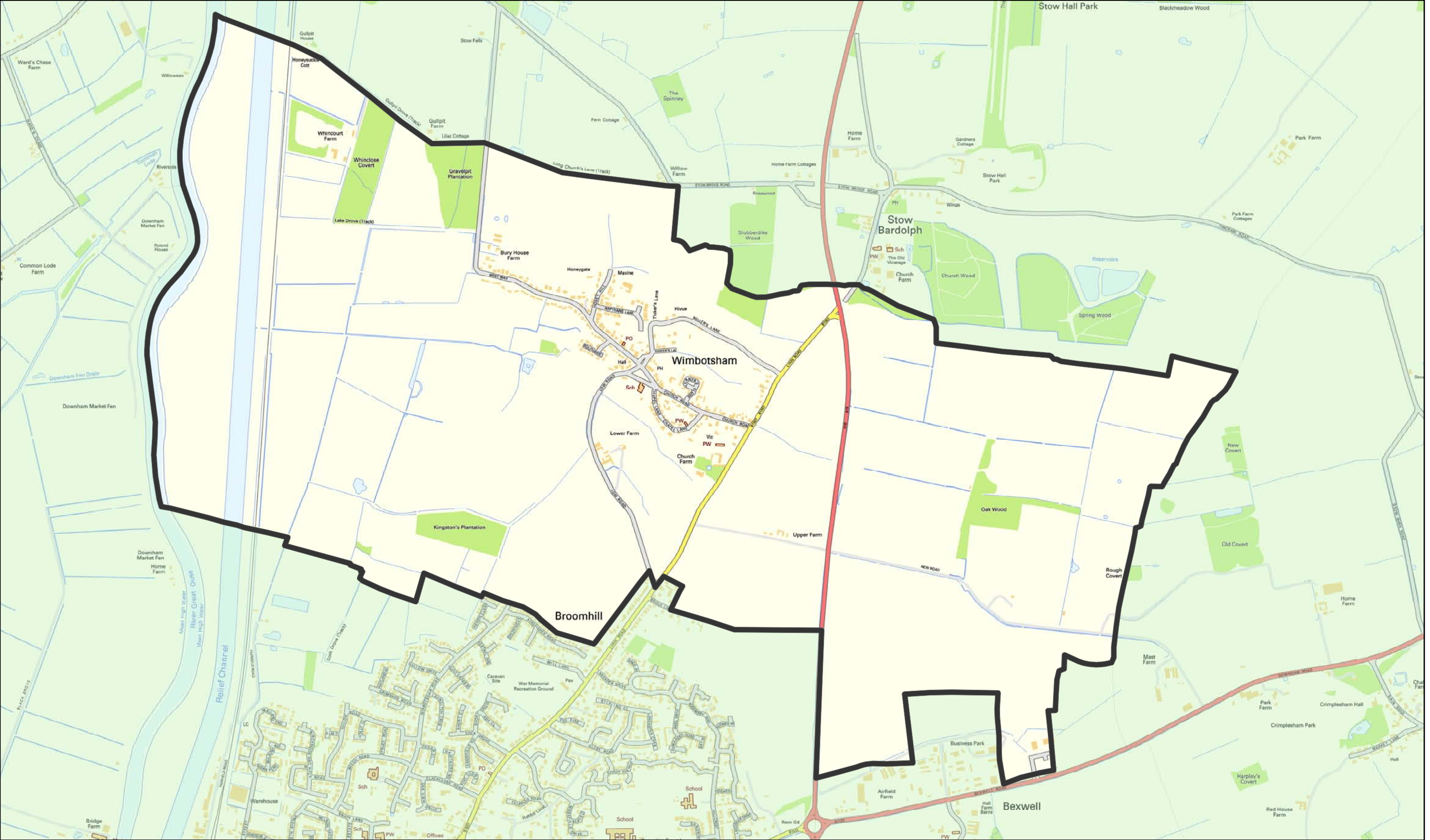



2010

WIMBOTSHAM PARISH PLAN



RESULTS AND ACTIONS



<div><div><div>Borough Council of</div><div>King's Lynn & West Norfolk</div><div></div></div><div>Tel. 01553 616200 - Fax. 01553 691663</div></div>	Title		<div><div><div><div>N</div><div>E</div><div>S</div><div>W</div></div></div><div>Scale</div><div>1:13,800</div><div>Date</div><div>22nd July 2010</div></div>	COPYRIGHT This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100024314 - 2010.
	Wimbotsham Village			
	Project / Details			
	Wimbotsham Parish Plan			
Drawn by / Department		Drawing / Reference Number		



CONTENTS

Map 1 – Wimbotsham Parish Boundary	Inside front cover
Map 2 – Wimbotsham Village	Inside back cover
Foreword	2
Introduction	5
About our village	6
Planning	8
Traffic	10
Village life	12
Village facilities	14
Feeling safe	17
Getting out and about	18
Young peoples responses	20
Action plan	22
Acknowledgements	24



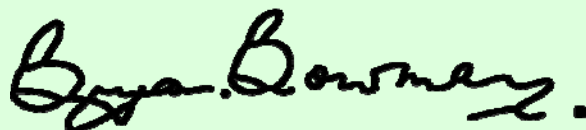
Personal message from Bryan Bowman, Chairman of Wimbotsham Parish Council to May 2010.

I was delighted when approximately 100 of Wimbotsham's residents attended the public meeting in March 2008 to hear more about a proposed Parish Plan for the village. I was further encouraged when volunteers stepped forward to form a Steering Committee to produce the Plan. Since its creation and with the progress reports to the Parish Council, I know that the Steering Committee has worked professionally throughout and has now produced a Parish Plan the village can be proud of. We have an accurate and objective document to work with and can do our best as a Parish Council to follow the recommended actions through for the benefit of Wimbotsham's residents.

It is clear that a lot of hard work has gone into the research and preparation of the final document and as a community we should be grateful to the team who have worked on this over the last two years. An 82% response rate demonstrates the views and comments printed can be relied on as being representative of the community's views.

In the past the village was a busier place during the day, people were able to meet, chat and share information. Members of our community knew what was happening in the village. With today's differing lifestyle we need to compensate for this and make sure our residents are kept informed of all our village plans, activities and opportunities.

I have lived in Wimbotsham for seventeen years and seen quite a few changes. There has been a great increase in the volume of traffic. Several new properties have been built with a good number of new people moving here but this is still a lovely place to live.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Bowman." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a period at the end.

Bryan Bowman
Parish Councillor

Jackie Squires
Parish Plan Chairperson

Dear Jackie,

I have read through the Wimbotsham Parish Plan with great interest, and feel that you have covered all aspects of living or being connected with the village.

Although I live in Stow Bardolph, I have had close ties with Wimbotsham for nearly 50 years and I do feel that future plans for the village mean a lot to me.

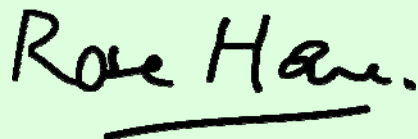
I strongly agree with all the positive comments of living in the village shown on page 7 and if there is to be further development, I very much agree with the point made on page 8 "We need small scale development sympathetic to local architecture, not big estates". I also agree strongly that we need affordable housing for local people.

Safety and speeding on the roads is obviously a very important issue, especially with so many children in the village.

We are very lucky to have so many village facilities, but I agree with the comments on the village shop on page 14. The shop could be much more attractive and to sell local produce could be a great bonus.

The bus service is good, but the excellent suggestion on page 19 for the number 37 to drive through the village would help a lot of passengers.

To conclude, I would like to say that we are very privileged to have such an active and attractive village with its own school, church, chapel, pub, shop, village hall, village green and recreation ground. Wimbotsham is a village to be treasured, nurtured and appreciated, so that many generations to come will enjoy the facilities which we all have today.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rose Hare." The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letters of "Rose" and "Hare" being capitalized and prominent. A horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.

Lady Rose Hare





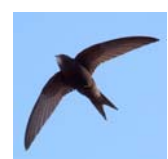
Wimbotsham is an historic village on the main route between London and King's Lynn, just a mile north of Downham Market. It has a number of older buildings and being on rising ground at the edge of the fens, the village centre has an attractive feel that is protected through Conservation Area status. The village retains a church and chapel, a primary school, a pub and shop as well as a number of independent businesses. Wimbotsham parish includes a small number of rural dwellings outside the main village as well as the surrounding countryside which is predominantly farmland but is readily accessible through public or permissive footpaths and bridleways. The two maps show the entire parish and the main village.

In 2008 the total population of the village was 606 persons. Household income in the village is close to the national average. Housing is all general purpose, owned or rented. There is no shared ownership and no special provision for vulnerable disabled or elderly people. Perhaps reflecting this, compared to the population of West Norfolk as a whole, villagers are relatively healthy, with marginally lower percentages of people with ill health or limiting long-term illnesses.

Having been undertaken objectively, the plan is a valuable and representative expression of the social, economic and environmental concerns of the Parish. It is the voice of the residents and has given them the opportunity to influence future changes in the village. The Plan looks briefly at the past, analyses the present (i.e. population and housing) and finally focuses on the future through an action plan.

The Parish Plan is based on questionnaires designed by the Parish Plan Steering group and completed in March 2009. There was a substantial questionnaire for each household, and supplementary youth (12-17 yrs) and junior (8-11 yrs) questionnaires for individual young people. Delivered and collected by volunteers, we had an outstanding household response rate of 82%. These questionnaires have been analysed and the results are presented in the following pages.

It should be noted that at the time of the survey a relatively large (37 homes) development was nearing completion, some of the new dwellings were already occupied and some were under construction. This affected the issues and concerns raised.



ABOUT OUR VILLAGE

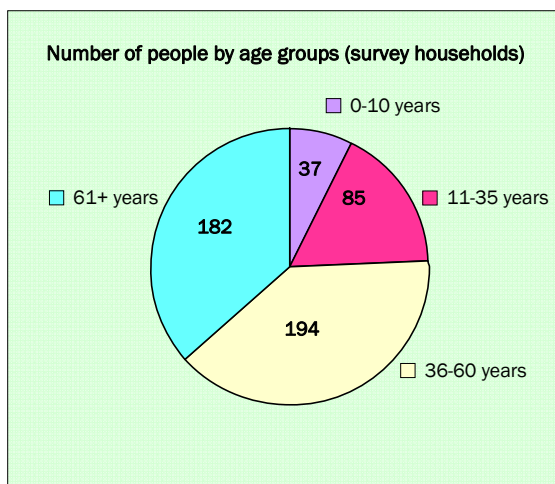


What is Wimbotsham like? 'About Our Village' looks at the mix of people of different ages that make up the village. Our questionnaire asked how long they have lived in Wimbotsham and what they like or dislike about living here.

82%

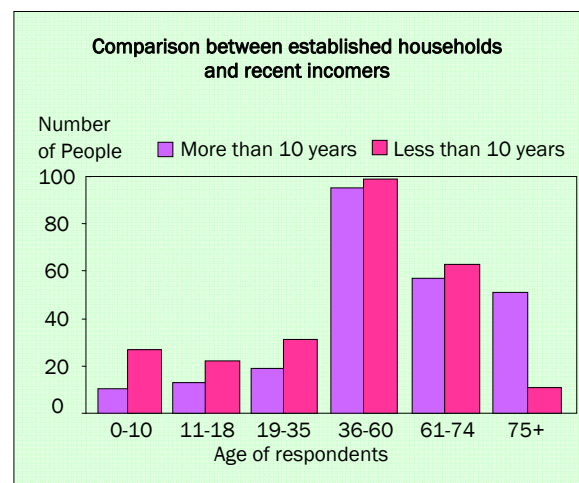
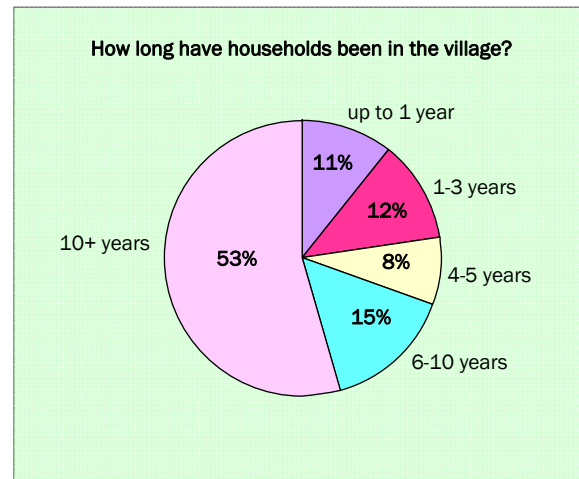
There were 291 households in the village at the time of the survey. 239 of these households, representing 498 people, returned the questionnaires. This is an excellent response rate of 82% and means that the results can be trusted.

The chart below indicates the age breakdown for people in the households responding to the questionnaire and shows that only around a quarter were younger adults or children.



Just over half the households responding to the questionnaire have lived in the village for 10 years or more. These include the majority of the over 75 year olds in the village.

Households that have arrived more recently account for the majority of school-age children and other young people.



The questionnaire asked what people liked or disliked about living in the village. There was a lot of agreement on many positive aspects:

- Rural environment
- Friendly community
- Good neighbours
- Convenient for Downham Market
- Feel safe
- Low crime rate

ABOUT OUR VILLAGE

The only negative view of the village that was mentioned by more than half of all households was that the countryside is being spoilt by too much development.

The rural environment and good quality of life were referred to by an even greater proportion of the more recent incomers than by the established households.



A few people added comments on their liking for the village.

"We adore the village and love being a part of the community in which we will become more involved as our young family grow up."

"We love Wimbotsham & feel lucky to live here. Thank you to you who care!"

"Have lived in Wimbotsham for 8 months. In that short time there is virtually nothing I am unhappy with, in fact the experience has exceeded expectations."



The comments of young people through their separate questionnaires also indicated that they liked living in the village because it is quiet and peaceful with nice neighbours and a friendly atmosphere which gave them a feeling of safety when out and about.

"Wimbotsham is a quiet village."

"I feel safe when walking out."

Concerns mentioned by a significant minority of households were:

- Poor public transport
- Difficult to know what is going on locally (the majority of these were more recent incomers), and
- No access to a good social life

Amongst our younger respondents concerns expressed were:

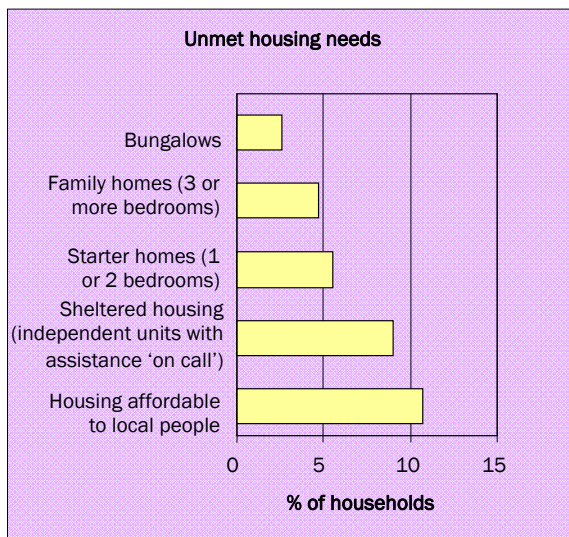
- Poor condition and facilities on the village playing field
- Little or no opportunity to mix and meet others of the same age





'Planning' deals with the built environment of the village and its distinctive character. Our questionnaire covered housing, the design of new development and lighting.

Asked about future housing needs, the majority, 3 out of 4 households, said the village does not need any more housing. A minority asked for housing to meet specific requirements as shown here.



Note the chart could under-represent the real need, as those who could not find such accommodation in the village will not be here.

16%

Only 16% of respondents considered that new development over the past 2-3 years fits in well with what was here before. Several households commented on housing development, identifying locations where problems have arisen. Many of these comments highlighted a concern with protecting the rural character of the village.

"Trees protected so that developers cannot fell them without going through the correct process (Napthan's Lane)."

"Over the past 40 years the village has grown beyond recognition, the rural character of Miller's Lane being lost."

"We need small-scale development sympathetic to local architecture, not big estates."

"Conservation area boundaries should be well defined and enlarged."

"The village needs a design statement to establish guidelines for any future development."

"The village doesn't have the infrastructure to cope with further expansion."

"New housing is near a storage/industrial facility, which is not only an eye-sore but is noisy, engines are left running for long periods which cause noise pollution at unsociable times."

"Too much new development will change the character of our village and bring problems such as increased crime; anti-social behaviour, breakdown of community, traffic /parking problems; local services becoming over-stretched."



The village is separated from Downham Market by open countryside. Villagers have concerns that future expansion of the town could threaten the character and identity of the village.

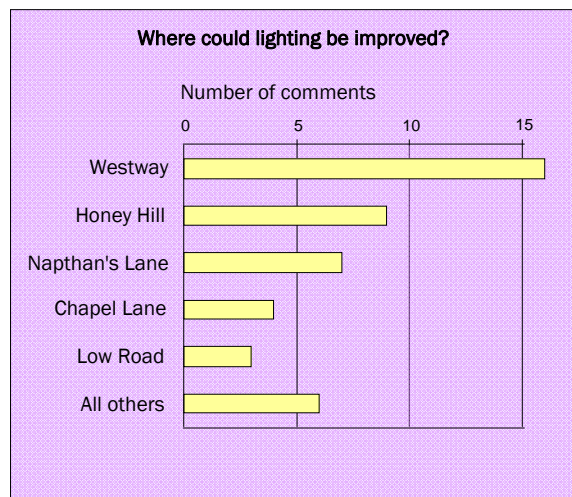
Responses to extended development

- If Downham Market expanded towards Wimbotsham it would be a good thing. **3%**
- If Downham Market is developed towards Wimbotsham, a green corridor separating town and village should be a country park for walkers and cyclists. **50%**
- If Downham Market is developed towards Wimbotsham the countryside between should be farmed as it is now. **67%**
- Keep fields between Wimbotsham and neighbouring Stowbridge and Downham Market. **91%**

The high level of agreement (91% of respondents) that fields should be protected between the village and its neighbouring settlements makes this one of the top shared concerns of villagers.

48%

Lighting in rural villages provokes debate. The largest group of respondents to the questionnaire (48%) said lighting around the village was just right. However, many households (35%) suggested there was not enough lighting and many people provided additional comments suggesting changes to the lighting in the village.



The main cause for concern was Westway. Comments included.

“Lighting is spaced too far apart and there are many dark areas.”

“It’s too dark to walk along Westway to get to the village shop at night. We need more light near the shop.”

“Lighting is poor along the road at the western end of the village and the road to Stowbridge in particular is unlit.”

“Poor lighting at the bottom of the village is dangerous for night-time dog walkers.”

Several places that were not well lit were considered particularly dangerous because the path is uneven or there is no pavement. This applied to Honey Hill, Low Road, Chapel Lane and Church Road. The lower end of Chapel Lane was considered by several households to be of particular concern.

There was also concern about Low Road; just beyond the Village Hall there is no lighting at all and no provision for pedestrians.

A significant minority view was that there is too much lighting in places. 10% of households considered street or security lighting to be excessive in some parts.

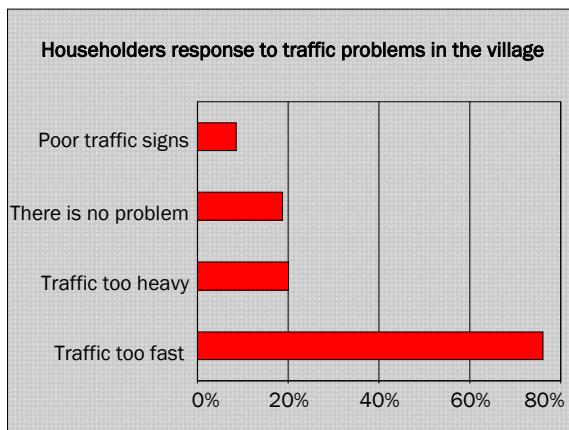
Amongst the specific comments, there were complaints that the new development in Napthans Lane had lighting that was brighter than elsewhere in the village, giving too much light pollution in the countryside. There was also concern that bright lighting was expensive to maintain and should be turned off at midnight. One household thought that there was too much light pollution in general. One household complained that the village green was too brightly lit. Two comments were made that eco lighting should be used along with downward lighting to avoid upward light spill.

There were several comments and complaints about security lights which disturbed householders, (as the questionnaire was anonymous, it was not always clear who the culprit was).

TRAFFIC

Like many rural communities, villagers in Wimbotsham are very dependent on their cars. In addition, some rural east-west traffic passes through the village. How does this historic village cope with traffic? Our survey asked about any problems.

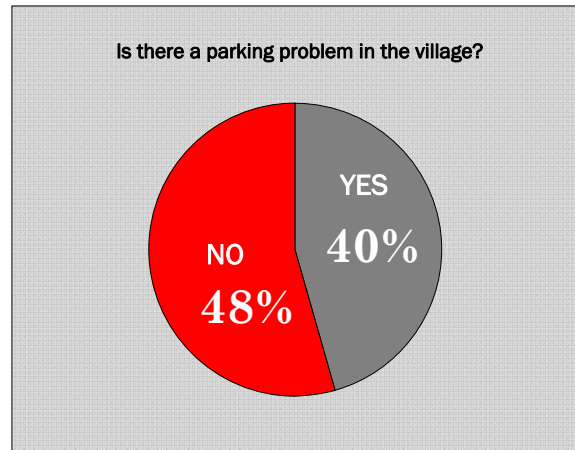
A very high proportion of households responded to these questions about traffic. Although there were several comments about the heavy lorries that come into and through the village, speeding was seen as a much bigger problem. More than three quarters of households who completed the survey highlighted a problem with the speed of traffic moving through the village.



Speeding was seen as an issue in several different parts of the village and unsurprisingly, most respondents agreed that the speed limits do not work.

A number of households made suggestions to combat and solve the problems: flashing speed lights, road narrowing to slow drivers down, stricter enforcement of speed limits, speed bumps and footpath around the village hall, 40mph limit on Low Road beyond the village, 20mph throughout the whole village, speed camera at lower end of village, traffic calming measures when entering the village, e.g. a 5 bar gate design either side of the road. One person commented that such measures would show we care about our village and its residents.

Whilst speeding was widely perceived to be a problem, people were divided on whether parking is an issue, perhaps reflecting the situation close to where they live.



Households commented on the way cars were parked in the village creating problems for both drivers and pedestrians, causing poor visibility and access, blocked driveways and damage to verges.

There were general comments about traffic in the village.

“Roads in village not capable of coping with modern traffic, also shortage of off road parking.”

In addition, many householders provided comments linked to specific problem areas and we have highlighted the areas that attracted the most comment below.

Westway: Here speeding is the major concern for many, especially at the lower end of the village where it leads to the road to Stowbridge. The roundabout, very new at the time of the survey, attracted comment.

“Drivers are using Westway as a drag strip.”

“New roundabout has poor visibility to the right and cars do not give way properly.”

“Traffic is a problem along the stretch past the shop, between the Village Hall and roundabout.”

“Mini-roundabout often ignored, people don't slow down or give way.”

TRAFFIC

Low Road: Households' comments for Low Road relate to drivers' speed and pedestrian safety. A footpath between Westway and Low Road to link in with the existing footpath to Downham Market has been suggested.

"20 mph on Low Road not adhered to; very dangerous bend vehicles go too fast."

"Traffic on Low Road too fast, accidents always happening."

"Too fast coming into the village and around the corner by the village hall."

Church Road: Traffic problems here drew more comments than any other road in the village. The road is used by buses and heavy lorries, is narrow, slopes steeply and many of the older houses here have no off-road parking. The school is located at the western end of the road and adds to the problem, especially at the 3pm school closing time. This lower end of the road has a 20 mph speed limit.

"Lorries & buses trying to pass each other, speeding, cars parked opposite driveways & sometimes blocking driveway, parents going to/from school parking badly."

"Traffic problem on Church Rd near school."

"20 mph zone around school and village green not being adhered to. Countless near misses while pushing buggy."

"20 mph ignored. Drivers going too fast down Church Road and through village."

"Church Road very badly congested, cars half parked on pavements obstructing paths."

"Too fast past school & up Church Road."

New roundabout at junction of Westway and Honeyhill: Households commented that the 'new' roundabout at the junction of Honeyhill is dangerous due to poor visibility for drivers and many cars ignoring giving way to the right. Traffic exiting Honeyhill has to pull into the main road to see approaching traffic.

"New traffic island at junction of Honey Hill and West Way is dangerous - no clear view when turning."



"Many cars ignore giving way to the right."

"Traffic too fast up/down Honey Hill. People with gravel drives need to keep paths clear to reduce accident risk."

Lynn Road: This road carries traffic heading north from Downham Market to the A10 and has a speed restriction of 50mph. The junction of Church Road with Lynn Road is on a slope and close to a blind summit and there have been a number of accidents.

"Speed limit too high on Lynn Road. Blind spot at the top of the hill."



"Speed limit on Lynn Road needs to be reduced to 40 mph."

"A10/Lynn Rd junction is very dangerous - put in a roundabout."



Is village life the rural idyll it is often said to be? We wanted to find out about the social side of village life, about whether people knew what was going on and how to influence change.

The places where people most often reported meeting and talking with other villagers, all accounting for more than half of households; were in the street, at the shop, or in someone's home. Other common places to mix with other villagers were the pub and the village hall.

32%

The village hall was referred to by a much larger proportion of established households (32%) than households who'd lived in the village for less than 10 years (20%).

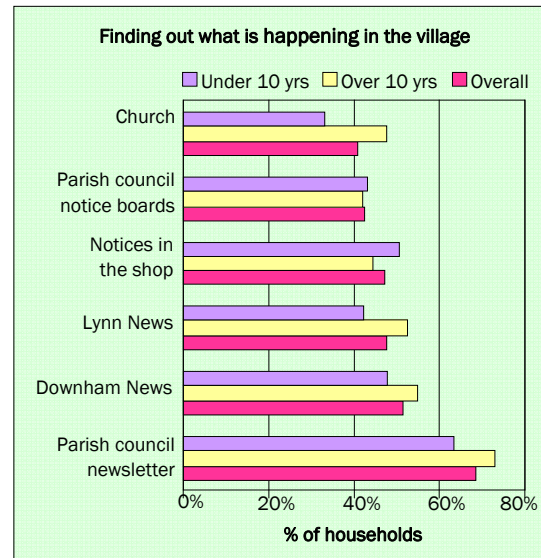
The recreation ground and the school were mentioned by less than 10% of households. One person commented that the allotments are an additional potential meeting point and added that meetings and conversations with other villagers also arise when walking a dog.

The Youth and Junior questionnaires explored the social side of their life in the village slightly differently, young people reporting what they did with their spare time. The most often quoted activities were solitary: watching TV, playing games on a PC, listening to music or surfing the net. However, seeing friends also rated highly and was mentioned on more than two thirds of the youth and junior questionnaires.



Three quarters of the young people reported that they travelled outside the village for group activities.

How do people find out what is going on in Wimbotsham? The chart below shows the most popular sources of information highlighting differences between longer established households and more recent incomers to the village.



The village website (<http://eoe.xarg.co.uk/wimbotshampc/>) was not much used and was referred to by only 4% of households.

One person commented that posters at the roadside, for example on telegraph poles, can be informative and there were additional suggestions for a village notice board at the shop and for a new village magazine.





The questionnaire provided a list of village activities and social opportunities and invited respondents to make suggestions if there were things they would like to do that did not exist at present. Suggestions included:

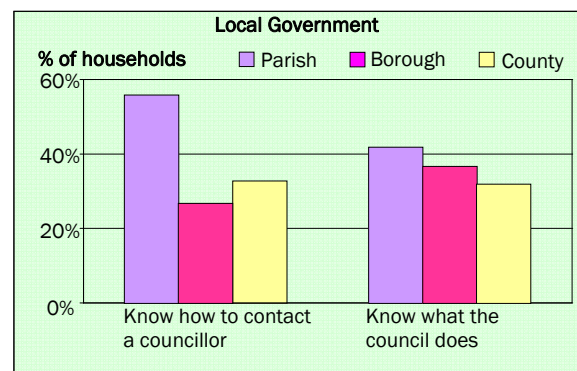
- More sporting activities for children, which includes a bigger and better sports area with floodlighting, together with a Youth Club.
- Village activities (possibly linked to fund-raising): Saturday car boot sales, a scarecrow competition, open gardens, or entry into the best-kept village or village green contests.
- Exercise classes, tennis court, pool and snooker, dancing or dance classes (line dancing, circle and Scottish dancing), yoga, book club, computing for beginners, local history group and art classes.



Young people made additional suggestions through the youth and junior questionnaires. Popular suggestions were for a youth club, football, scouts, and a youth shelter/meeting space. The need for improved drainage on the playing field was highlighted. One respondent said,

"I don't like a soggy playing field."

Households were asked about their knowledge of local government through questions about the parish, borough and county councils.



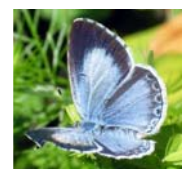
The parish council was clearly more accessible than councils at borough or county level. Overall, 41% households agreed that the parish council represented the village effectively. Longer-established households were more familiar with the roles of the separate councils and how to contact a councillor. A number commented.

41%

"I don't know what councils at each level do."

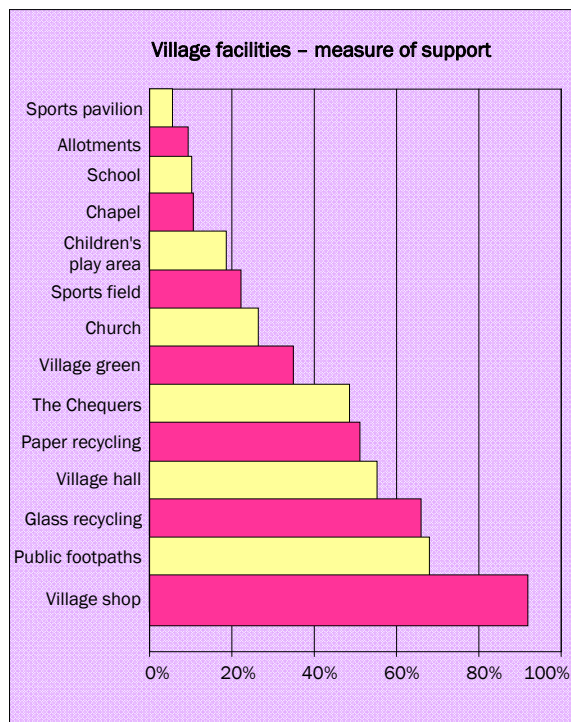
"I'd like improved information about the parish council and its representatives."

"We need better communication and more openness on the issues we should be aware of now and in the future. Website updated and expanded newsletter more often. Better initiatives to inspire people to get involved in projects that could benefit the whole village."



VILLAGE FACILITIES

What does our village offer to support those living here? Does it retain a range of well used amenities or is it at risk of becoming a dormitory? Do public service and utility providers offer high quality services within Wimbotsham? Continuation of our village facilities relies upon support from the residents. Our questionnaire identified the popularity of facilities and services and invited suggestions for improvement which will become actions for the parish council to take forward.



90%

Out of all the facilities, the village shop is the best supported with over 90% of respondents saying they use it. However, there were some suggestions for improvement.

"The village shop could be more useable if it had more to offer, eg. local fresh veg, bread and maybe a deli counter."



Recycling facilities are especially well used by residents of more than 10 years. Some newer households were unaware of the facilities behind The Chequers.

Longer term residents reported higher usage of the village hall. The condition of the village hall attracted many comments.

"Village hall desperately requires upgrading, it is out-dated, very uncomfortable to use. It is also environmentally unfriendly and is extremely draughty, therefore wasting heat."

"The village hall needs a hearing aid loop and radio mike."

"The village hall committee room is very drab, chairs hard & uncomfortable, kitchen could be modernised."

Both of the questionnaires completed by young people gave them chance to rate the village facilities. A large proportion identified the shop and the village green as 'good'. However, the football field, pavilion and children's play area (places provided for young people to meet and play with their peers) were rated 'poor' by some. Several commented that there was not enough to do in the village and that they had little or no opportunity to meet others of the same age.

Use of the public footpaths around the village is high with 69% of respondents saying they use them. This high use is reflected in the strong support for safer walking routes in and out of the village. One household suggested.

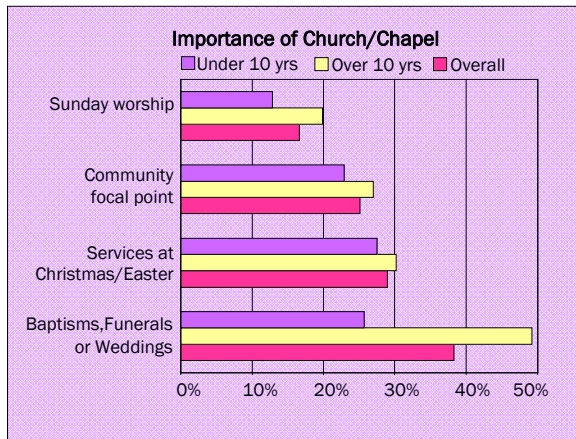
"Walks in and around the village could be published on the Wimbotsham Parish Council website."

The village pub relies on local support for its viability. The survey showed that the newer households in Wimbotsham support the pub more than longer-established households. One household voiced their concern.

"People should use the pub or we will eventually lose it."

VILLAGE FACILITIES

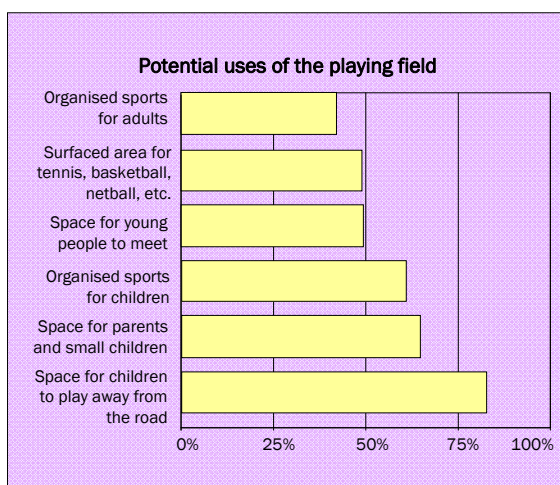
We asked if the Church or Chapel were important to households.



Longer term residents support the church more than those living here less than 10 years. There were many households who were not regular Sunday worshippers who attended special services and additional households for whom the buildings were important as a community focal point. Taken together, responses indicated that church or chapel was important to 57% of village households even though only 17% participate in Sunday worship.

57%

The village playing field is now owned by Wimbotsham Recreation Ground Ltd. This makes it possible to seek outside funding in order to make improvements to the field and households' comments will be important consultation evidence for this. The first priority is drainage. Most households saw the main use of the playing field as a space for children to play away from the road.

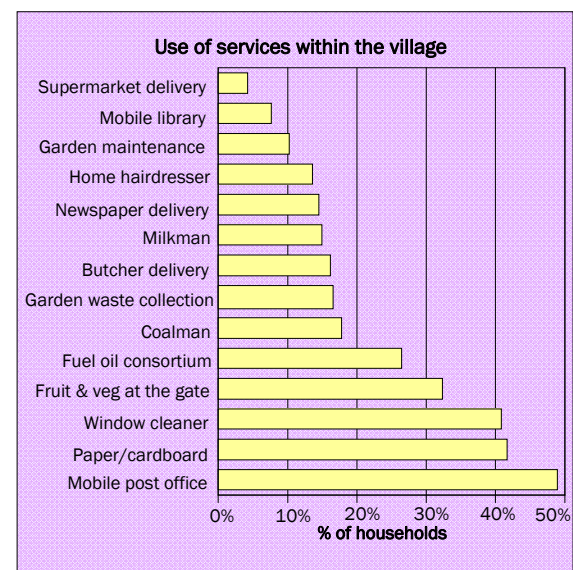


We received a number of comments relevant to the development and future use of the playing field.

"There should be more activities for the 8-15 year olds."

"With better facilities such as an updated sports pavilion, the field could be used for special events as is the village green. Find out what villagers would like to take part in, perhaps set up an events committee."

Use of the various services available within the village is illustrated below.



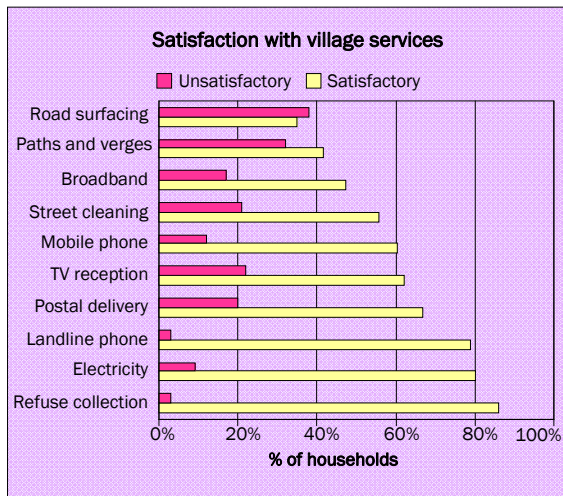
These services reduce the amount of travelling that villagers must do in order to meet their daily needs. It was evident in the survey that longer-established households were making more use of some of these mobile services than more recent incomers.

This was particularly marked with paper and cardboard collection, window cleaner, butcher's delivery and newspaper delivery. This could be because the most recent incomers had not yet identified these services, or because the longer-established households tended to be older and less mobile.

One household reminded us of other mobile services that were not included in the questionnaire: fresh fish deliveries and the fish and chip van.

VILLAGE FACILITIES

Householders were also asked if they were satisfied with utilities and maintenance services supplied to the village.



A number of comments clarified specific areas of dissatisfaction.

On refuse collection: bins left 'willy nilly' on pavements and limited plastic recycling capacity.

On electricity supply: occasional power cuts - less frequent than in the past, but can still be a nuisance.

On postal service: lateness of deliveries.

On TV reception: inability to receive the Anglia broadcasts and poor reception on digital.

On broadband: erratic and slow.

On paths and verges: gravelled driveways leaving stones on pavements, some verges left uncut, and uneven pavements near the school, Chapel Lane, Honey Hill, between The Chequers and the shop, on Church Road and Lynn Road to Downham.

The greatest dissatisfaction was with road surfacing where some households mentioning problems also suggested possible solutions.

"Miller's Lane is in a poor state. Local people need to get together to repair the potholes, as was done in the past."

"Westway/Miller's Lane corner is liable to flooding."

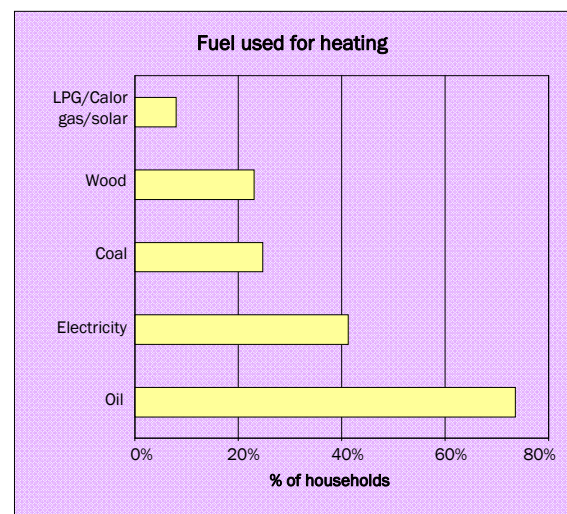
"Honey Hill is particularly problematic for people with limited mobility and using wheelchairs."

Other roads mentioned by more than one respondent were Chapel Lane, Church Road and Low Road where it was suggested there should be provision for surface water which tends to flood the roadside as it runs downhill after heavy rain.

Allotments are very popular within the village. 22 households (9%) said they already have one but 30 households said they would like to have one within the next 2 to 3 years. The survey was conducted at a time when interest in allotments is increasing nationally and suggests a relatively high demand for allotments in the village. Our demand is equivalent to 120 per 1000 dwellings - 5 times the minimum rate suggested by the National Society for Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.

9%

The survey indicated that the village is very dependent on fuel oil for heating.



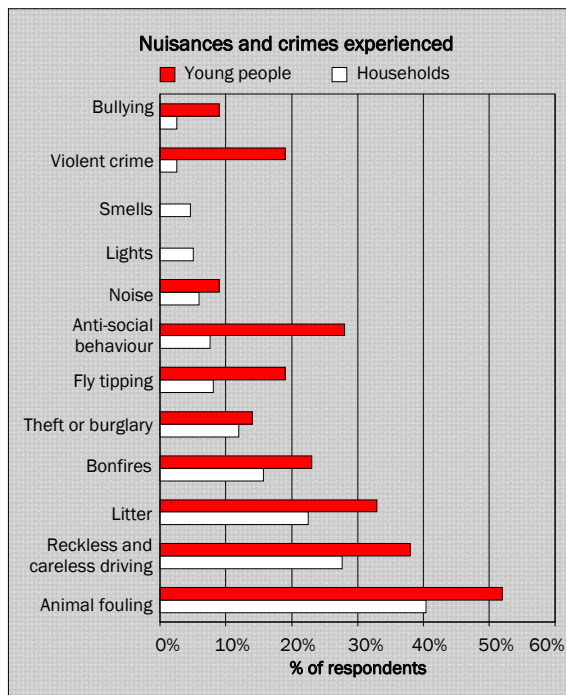
At present there is no mains gas in the village though gas is supplied to Downham Market less than a mile away.

The questionnaire asked if householders would connect if the opportunity arose. More than half of respondents said 'Yes'. There was a tendency for those wanting to switch to gas to be amongst the households that have been in the village for less than ten years.

FEELING SAFE

We used the questionnaire to find out whether people feel safe in Wimbotsham. There were questions about households' experience of a range of nuisances or crimes, and the extent to which they were satisfied with any police involvement.

The chart below shows the spread of experiences reported.



The survey provided more information on these experiences:

Animal fouling: dogs were the main culprits and dog mess was referred to in many comments from both householders and young people, with the place most affected being Millers Lane. There were several references to the problems caused to small children and pushchairs. A number of people commented on the need for 'dog poo' bins and there was a complaint that some dog walkers were leaving their 'poo bags' stuffed into hedgerows. There was an additional complaint about cats fouling a garden.

Reckless or careless driving: again reported by both householders and young people. In addition to those comments included under 'Traffic' there was a comment about youths riding motorbikes on the edge of private land along Low Road.

Fly-tipping: reported in the woods off Lake Drove.

Bonfires: one household suggested that these should not take place till after 7pm.

Crime: 28% of respondents had experienced a crime and the majority reported these to the police. Most people who commented on the police were very satisfied, describing the police response as good, helpful, or excellent. However, there were several people who reported a different experience.

28%

"I reported a burglary at the shop but the police never came to speak to me."

"They treated me as if I was a daft old biddy who'd put my ring somewhere and forgotten where."

"Police seem to have more important things to do than find a car stolen from your drive."

"Police didn't visit me after car stolen and when it was found – not happy with service."

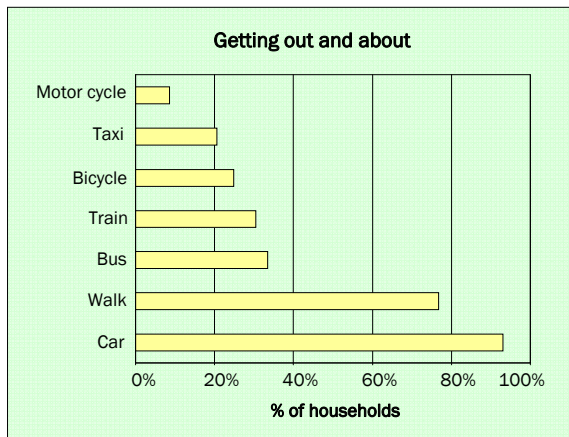
There was a high degree of support for a neighbourhood watch scheme in the village, two thirds of households. There was even greater support amongst households that have been in the village for less than ten years. Only 10% overall were against such a new scheme.

GETTING OUT AND ABOUT

Is Wimbotsham a good base for people who work or study further afield? How do people manage if they need to access healthcare or participate in sporting activities? Our survey asked how people get out and about.

93%

The majority (93%) of households use a car.



Many households have more than one vehicle. For every 40 households there are 54 cars, 5 vans, and 8 motorcycles. It is not surprising we suffer from a car parking problem, especially in the top (older) end of the village.

Our questionnaire also showed that many people walk (three quarters of households) and that people in a quarter of all households cycled. There was strong support for safer walking and cycling routes, as indicated below:

- Route to the High School. **23%**
- Route to the station. **30%**
- Route to the river. **31%**
- Route to Stow Bardolph. **34%**
- Safe crossing of the A10. **47%**
- Route to Downham Market. **52%**

Several households commented that Low Road is unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists and others highlighted similar issues on the route to Stowbridge where the road is narrow but straight and traffic tends to go quite fast.

"A cycle path to Stowbridge would be excellent."

Although a third of all households reported that they use the train service from Downham Market, only 5% do so on a weekly basis. They provided positive feedback, saying that facilities were good with friendly and helpful staff. They also offered several suggestions for improving the service.

"Need a better Sunday service."

"Provide more parking at the railway station."

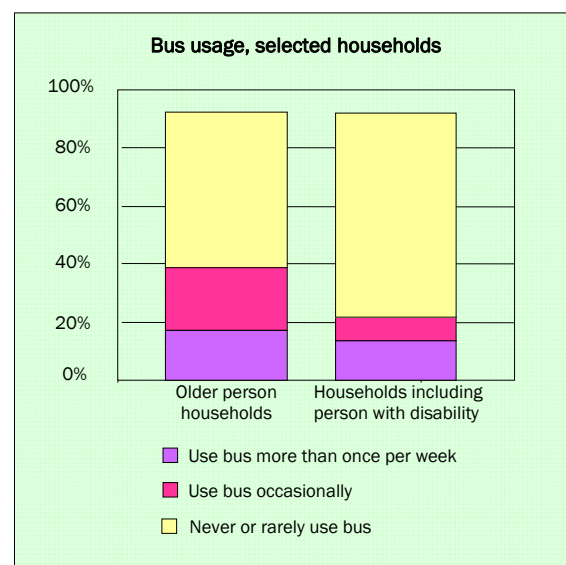
"Police or railway staff should be on the late night trains to protect the wider public from people affected by drink/drugs."

"More trains at peak periods - specifically, a half hourly service to Cambridge."

"Introduce a later train from King's Lynn."

"Fares are expensive."

Two thirds of households never, or rarely, use the buses and only 12% (1 in 8) use the bus frequently (more than once a week). Bus use is much more common in older person households (defined here as households with no-one under 60), and less common in households where someone had a disability.



GETTING OUT AND ABOUT

Households where someone had a disability were much more likely to say that they could not get onto the bus and the bus-stops are inconvenient.

What bus users say about the service

- The bus stops are inconvenient. **6%**
- There is no bus when I need to travel. **14%**
- The bus connects to other services I want to use. **22%**
- Information on the route and timetable is readily available. **49%**
- It is affordable and good value. **58%**
- Staff are friendly and helpful. **65%**
- I can rely on the bus service. **69%**
- I feel safe going to and from the stop, on/off the bus and whilst travelling. **71%**
- The bus goes where I need to go. **83%**
- I am able to get to the bus stop. **85%**

The village has two bus services with one No 37 only serving the top end of the village. The service is inconvenient for people travelling to or from points north of the village. For most villagers, the northbound service involves a long trek up Church Road. Passengers returning by this service then have to alight at the side of Lynn Road on a narrow stretch with no pavement, and cross the road to walk down into the village.

Several respondents included comments about unsafe stops and inconvenience of the No 37 service, for example.

“Bus stop very dangerous and in a silly place. Bus holds traffic up and it’s near a hill so you can’t see to cross. Bus should come through the village at all times.”

“Bus service No 37 should come down Low Road and service the village centre.”

Several other suggestions were put forward for this service to divert into the village centre via Low Road and/or Church Road, making

the service available to more residents and commuters. The change would add very little to journey times and was in daily use (the 15.42 to Kings Lynn) until it was axed in September 2009.

Other suggestions for improvement of the bus services included.

“Buses to connect with train arrivals and departures.”

“More buses, particularly at weekends.”

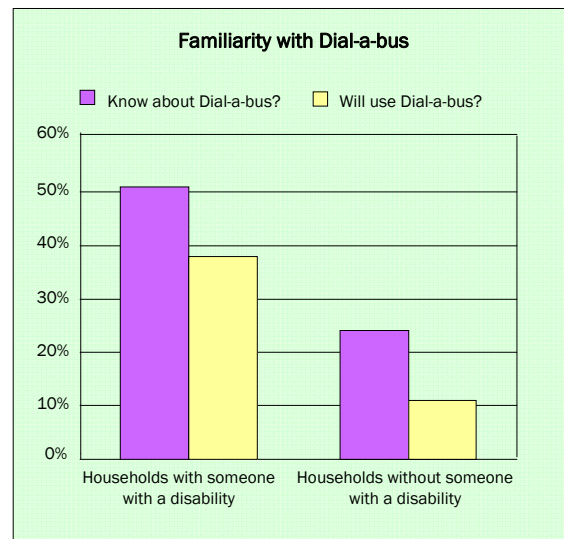
“Bus timetables need to provide a return service suitable for shopping etc.”

“Difficult getting to Wisbech by bus.”

“More buses in early morning (7-9am) to Kings Lynn and more returning in the evening (4.30-6.30pm).”

“Improve bus shelters (put one on Westway), provide timetables and mark bus stops.”

A supplementary mode of transport available in the village is the Dial-a-bus service. Awareness of the service is markedly different for households that included someone with a disability.



YOUNG PEOPLES RESPONSES



Alongside our household survey we distributed separate versions for young people aged 12-17 years and juniors 8-11 years. These were completed by a total of 33 young people. Where it was appropriate, their responses have been incorporated within the Plan. However, the young people's surveys provided some additional information about what it is like to be growing up in the village; where they have to go for school or college; the opportunities for them to enjoy spare time in the village and what they think about the facilities provided for them here.

Our respondents were 17 boys and 16 girls with an even spread across the age range.

All of these young people were participating in education and two thirds of those eligible were attending the school in the village. Schools and colleges attended were as below; numbers of students are in brackets.

- Wimbotsham and Stow Community School (6)
- Hillcrest Primary School, Downham Market (2)
- Runcton Holme Church of England Primary School, Runcton Holme (1)
- Downham Market High School (18)
- Downham Market 6th Form College (4, one of whom was working part-time & one also attending COWA)
- College of West Anglia (3, one was also attending 6th Form College)



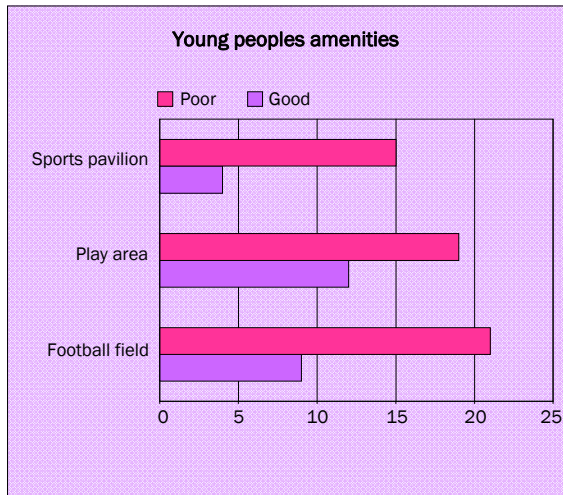
Only the village school is within easy walking distance, though some of the High School students said they walk occasionally if the weather is good. A quarter of the young people reported using a bus but, for the majority, the journey involves car travel.

Our survey asked what the young people did in their spare time in the village. The most often reported activities across all ages were playing computer games, watching TV and listening to music, closely followed by seeing friends. Amongst the younger respondents activities reported included playing on the recreation ground, cycling and football. The young people also commented on things that bother them when they are around the village with their friends. The most frequently reported nuisances were speeding traffic, animal fouling, and 'grumpy villagers'.

Apart from the school, the village amenities that might be expected to play a large part in the life of our young people are the recreation ground, children's play area, and the sports pavilion. These were not highly regarded in our survey.



YOUNG PEOPLES RESPONSES



The young people made a number of suggestions for improving the existing field and play area: better drainage, an adventure play ground and a shelter. They also made requests for additional facilities:

- Safe bike riding area
- Skate park
- Youth club

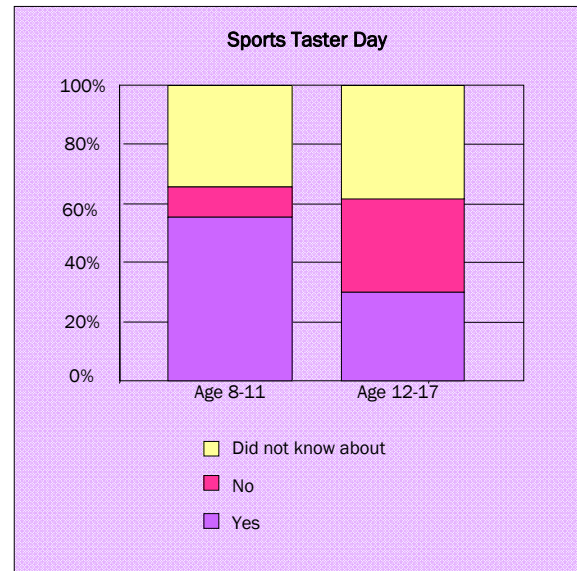
The survey was carried out shortly after a 'Sports Taster Day' had been held in the village. We asked how many had attended.



Day	Time	Event	Venue
Sunday	8 - 12 12 - 1.30 1.30 - 2.30	Karate (come and watch) Karate (come and try) 5-14yrs Karate (come and try) 14yrs plus	Village Hall Village Hall
Sunday	10 - 12	Table Tennis	School
Sunday	10.30-12.30	Football	Playing Field
Sunday	12 - 2	Climbing wall	Playing Field
Sunday	12 - 2	Skate ramp	Playing Field
Sunday	2	Cycling (please bring your own cycle)	Meet at Chequers public house
Sunday	2 - 4	Short Tennis	School
Sunday	2 - 4	Netball	School
Sunday	2 - 4	Angling (please bring your own bait)	Playing Field
Sunday	2 - 3	Fencing 6-8yrs	Playing Field/Pavilion
Sunday	3 - 4	Fencing 9-11yrs	Playing Field/Pavilion
Sunday	3 - 5	Short Mat Bowls	Village Hall
Sunday	5	Family Rounders followed by B-B-Q (please bring your own drink and food to cook)	Playing Field

For more information Contact Chris Hartley 0774907739

Their responses indicated that a third of them had not known about the day and amongst those who knew it was happening, a higher proportion of the younger age groups had been attracted to go along. For these young people, the activities that they found most enjoyable were rock climbing and table tennis.



The majority of our respondents would be interested in having professional sports coaching or other additional activities arranged for the summer holidays. Their requests included football, basketball, cricket, badminton, tennis, table tennis and rock climbing.

Two thirds of our respondents join in with clubs or activities in Downham Market or in neighbouring villages. The most popular activities were youth club, football, swimming, scouts and gym.



ACTION PLAN

The questionnaire set up expectations amongst householders who were asked for an opinion. Some people requested additional information on village activities or volunteered to assist in activities. Such requests and offers have already been followed up. The recommended actions below represent ways of addressing other suggestions made and issues apparent from the questionnaire responses.

PLANNING

- 1 Take steps to provide affordable housing for local people.
- 2 Produce and adopt a Design Statement ensuring that the village remains a distinctive settlement separated by fields from both Downham Market and Stowbridge.
- 3 Review and analyse lighting in the village and make appropriate changes as opportunities arise.

TRAFFIC

- 1 Explore speed reduction initiatives suitable for the identified problem areas and make appropriate changes to control traffic speeds. For the Stow Bridge to Wimbotsham road this will need to be carried out alongside Stow Bardolph Parish Council.
- 2 In conjunction with the village school and PCSO's, the Parish Council to address the problems caused by parking around the school.
- 3 Parish Council to provide guidance, after raising this at the Safer Neighbourhoods Action Panel (SNAP), on 'safe parking' for people living in areas identified as having a problem.
- 4 The roundabout was very new when this survey was conducted. Monitor and review how it is working and make representations to Norfolk County Council Highways Department for change if necessary.

VILLAGE LIFE

- 1 Make it easier for households, including young people, to find out what is going on locally. A community notice board at the shop is the preferred solution. Improving the village website and keeping it up to date will also be helpful.
- 2 Achieve better engagement between parishioners and Parish, Borough and County councils. Making the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council more inviting to villagers will be helpful.

VILLAGE FACILITIES

- 1 Set up a communication group (parish councillors and others) to spread the word about what is going on at the various facilities and help people to feel connected. For example, give information from the Recreation Ground Committee in the newsletter. Aim to include information on Village Hall activities, events at The Chequers and updates from the shop, school, church and chapel. Include local consultation meetings (e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel). Extend all this to a community notice board.
- 2 The shop is much used and appreciated but not attractive and perceived to operate below its potential. Business Link could be asked to help the owners.
- 3 Parish Council continue to support the Recreation Ground committee to provide enhanced facilities for villagers, especially young people.
- 4 Parish Council to find out why pot holes on unmade roads are not being tackled and help residents to address the issue using ashes or alternatives. Affects Honey Hill and Chapel Lane.

ACTION PLAN

VILLAGE FACILITIES

- 5 Parish Council to identify the areas where gravel from driveways needs to be cleared.
- 6 Get work done to address flooding problem at Millers Lane/Westway.
- 7 Parish Council to investigate demand for gas in the village and look at reducing our dependency on fuel oil.
- 8 Parish Council to provide good information about how to apply for an allotment and to give them more attention as an amenity in the village. Supply water to the allotments.

FEELING SAFE

- 1 Parish Council to maintain efforts to minimise dog fouling. Consider offering signs via the newsletter and raising the issue with SNAP.
- 2 Raise the concerns about motorbikes around Low Road at SNAP meetings.
- 3 Address fly tipping by giving people information on what to do when they find it or witness it. Parish Council to hold contact information for neighbouring landowners.
- 4 Villagers need guidance on bonfires – from the Borough Council.
- 5 Parish Council to facilitate a meeting between people interested in a neighbourhood watch scheme and the PCSO.

GETTING OUT AND ABOUT

- 1 Make Low Road safe for pedestrians walking to/from Downham Market and tackle drainage there. Look into other safe walking/cycling routes to the town's railway station.
- 2 Look into the introduction of safe walking/cycling routes to neighbouring villages (Stowbridge, Stow Bardolph).
- 3 Parish Council to ask for the Norfolk Green No 37 bus route to come through the village.
- 4 Parish Council to pass the results relevant to rail services directly to First Capital Connect.
- 5 Parish Council to ensure villagers are up to date with supplementary travel information, e.g. the Dial a Bus.



Back in March 2008 Wimbotsham Parish Council called a public meeting to consider whether there was interest in producing a Parish Plan. Together villagers decided it was a good idea and I put myself forward to co-ordinate a small team of volunteers. The writing of this acknowledgement allows me to express my gratitude to the many people and organisations that helped us along the way.

Thank you to all the households in Wimbotsham who completed their questionnaires and have been waiting patiently for the final Plan. Also the community groups that meet in the village hall, church and chapel who responded to the consultation process. The village shop, Chequers pub and village hall kindly provided space for the 'idea' boxes and households who tested our first questionnaire, all helping towards the gathering of information for the Parish Plan.

Janice Howell from Norfolk Rural Community Council was a tremendous support in our early days as a committee. She attended our evening meetings and gave invaluable advice and confirmation that we were heading in the right direction.

The production of a Parish Plan requires financing and our project was made possible by the following organisations providing grant aid or support 'in kind'.

- **ITV Community Planning Grant/Rural Action East. This funding helped to pump prime the project.**
- **Norfolk Rural Community Council. This funding contributed to printing costs of the Parish Plan.**
- **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for providing the maps of the village, access to social data and funding for the printing of the Plan.**

- **Wimbotsham Parish Council for covering rent for meetings in the village hall and kindly underwriting the various costs that have arisen during the production of the Parish Plan.**
- **Paul Goodrum for the production of the wooden signs which were used to promote the Parish Plan.**

Finally I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to the members of the Parish Plan steering committee for being committed to two years of time consuming work in the form of data collection, data analysis, information gathering, photography, drafting, proof-reading and final editing. In comparison with other Parish Plan committees our steering group was small with only five volunteers, but their combined skills and professionalism plus their firm belief in the value of the project has generated the report you see today.

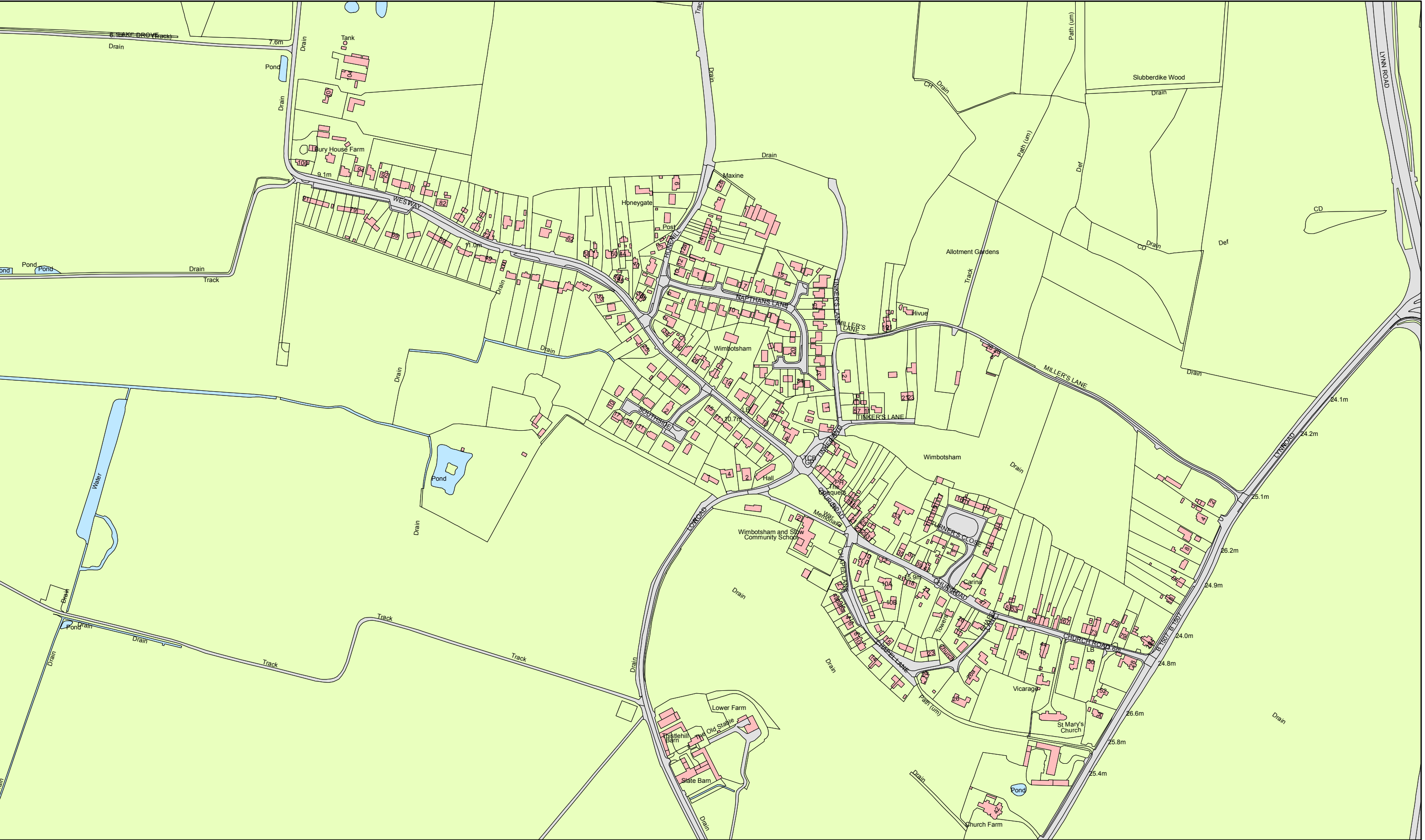
I must not forget the husbands, wives, partners and families of the committee who have not only helped with the production of the Parish Plan, but have also endured committee meetings in their homes and remained supportive throughout. Special recognition is also given to Christopher Smith for his design skills and attention to detail in the production of both the Questionnaire and the final Parish Plan.


Members of the committee are Anne Smith, Rachel Bodle, Janice Scragg, Rob Carrick and Jackie Squires.

Jackie Squires

Jackie Squires
Parish Plan Chairperson
September 2010





<div><div><div>Borough Council of</div><div>King's Lynn & West Norfolk</div><div></div></div><div>Tel. 01553 616200 - Fax. 01553 691663</div></div>	<div>Title</div> <div>Wimbotsham village</div>	<div><div><div>N</div><div>W</div><div>E</div><div>S</div></div></div>	<div>Scale</div> <div>1:4,389</div>	
	<div>Project / Details</div> <div>Wimbotsham Parish Plan</div>		<div>Date</div> <div>6th May 2010</div>	

COPYRIGHT

This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100024314 - 2010.



PICTURE CREDITS

All photographs by the members of
the Parish Plan Committee except for the following:

Holger Gröschl, Holly Blue butterfly, pages 1 and 13

Aaron 1a12, Honey bee, pages 1 and 12

Pau.artigas, Swifts, page 5

Pawel Ryszawa, Jackdaw, pages 6, 7, 20 and 21

Philip Wing, pages 6 and 13

Rob James, pages 7 (top right), 12, 20 and back cover

Sports Taster Day poster, courtesy of West Norfolk Sports Council, page 21

Steve Brace, Barn owl, page 24

Hans Hillewaert, Wood mouse, page 24
