

SHALFORD PARISH APPRAISAL

2009

This report presents the analysis of responses to the Shalford Appraisal Questionnaire which was distributed during 2007.

With help from the Rural Community Council of Essex [RCCE] who assisted with the subject headings, the questionnaire was devised by members of the working group, during 2006.

Independent of Shalford Parish Council the working group consisted of members of Shalford Residents that were interested in plans for the future of Shalford.

Using the voter's listings the survey was distributed to every household within the Shalford district.

A 52% return rate on completed questionnaires recorded not every respondent completed the 72 questions.

Many respondents made use of the opportunity to add comments and these contain useful ideas and criticisms which should be carefully studied by serious users of the study. There has been no attempt to summarise these comments in this report, as they are too disparate in nature.



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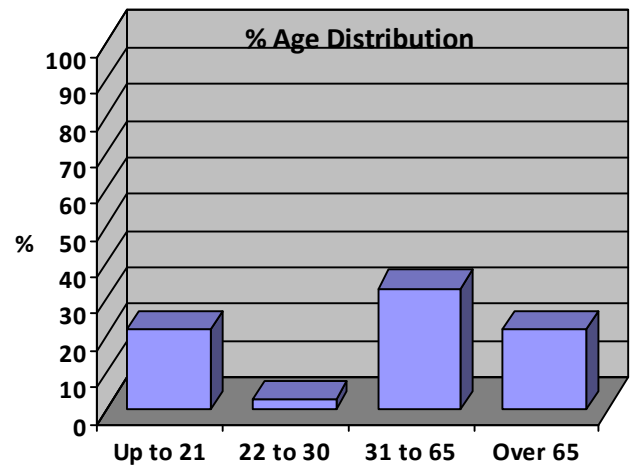
The report has been arranged under the following headings:

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Age Distribution

Age distribution (Q1)

Over a fifth (22%) are aged up to 21 and another fifth (22%) are aged over 65. The smallest (3%) is the 22 to 30 age group and the largest (33%) is the 46-65 group.

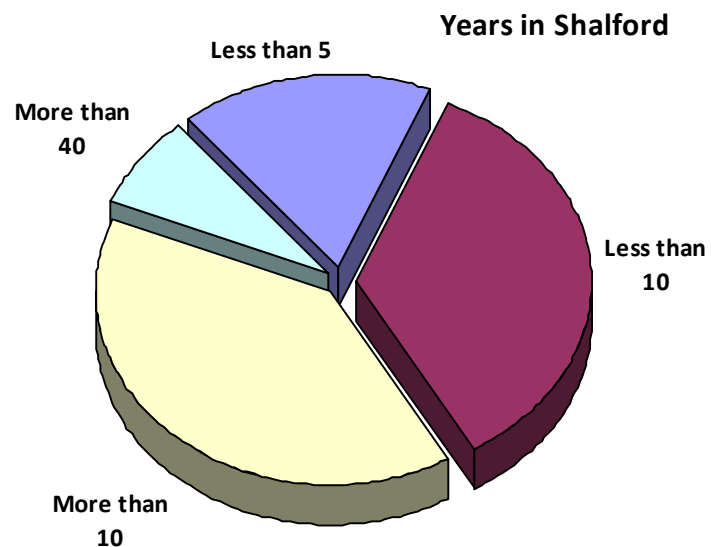


Housing

Residency (Qs2 & 3)

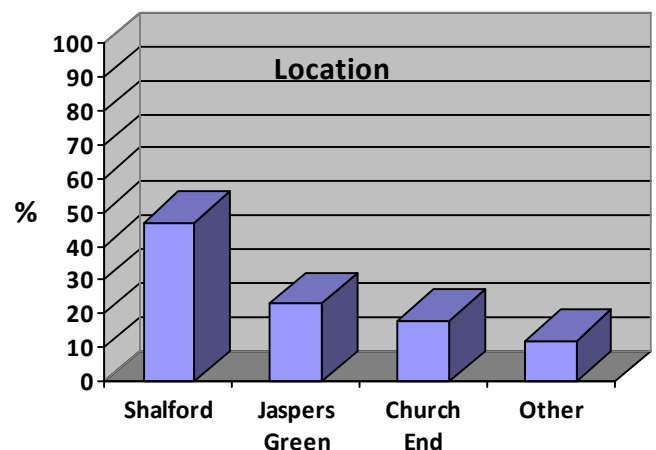
The population divides equally at the 10-year period, half (50%) have lived in the village 10 years or less and therefore a half more than 10 years. A quarter (25%) have lived here less than 5 years but 1 in 9 (11%) have been here over 40 years.

Nearly a quarter (23%) have lived in more than one place within the village, ie decided to stay when moving house.



Location of residence (Q14)

Respondents were asked where live and the distribution was: nearly half (47%) in Shalford itself, over quarter (23%) in Shalford /Jaspers Greens, under a fifth (18%) in Church End and remainder (12%) in other areas.



Reasons for choosing Shalford (Qs 4 & 5)

“Because it’s an attractive area” was outstandingly (91%) the popular reason for coming to live here. Being a ‘commutable’ place was also a popular reason (30%). ‘Retirement’ was cited only by 3%.

Only 2% cited their residency as being a second home, namely not their main residence..

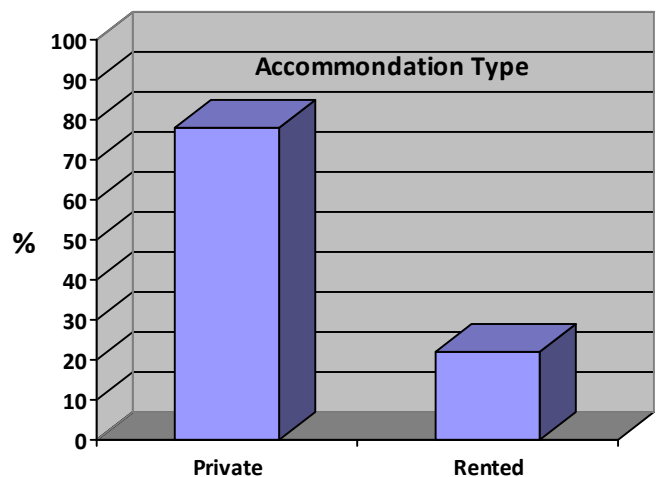
The home itself (Qs6-8)

More than three quarters (78 %) are owner-occupied homes.

Well over a half (54%) of the housing stock is more than 50 years old. Understandably, a very small proportion (2%) is under 10 years old.

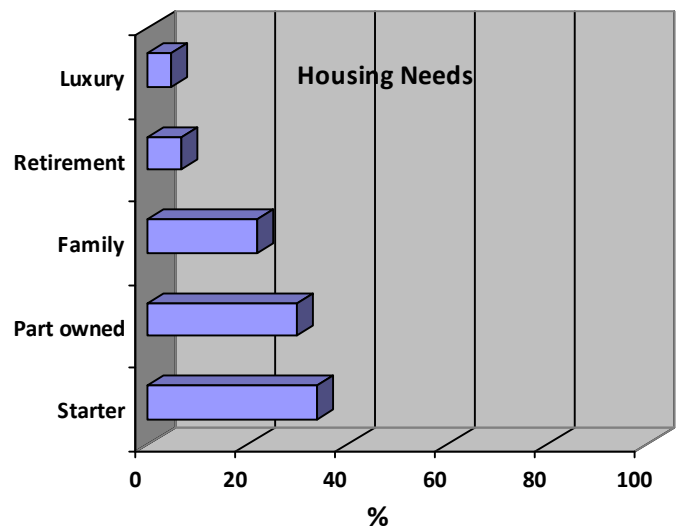
Nearly 1 in 12 (8%) had current plans to move house. (The returns were pre-credit crunch.)

Nearly two-thirds of these were planning to move out of the area, so perhaps this was mainly pressure of circumstances.



Housing needs (Q9)

Over a third (34%) thought starter homes/flats were needed and a further third (30%) thought the need was for Housing Association/ Part-owned or Rental properties. Under a quarter (22%) cited the need as being for family homes. Retirement homes were cited by 7% and luxury/large homes by 5%.



Employment

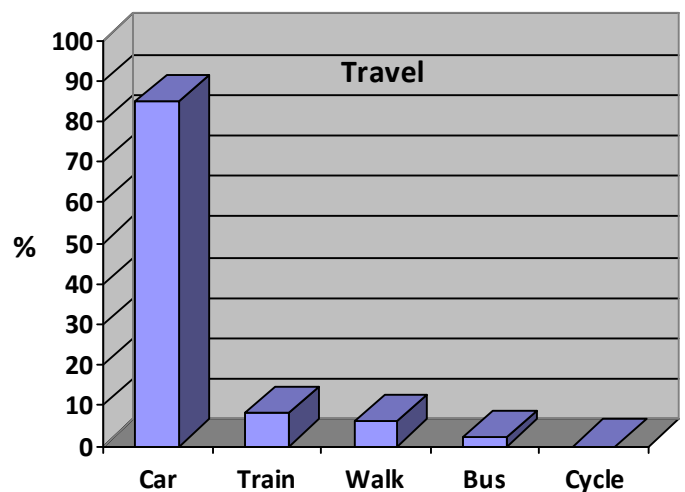
Employment status (Q10)

Nearly two-thirds (64%) are in some kind of employment, over two-thirds of these being full-time. Over quarters (28%) are retired. Minorities were 'At home with children' (3%), students (5%) and working in agriculture (7%).

Travel to work (Qs12 & 13)

Two-thirds (65%) travel more than 10 miles to work. 1 in 10 (10%) work from home, 1 in 11 (9%) work elsewhere in the parish and 1 in 6 (16%) work locally (within 10 miles distance).

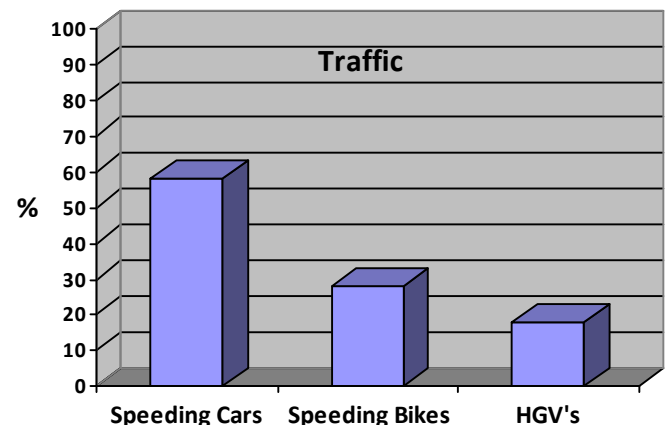
The great majority (85%) travel by car; 8% by train, 6% walk 2% by bus. No one claimed to cycle to work!



Traffic

Concern over traffic (Q15)

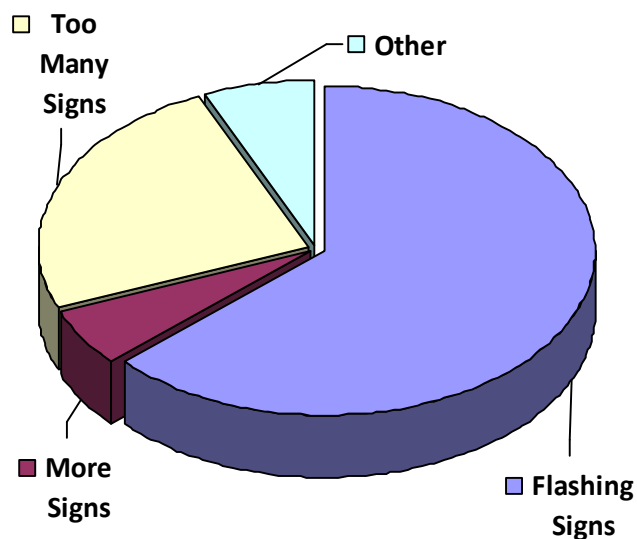
A large majority (80%) said that traffic in the Parish is a concern. Of these well over a half (58%) nominated speeding cars (32%) and bikes (28%) as concerns. Other categories were HGVs (18%), sheer volume of traffic (12%), noise (9%) and heavy farm equipment (4%).



Control and calming measures (Q16 & 17)

Two-thirds (67%) believe traffic calming measures would help. Of seven measures to choose from there were no significant front runners. Flashing signs was most popular at 21% and more speed signs least popular at 6%. A quarter only (26%) think there is too much signage already.

Concern over inappropriate use of green lanes, bridleways and footpaths was expressed by over a third (38%) of the respondents.



Transport & Shopping

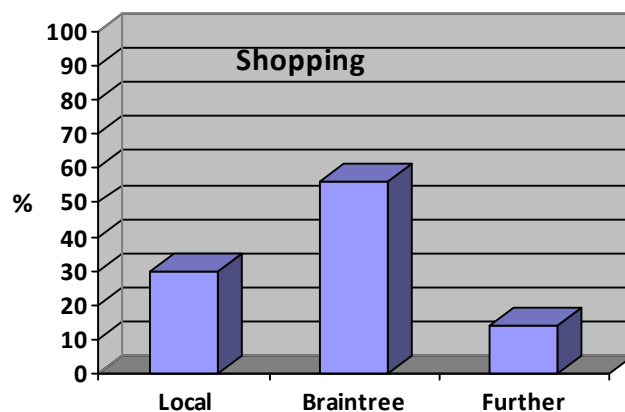
Bus service usage (Q19)

Under a quarter (22%) use the bus service, i.e. 78% said no they don't use the service.

Shopping (Qs20-25)

Overall most (56%) shop in Braintree, under a third (30%) locally and the remainder (14%) go further afield. For groceries Braintree was most cited (76%), as it was (63%) for other general shopping. For Post Office the local option was more used (59%) as it was for newsagent (56%).

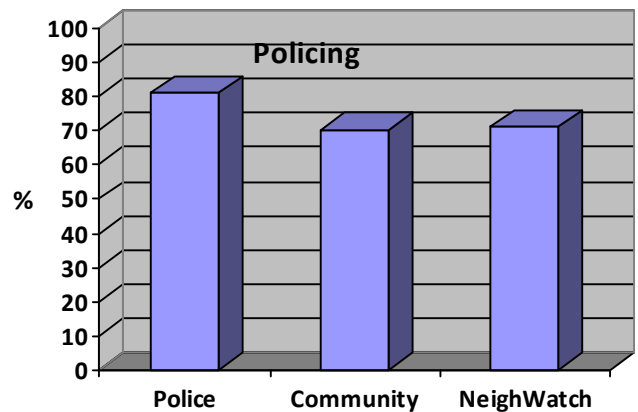
Shopping regularly by car was the choice of the vast majority (96%) and by public transport the choice of a small minority (9%). Doorstep delivery of milk (45%) and newspapers (47%), but of groceries far less so (8%). A significant minority (6%) rely on help to do shopping. A significant proportion (41%) cited internet shopping as an option they use. (See also the later section Computers and internet.)



Local Services

Policing (Qs26-29)

Satisfaction with the police service was reasonable for both Braintree (81%) and at Community level (70%). There was good awareness (80%) of the purpose of the community police facility, though only 51% admitted to knowing how to contact the facility. There was also good awareness (71%) of the Parish Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.



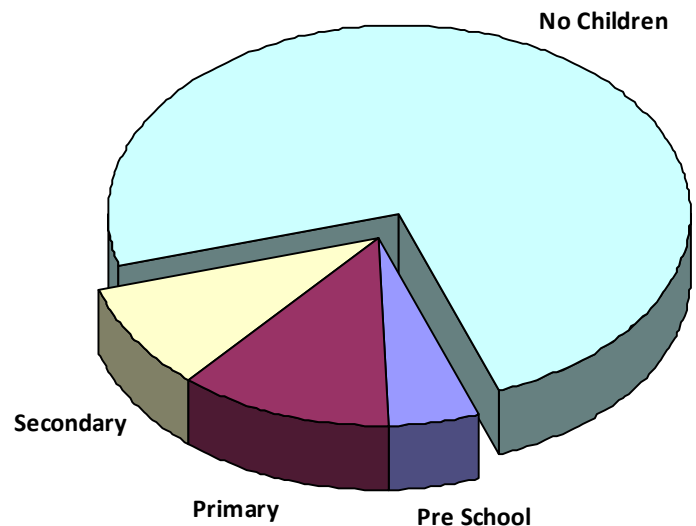
Health (Qs30 & 31)

Registration with the Freshwell Health Centre stands at 77% of the respondents. Of those with a disability or long term illness requiring support locally a majority (62%) expressed satisfaction that their need was being met. At least one said 'no' to this because the need is being met elsewhere.

Education

Children numbers (Qs32-34)

1 in 20 (5%) households have pre-school age children, 1 in 8 (12%) have Primary school age children and 1 in 10 (9%) have Secondary school age children.



School journeys (Q35)

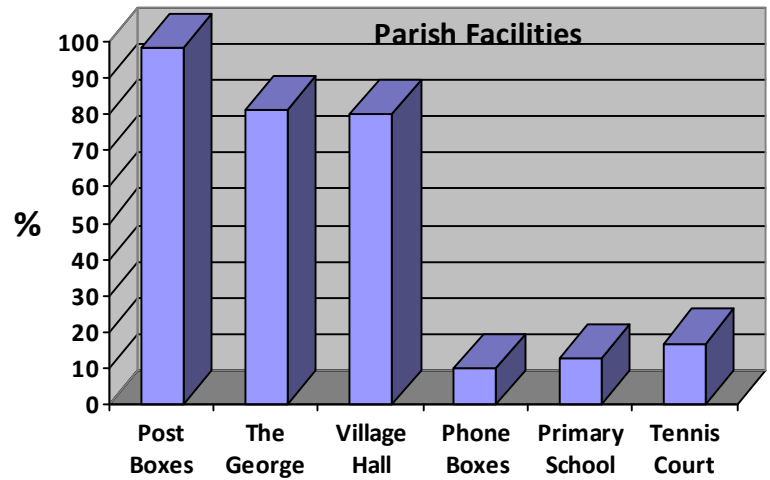
Note: This question was poorly posed and it is therefore not possible to understand what the figures really mean.

Nearly a half of relevant households (12 'yes' out of 25 replies), use School bus Public transport. Over 70% (18 out of 26) use private car to get children to school. Over a third (35%) walk or cycle.

Parish Facilities

Range of facilities (Q36)

A range of 16 different facilities were listed and respondents asked to say which they use ('regularly', 'sometimes' or 'never'). The most used ('regularly' or 'sometimes') were Post Boxes (98%), The George Pub (81%) and the Village Hall (80%). The least used were phone boxes (10%), Shalford Primary School (13%) and tennis court (17%).

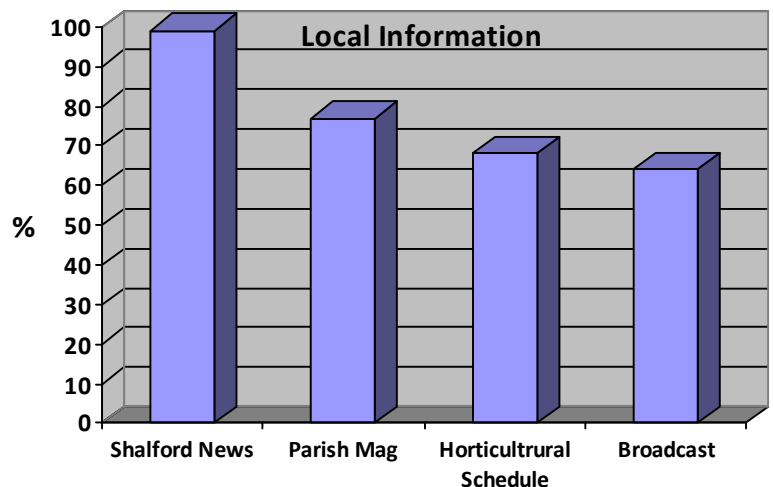


Church attendance (Qs37-38)

Regular attendance at St Andrews' Church was claimed by 15% and at the Congregational Church by less than 1%. However, when asked whether local churches are important to them the number answering 'yes' was 79%.

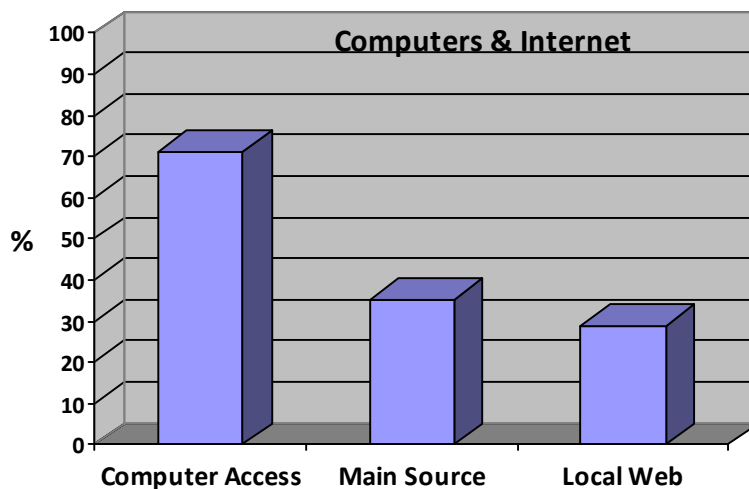
Local information (Q39)

Receipt of local information was high: Shalford News (99%), Parish Magazine (77%), Horticultural Society Show Schedule (68%) and Dunmow Broadcast (64%)



Computers and internet (Qs40-43)

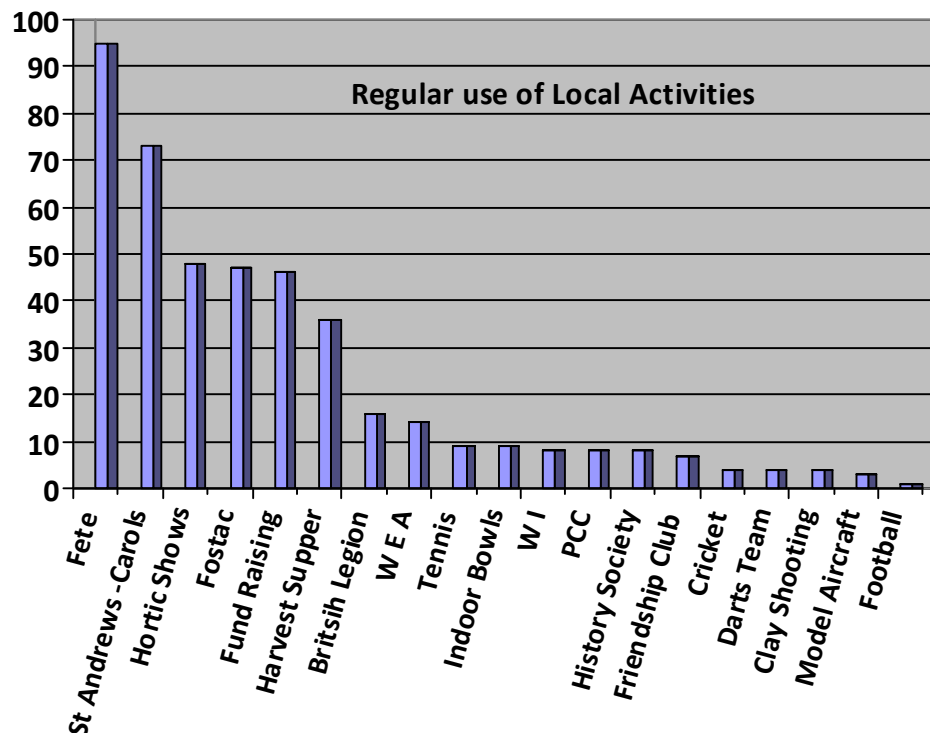
More than 7 out of 10 (71%) respondents use computers at home and nearly all of these have access to the internet. Nearly 6 out of 10 (58%) have Broadband. Over a third (35%) claimed the internet was their main source of information and rather less than a third (29%) use the Shalford website to find out local news and information.



Local Activities & Other Facilities

Activities (Q45)

A list of 20 different activities was presented and respondents asked to rate their use of them ('regularly', 'sometimes' or 'never'). All were well to moderately well used. The ones most rated as 'never' used were WEA (29%), Harvest Supper (21%) and Friendship club (21%).



Note:- Chart shows total number of votes, not percentage based on replies

Sports/leisure facilities (Q46)

Regular use of these facilities at four sites were as follows: Braintree (34%), Dunmow (6%), Elsewhere in the County (28%), Travel further afield (15%).

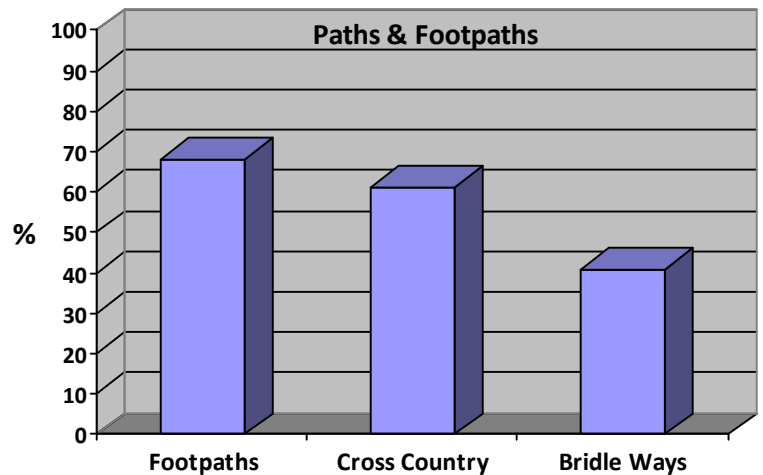
Paths and footpaths (Qs47-51)

7 out of 10 (68%) regularly use footpaths which run alongside roads, nearly half of those using them for pleasure/exercise. Over a third (35%) said they would like more paths.

6 out of 10 (61%) regularly use cross-country footpaths. More than 8 out of 10 (81%) use them for pleasure/exercise. Nearly a third (29%) of those not using them regularly said it was because they were unsure of where they are.

Two-fifths (41%) use bridleways/byways and user types are distributed as follows: On foot (70%), On horseback (14%), By bicycle (23%). Clearly some users appear in more than one category.

Satisfaction with the condition of footpaths, bridleways and byways was high at 78%.



Rural environment (Qs52-54)

A full 100% of respondents said that the surrounding countryside was important to them. Over a third (35%) said they take part in or support rural pastimes. A fifth (19%) actively take part in conservation/nature projects.

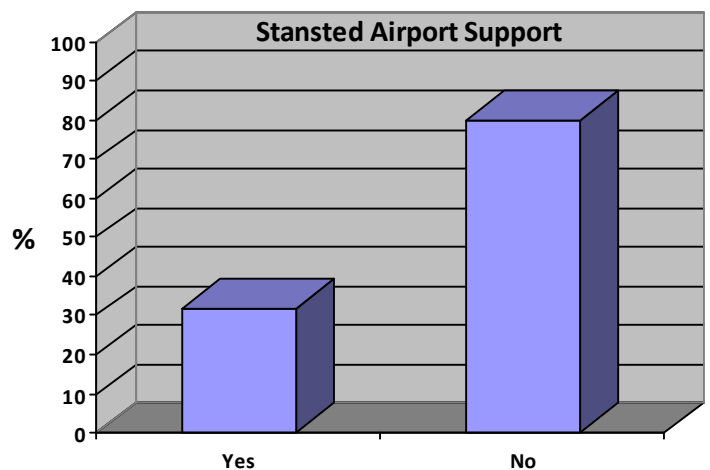
Stansted Airport

Use of the airport (Qs55-56)

Three-quarters (74%) have used the airport in the last 5 years; over a half (52%) in the last 12 months.

Airport expansion (Qs56-58)

Nearly a third (32%) support the proposed increase in passenger numbers for the existing runway, (i.e. two-thirds do not). Just over a fifth (21%) support the proposed second runway (i.e. four-fifths do not). A possibly significant 6% of respondents work for a company associated with the airport.



Waste Management

Sites (Qs60-62)

The great majority (93%) of respondents regularly use the amenity/recycling centre in Shalford. About 1 in 6 (16%) want the facility to close and relocate to an alternative site. If it were to be relocated, well over a half (58%) said they would then travel to this alternative site. (NB It is not clear if this alternative site was one that is common knowledge among the respondents.)

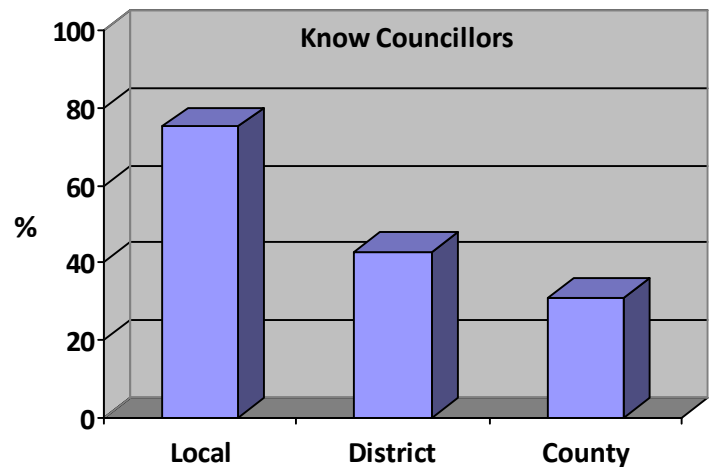
Collection and recycling (Qs63-64)

Over a half (51%) agree with fortnightly refuse collection and the vast majority (99%) participate in recycling.

Parish Council

Councillors (Qs65-67)

Three-quarters of respondents (75%) know who their Parish Councillors are; just over two-fifths (43%) know who their District Councillors are; under a third (31%) know who their Essex County Councillor is.



Operations of the Council system (Qs68-71)

Three-quarters of respondents (74%) said they know how to raise an issue or how to contact the Parish Council. Over a half (51%) know how to contact their District or County Councillor. Nearly three-quarters (73%) claim to understand what the Parish Council is for. Over a third (35%) see/read the minutes of the Parish Council meetings.

Conclusion

During the three years since the report was proposed and the survey questionnaires completed a number of changes have already taken place within Shalford including the Parish Council introducing Speed Watch using hand held devices by members of the public, opening of Shalford Village Store, pending closure of the Recycling Centre shortly and unfortunately the demise of Shalford News, the quarterly local newspaper which was delivered to every household.

Probably due to the way in which some questions were worded some of the statistics produced by this survey are not supported by the observed facts. In particular the number of people regularly using The George public house and the Village Hall do not amount to some 80% of the Shalford residents. In addition the question about travel to Shalford School was poorly posed and the data has little meaning as the majority of children attending the school do not reside in Shalford.

This appraisal is a prelude to the next step which will be a Village Plan to be undertaken at sometime in the future by a committee of Shalford residents.