

Brailes and Winderton Parish Action Plan 2005



Just imagine

A survey of our community wishes for the future

'Make it happen



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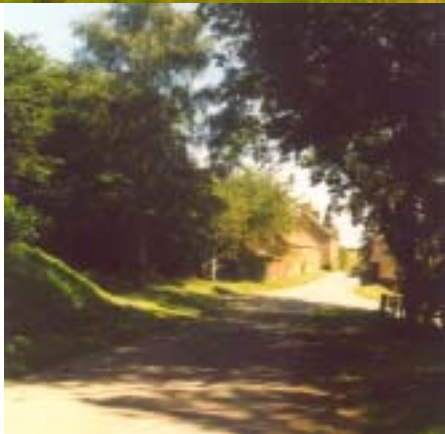
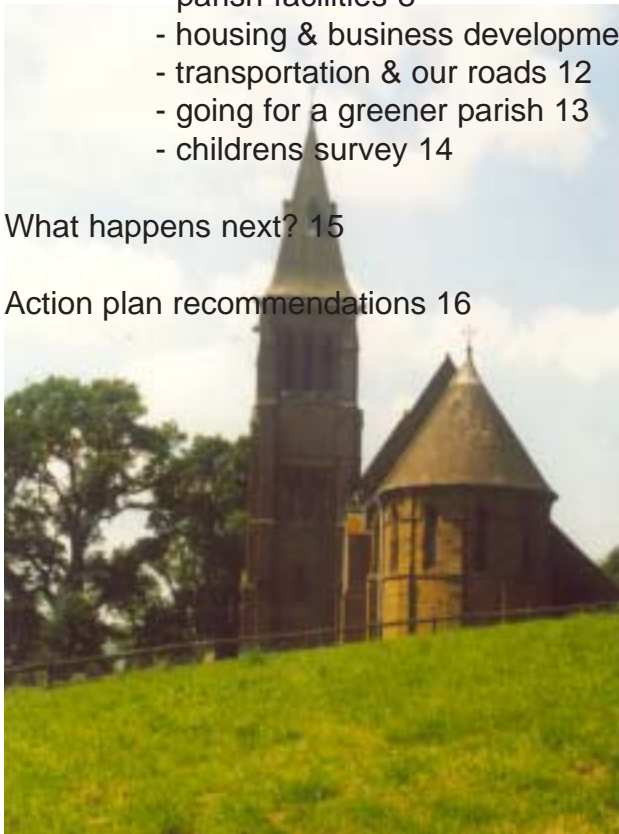
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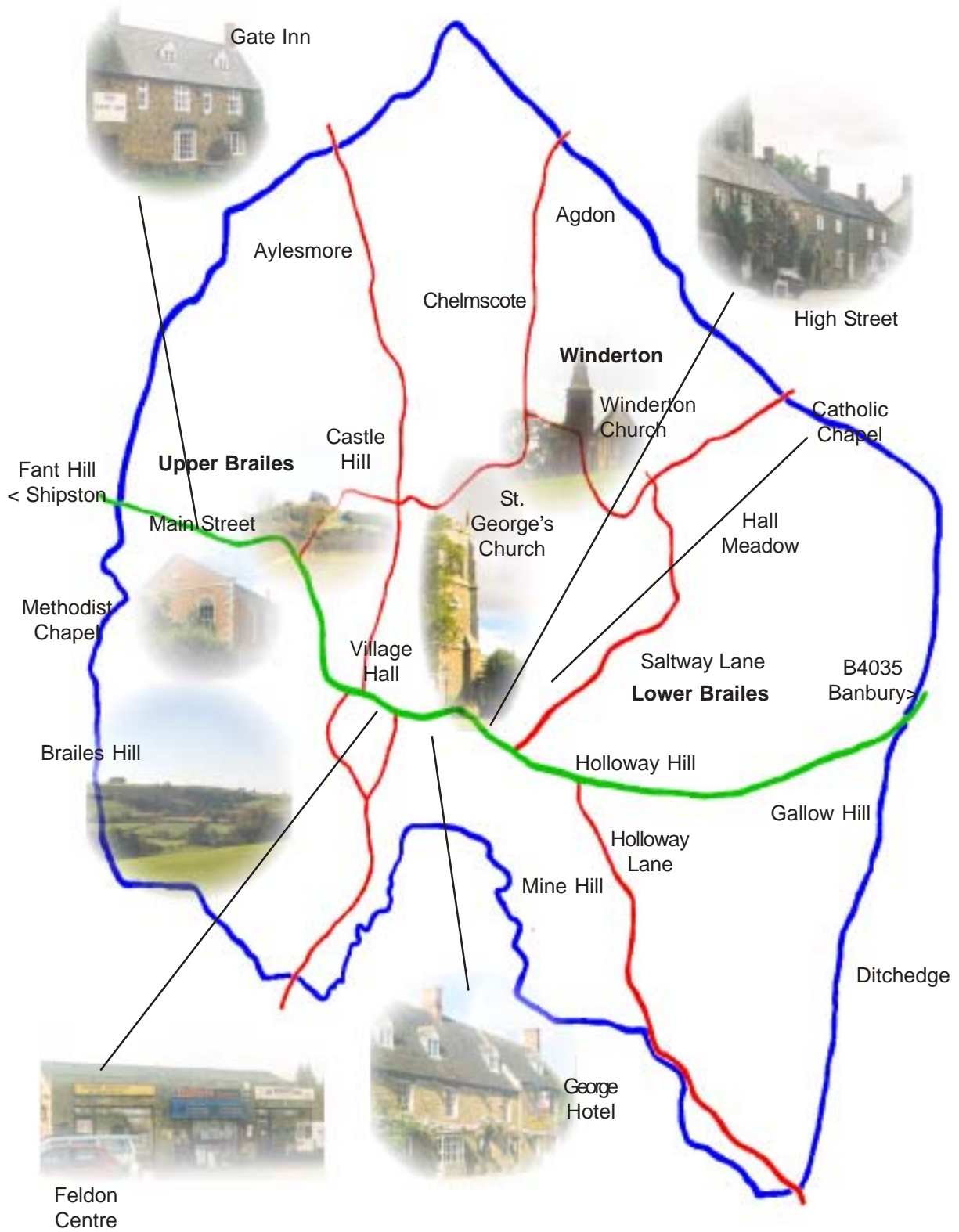
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The Parish of Brailes and Winderton



BRAILES and WINDERTON PARISH ACTION PLAN

'Just imagine.....'

A survey of our community wishes for the future

'Make it happen.....'

Results and Actions

The Brailes and Winderton Action Plan Steering Group

Chairman	Chris Cox
Secretary	Pam Jordan
Treasurer	Margaret Pogmore
Members	Susan Walker
	Erry Parker
	Peter Jordan

The steering group plus other volunteers undertook to produce this survey of the wishes for the future of Parish residents in 2004/5

We appreciate the support of the Parish Council, District and County Councillors and the Countryside Commission

We are grateful for the expertise in the fields of research help and analysis, to our distributors and most of all to everyone who gave ideas and completed the survey

Introducing our Parish

Brailes and Winderton lie within the Cotswold area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in South Warwickshire. The Parish borders onto Oxfordshire and the nearest town is Shipston on Stour some 4 miles to the west.

We are a close and friendly rural community and proud of being a living village supporting shops, pubs, churches and a school. Being within easy distance of the Cotswolds and Stratford upon Avon we have tourists who visit, notably walkers who enjoy the excellent public footpaths recently improved by our local Footpath Group, regular Caravan Club rallies and music events. There are many activities and clubs for locals to support and since 1943 we have staged an annual Village Show, which attracts some 2-3000 people.

Most people who live here do so because they enjoy country life and the neighbourly atmosphere of a village where most people know each other.

We have always been an active community and have previously produced a Village Appraisal (1993) and a Village Design Statement (1998). The putting together of our Village Action Plan was simply the next step to further develop our community spirit and identify what most residents would like to see happening in our village in the future. We used the theme '*Just Imagine...*' to gather ideas, which could be developed to make things happen.

What we did

The process started with an open meeting in the Village Hall in summer 2004 when Linda Ridgley of the Warwickshire Rural Community Council talked to us about developing an action plan. Chris Cox agreed to chair a steering group of six resident volunteers to get us underway. Some ideas were offered straight away at the meeting but we wanted to involve the whole community and gather views of as many people as possible so we set up our first event at Brailes Show in August. This was a chatting opportunity, which was sure to reach a large number of villagers. We had a display setting out what we were trying to do and a 'stick it' notice board for anyone to add their thoughts.

The steering group met regularly after that and over the following months members presented the scope and purpose of the Action Plan to as many clubs and special interest groups as we could. We held two sessions in local pubs for people with businesses in the parish and set up suggestion boxes in local shops. Feedback and ideas from all these formed the basis of surveys, which were distributed, by a team of 11 volunteers to all households and businesses in April 2005. There was a general household survey as well as special surveys for businesses and children. We also included an opportunity for people to offer their help as leaders/organisers/supporters for activities in the future.

58% of the surveys were returned with a mass of comments and suggestions as well as answering the questions. The data was entered and analysed by an independent company, Framework, (many thanks to them for carrying out this work at special rates). This formed the basis for the draft report produced in July 2005 which was presented at an open meeting to villagers, Parish Councillors and others.

The Draft Plan highlighted the good and the not so good aspects of our village life and we are now committed to maintain or improve these in our Action Plan so that the '*Just Imagine...*' becomes our reality.

What you said

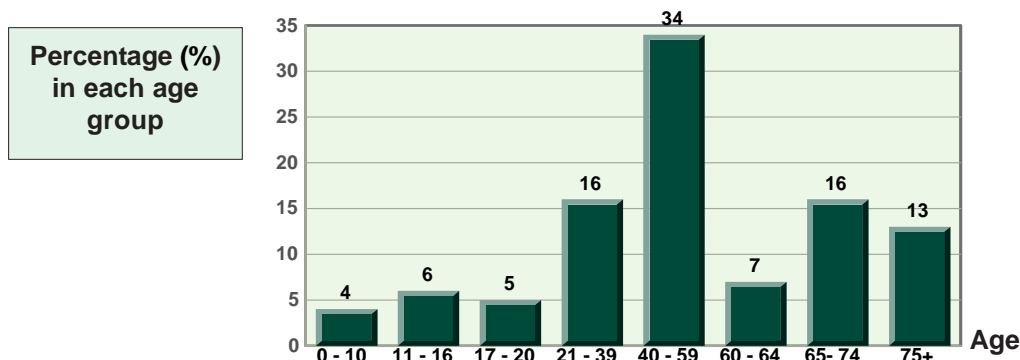
We had an encouraging 58% response rate from the surveys distributed to residents in the parish; a good response level compared with other similar surveys. The following results, comments and information reflect their views.

Who we are

Most of us live in the villages of Lower Brailles (59%) and Upper Brailles (32%). The village of Winderton is also part of the parish where 5% of people live with the remaining 4% of residents being in country properties lying outside the main village areas.

Most of us live in households of 2 people only (45%). Just over a quarter (28%) of households are single person and only 27% of households are 3 persons or more. Many people live alone, which could lead to being isolated and lonely so that any action plan, which creates opportunities to bring people together, would be positive.

The 40 – 59 age group is the most represented in our survey though we do have a range of all age groups in the parish but with a leaning towards the older ranges. In the long term we may need to think more about housing for the elderly and also continue to provide homes at affordable prices which would attract young families into the parish to maintain a balanced community.

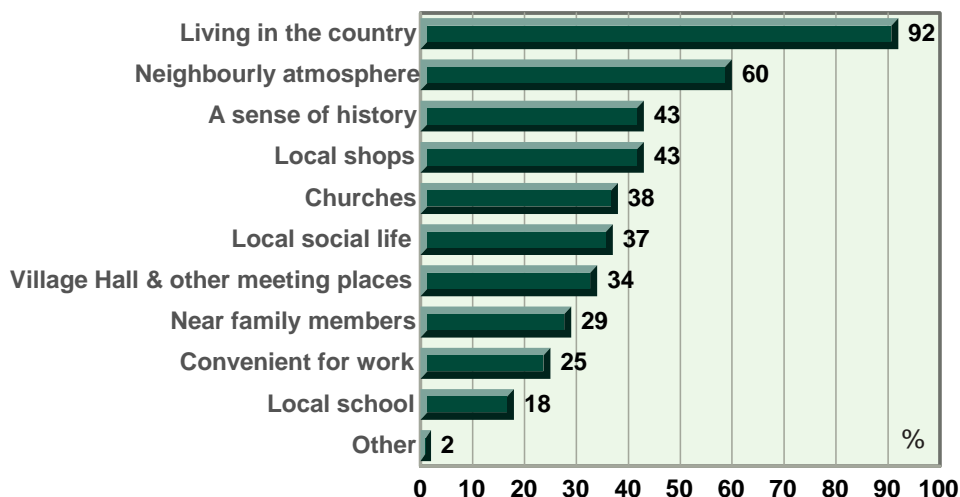


Do we like living here?

Generally we really enjoy living here. We asked people to score how much they liked living in the Parish on a scale of 1 to 10. 89% of people scored it over 7 with 25% giving a top mark of 10 out of 10!

Why do we like living here?

There were lots of reasons why people liked being here, the main ones are shown below.



Enjoying the countryside and appreciating the neighbourliness of the area being the winners but the availability of shops, churches, meeting places and social life are all important as well.

Parish life and activities

People were asked, 'If they had three wishes for the future what would they like to see ?' and the top ones were:

- **Keep the character, identity of a working village and stay unspoiled**
- **Reduce speeding and enforce the speed limit**
- **No more significant developments, restrict new building and no more luxury homes**

Any action plan would therefore keep these in mind.

There were lots of comments about what people felt was generally important. Here are few:

“That we retain our area of natural outstanding beauty”

“Slower traffic on country lanes”

“Within the law, villagers should have a say in how it develops free from outside interference”

“Gentle improvement of existing properties to retain their character”

“Keep the village alive, not fill it with holiday homes and commuters”

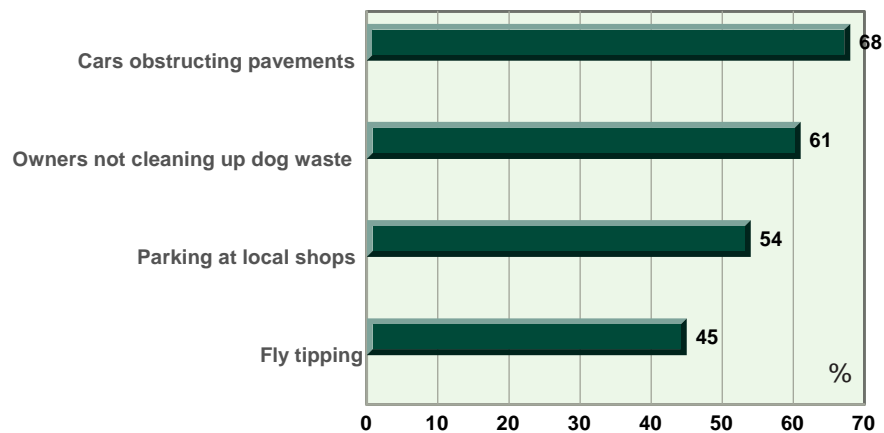
“Fight hard to keep the balance between getting too large and over contraction”

There are also specific places within the parish which people particularly value and the top six were:

- St. George’s Church**
- Castle Hill**
- Brailles Hill**
- Our rural setting and countryside**
- The footpaths and walks**
- The pubs**

The main things that people felt were a nuisance in everyday life were:

... nuisances in everyday life ...



Two thirds of people in Lower Brailles think that car parking is a problem and nearly half of people in Winderton think that fly tipping is a problem.

The parish is a lively community with a lot of activities going on. The Annual Show is supported by over 90% of residents and a lot of fund-raising goes on too.

What activities do we support now?

Brailes Show	92%
Fund raising	52%
Music	42%
Other club activity	27%
Sport	20%
Craft/skill activity	14%

And would we like to see in the future?

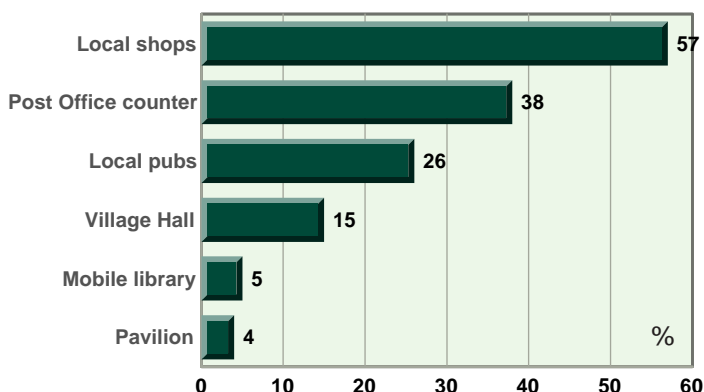
Village museum	43%
Adult evening classes	41%
Tennis club	31%
Adult day classes	31%
All weather sports surface	31%
Art/craft workshop	28%

Many people were interested in adult learning classes both in the evenings and during the daytime. We need to assess what the main interests would be to find the most support. An all weather surface was asked for mainly by the youngsters. This has been raised in surveys previously over a number of years so perhaps now is the right time to look into this. The setting up of a village museum was popular but the reasons for doing this would have to be carefully looked into. Would it be mainly for villagers or for visitors? Would a register of archive material available relating to the parish be of use or would it be a self-financing 'small business' type of project?

Parish facilities

We looked at how often some of the facilities within the villages are used.

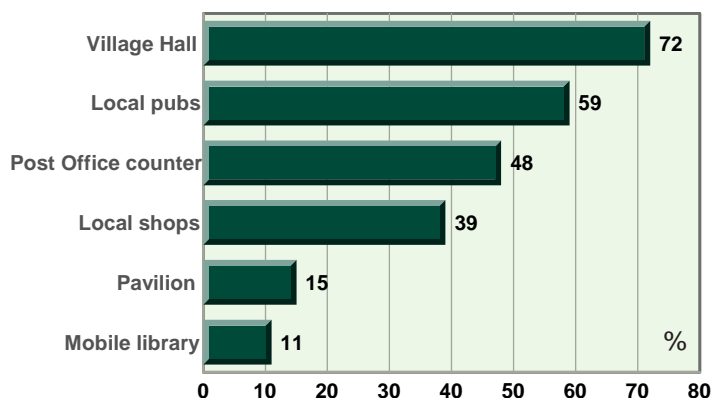
Frequently used facilities



The shops and the post office are used by nearly everyone at some time or other and the pubs visited by 85% of people.

The mobile library is not used by many people and it was suggested that the timing of its visit at 3pm may not be convenient for children who would still be in school.

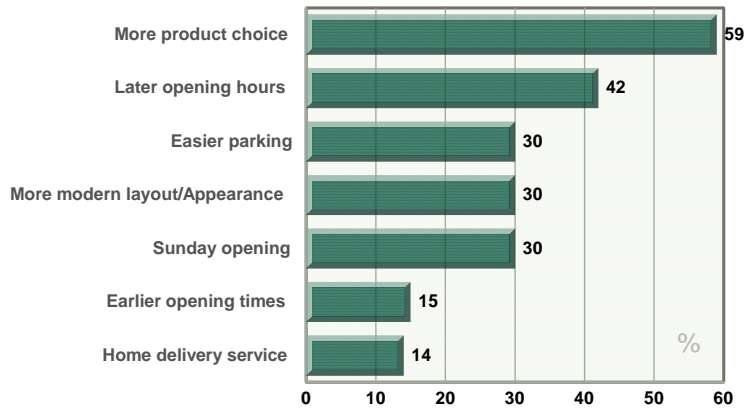
Occasionally used facilities



The village has many meeting rooms available, which might explain why the pavilion seems under used. Some groups regularly use it but perhaps others do not realise that it can be hired for regular or one off events.

We thought that maybe we could encourage people to become more frequent rather than occasional users of the local shops, so we did a 'customer' survey for ideas.

... we did a customer survey for ideas



As expected, when most people here value living in the countryside, a great majority enjoy the footpaths and bridleways available for recreation. Particular praise was given to the work carried out by the Footpath Group over the last few years.

Some quotes received on the footpaths

.... and on the bridleways:

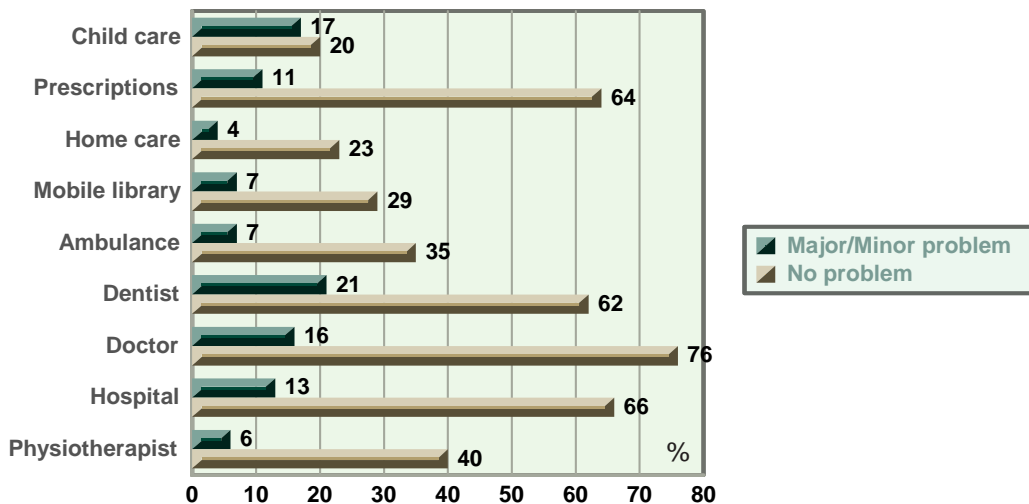
“Brailes Footpath Group has done a marvellous job”
 “Lack of knowledge ... map would help”
 “Bog at 32A” (Is it a problem or do we need one!)

“They have been kept very well”
 “Too few bridleways”
 “The only problem is mud! Not easily solved”

87% thought that the footpaths were fine and 81% that the bridleways were fine.

Sometimes living in a village area may cause people difficulty with access to services available, so we had a look to see how people coped.

Access to services



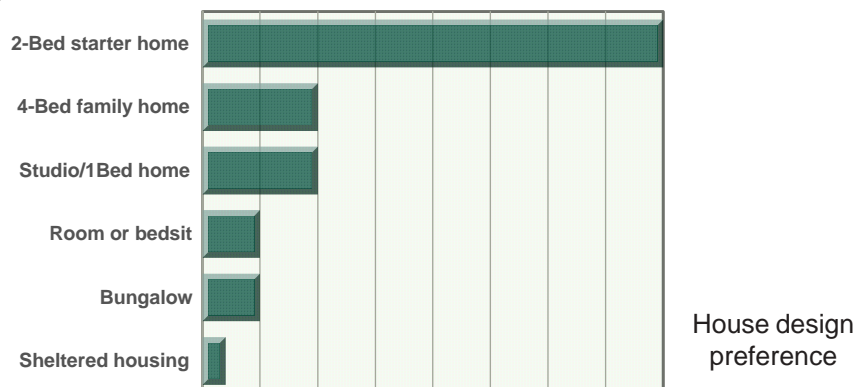
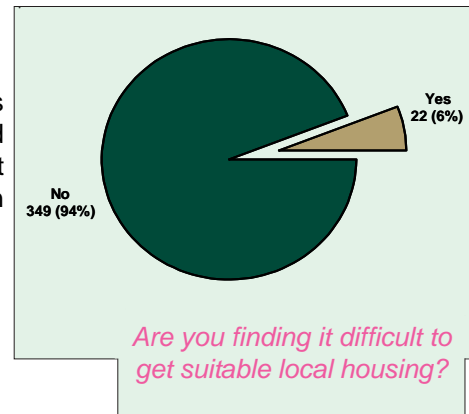
Some people, as expected, in the 21 to 39 year age group, had difficulty with childcare arrangements. There has previously been a school survey which suggested that there was not a need for extended school hour care and there are child minders available in the village. Perhaps we need to make sure that the people who need to know are aware of what is available.

This busy parent age group were also the ones who found difficulty with accessing doctors and NHS dentists along with the older residents.

Parish housing and business development

Availability of suitable housing for people living in the Parish seems to be good. Only 13 people out of the 261 respondents had moved away because they could not find affordable housing. It may not be as suitable for encouraging new people to move here to maintain a mixed balanced community.

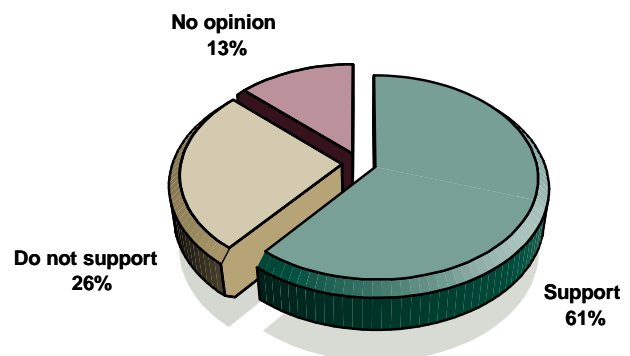
22 people at the moment were finding it difficult to get suitable housing. The design of housing that they are looking for:



Those wanting to rent (33%) or buy (67%) housing are in the age range 21 to 59 years. The high percentage with a preference to buy is to be expected but realistically they may not be in a financial position to do so.

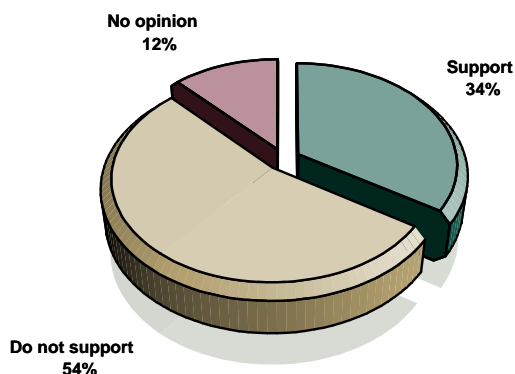
This survey was completed before the additional Sutton Lane housing development was completed and a survey now may give a different picture. A further survey in the future would give a more up to date view.

There is support (*right*) in the parish for Housing Association or Shared Equity housing schemes on land within the parish. 410 people answered this question.



But less (*below*) for private housing development.

34% however is in fact a very high response compared to other similar surveys in this area and may indicate a concern from older people who may want to down size in a few years time.



Building within the parish for business premises was supported by 36% of replies, not supported by 19% and 45% had no opinion either way.

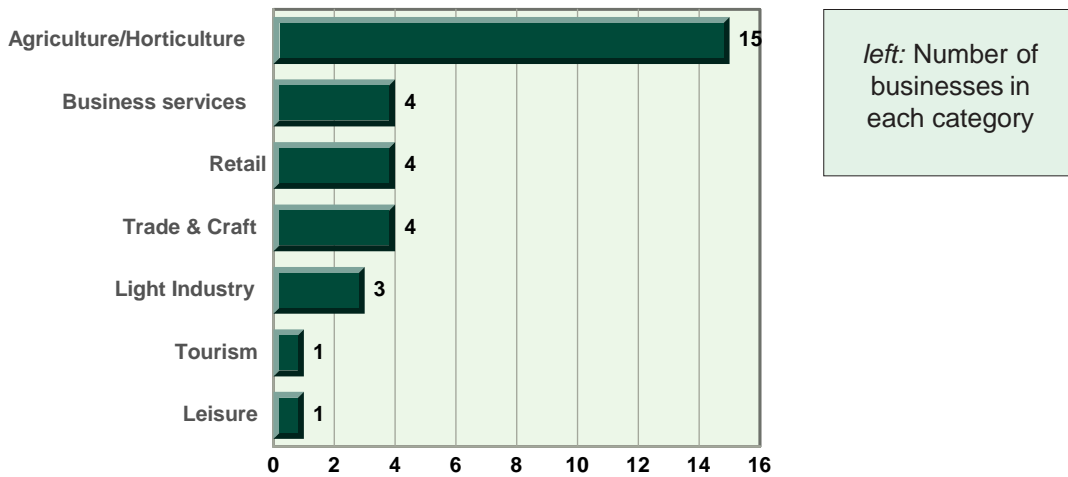
There are a large number of businesses trading within the parish and 40 of them responded to a Business survey. 27 of these worked from home and 13 had separate business premises. Only one of the businesses felt that the premises they currently occupied were unsuitable for their needs, however five felt that they might be interested in a purpose built unit of some type and there was a general feeling reflected in comments from the business community that the availability of premises could be improved.

“I would prefer to work from a small clinic or similar premises rather than from home”

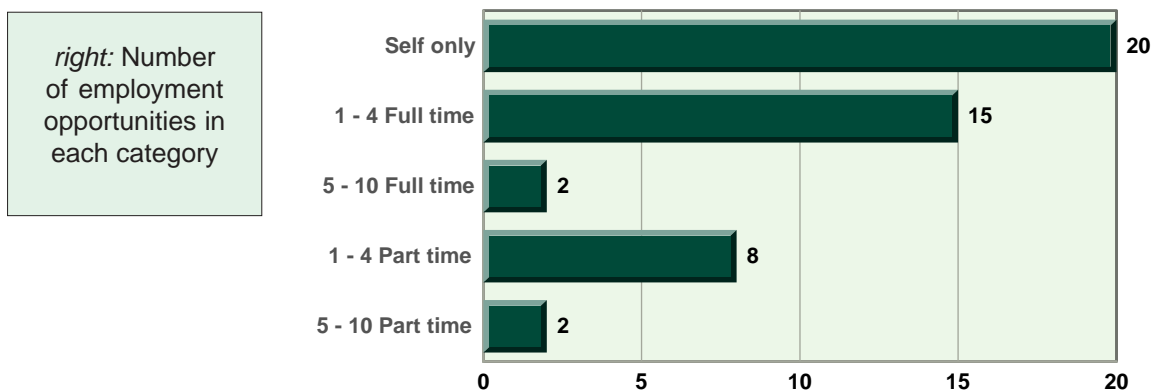
“Finding suitable premises is huge headache for growing businesses - we have ours so don’t need to worry but there is a big shortage of business premises in the area generally”

“It would be good to have a range of options available for business premises - short-term lets, long-term lets and freehold”

One local business already seeks larger premises in a central area of the parish and another would like a house with a workshop attached, which seems to show a need for greater flexibility from planners.



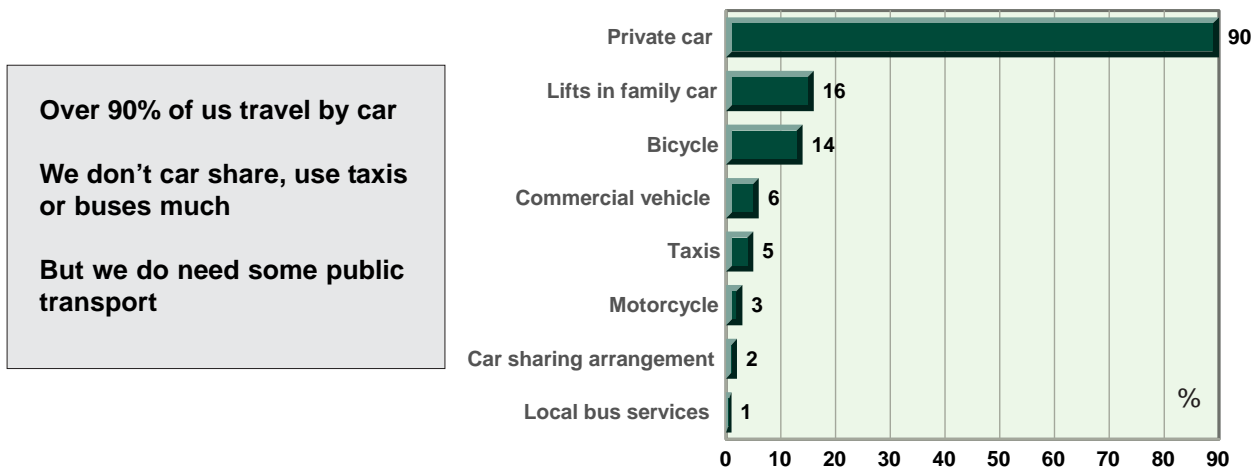
The businesses tend to be small, offering some employment opportunities.



Nearly half the businesses would like to see a local printed directory of services available and a similar number felt they would benefit from a networking group.

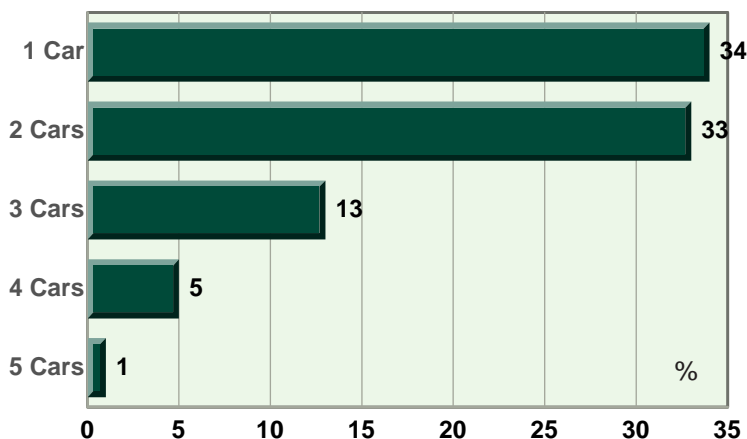
Transportation and our roads

Living in a rural community we are heavily reliant on private cars for transportation.



We are not keen to car share (2%), use taxis (5%) or buses (1%). However buses are the only public transport available in the village and may be vital to some members of the community. A bus service is used by 34 individuals to get to school or college, 51 people used a bus service to go shopping especially in the over 75 age group and it is used for social event transport particularly in the 11-16 age range. Individual figures for public transport usage are small apart from those running for the specific use of college/school transport. But even if the type of service now running is not commercially viable its value for social freedom for the young, for access to medical services for the elderly and for shopping trips still needs to be considered for the future.

Over 50% of households in the parish have more than one vehicle.



The vast majority of these are garaged or parked in our own premises but 9% have to park on the road and 9% had no answer for where they parked!

It is not surprising therefore that in an old village like ours, not originally designed for modern transport, some problems will result. Many comments were made relating to problems caused by parking. We may need to identify safe parking areas and make people more aware of the problems.

“Parking on the Lower Green is a problem”

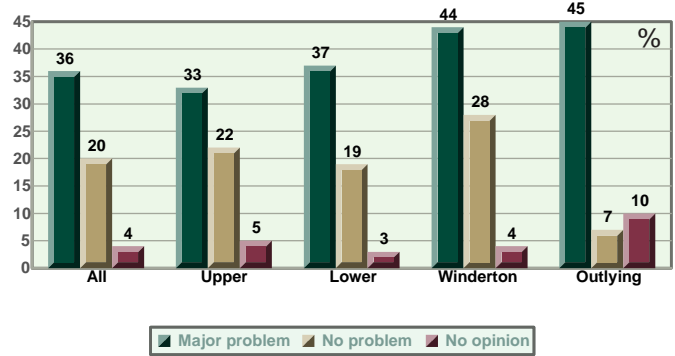
“Pavements obstructed by cars becoming a greater problem for pedestrians, pushchairs and scooters.”

“Stationary cars in lines by the pavements obstruct the view”

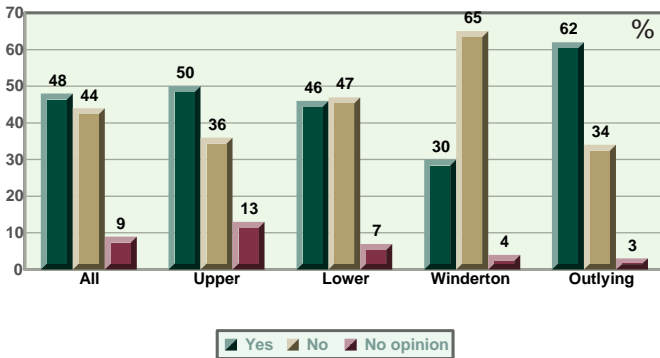
Traffic speed has also been recognised as an issue for some time. Three quarters of people feel that it is a problem and opinion is divided about whether current measures are sufficient to enforce the legal limit.

The Brailes Speed Reduction Committee have been looking into this for a while now.

Is the speed of traffic a problem?



Have we done enough to stop speeding?



The residents of Winderton, being particularly concerned about speeding traffic, support the very many comments made relating to widening the effort to control fast traffic on the country lanes rather than concentrating only on measures to slow cars through Brailes.

- “Reduce speeding on the country lanes around the village”
- “In Winderton the beautiful lanes are not safe enough”
- “Saltway Lane is a race track in the morning and afternoon”
- “Improve the condition of local back roads”
- “Fast traffic sprays water which is unpleasant and dust making breathing difficult”

Over 75% of people still think speeding is a problem

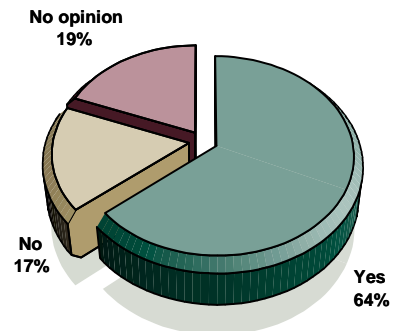
But opinion is divided as to whether enough has yet been done to control it

Going for a 'greener' parish

There was very positive feedback relating to developing more environmentally friendly initiatives and understanding. 64% of us would like to see the parish becoming 'greener' but this number rose to a huge 86% when families with pre school age children responded.

There were many visions and ideas:

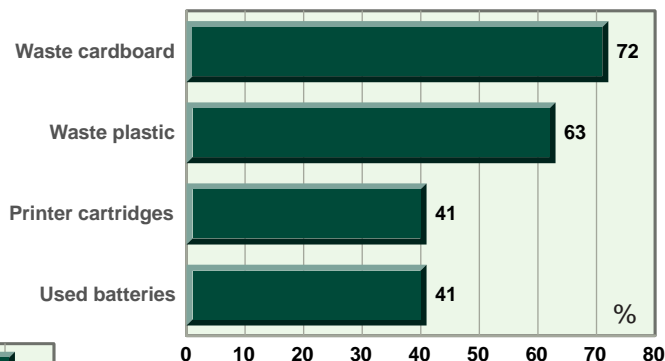
- “Retain our area as outstanding natural beauty”
- “Progress .. in tune and with respect for nature..”
- “Create a community fund to purchase parcels of land, when available, to provide wildlife”
- “A Brailes wood would be lovely”
- “Let's have a village pond”



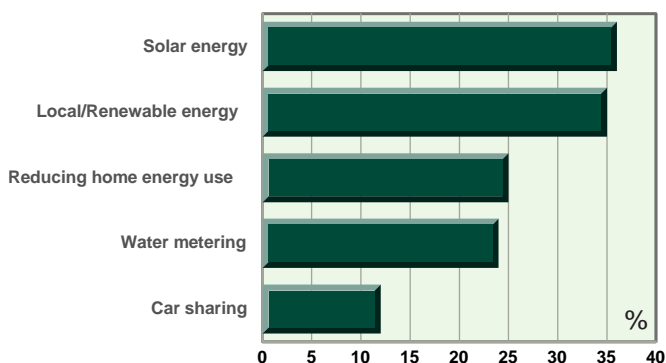
Some very specific suggestions are: to make features of some local areas, like Henbrook Lane, to carry out a tree survey and plan a replanting scheme, to lay more hedges and to have very limited mowing of verges when vision lines are not a problem.

We were keen to recycle more in the parish. “Bring back our own recycling unit” was mentioned many times. We would like to be able to have home collections for more recyclable materials.

Recycling from home



Interested in more information



We were interested in gathering more information on environmentally friendly topics.

There were other ideas which people thought would improve our lives

“Have an action against litter program”

“Be considerate when you use noisy garden machinery”

“Be aware of using excessive lighting on your property, focus security lighting to where it is needed”

“Develop a cycle path to Shipston”

Not all suggestions were practical. Commercial interests, ownership of land, Parish and District Council responsibilities have all to be considered but there was a generally positive feeling that we could do more. Maybe we could set up an environmental group to develop a policy, advice and an environmental action plan for the parish.

Children’s survey

21 children under 10 years of age returned a special children’s survey. Many included original artwork to illustrate their favourite place.

When asked what is best about living here the winner was playing on the playing field and as you would expect, they had lots of suggestions for extra, new or different pieces of apparatus which they would like to see. These ranged from simple things like Basketball nets to the unimaginable ‘Death Slide’!



Most of the apparatus suggested was for the older children so perhaps we should be considering developing something for this age group.

The children's favourite place was Castle Hill with 'my house' coming in second.

There were lots of activities which they would like to see including tennis, football and cricket clubs as well as dance and drama classes. A safe place to ride bikes and an indoor/outdoor place to 'hang out'



What happens next?

A full version of the survey results data is available in the Parish Council office and can be viewed by arrangement with the Parish Clerk. A data CD is also available for which a small charge may be made to cover the cost of the disc and any postage.

The Action Plan was adopted in full by the Parish Council and by the Stour Area Community Committee of Stratford-on-Avon District Council on 15th. November 2005. It highlights options which the Parish Council may explore to make happen your vision for the future. The documents relating to the adoption of the Action Plan are also available for viewing in the parish office.

Some changes locally may be made quickly but others are long term and need more research and consultation and, very often, volunteers before things can happen.

Thank you for taking part in a process which gives you a voice in how you see the development of the Parish.

We have followed the 'Just Imagine' route and now we move onto 'Make it Happen'

BRAILES PARISH ACTION POINTS

It is important to keep in mind the three overall wishes which were identified from the survey:

- **Keep the character, identity of a working village and stay unspoiled**
- **Reduce speeding and enforce the speed limit**
- **No more significant developments, restrict new building and no more luxury homes**

On the following pages our Action Points are presented in tabular format under specific headings and areas of interest:-

<u>ASPECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WHO COULD BE INVOLVED</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
<p><u>Parish life and activities</u> Adult Educational classes</p>	<p>Parish Council to measure interest in evening and day courses. Identify areas of interest and any volunteers willing to help. Perhaps arrange taster classes of a wide variety of topics to identify real interest and support.</p>	<p>Parish Council, Feldon News, School, WCC Adult and Community Education Department & Workers Educational Association. Local communities who have tried a similar approach.</p>	<p>No initial cost</p>
<p>Village Museum</p>	<p>Measure interest and identify a volunteer Leader and Steering group. Investigate whether a suitable venue is available in the village and what changes would be needed to it. Whether any funding grant could be available. Specify the purpose of the project. Is it aimed at locals or visitors? Would be a long term project only viable with a business plan to show how it could become self-financing.</p>	<p>Parish Council, Feldon News, Brailles Craft and Mechanical Society, Talk also to Shipston Market Towns Initiative. Shipston Museum.</p>	<p>No initial cost to measure interest. Available grants to be investigated. Possible funders are Local Heritage Initiative - www.lhi.org.uk and the Heritage Lottery</p>
<p>Activities for Children / Youth: Playing field area</p>	<p>Look at provision of some equipment suitable for the older children (10-15) e.g. Basketball nets, All weather surface Bike area, Trampoline, etc. Investigate cost and likely usage. The children could be given a budget and help choose the best way to spend it.</p>	<p>Village Hall and Pavilion Committees, FOBS, School, Children.</p>	<p>Investigate available grants</p>
<p>Sports clubs for Football, Cricket, Tennis</p>	<p>Research interest levels and volunteers.</p>	<p>Pavilion committee, Parents, Youth Group.</p>	<p>Minimal</p>
<p>Other Activities</p>	<p>Research interest in various activities Dance classes, Drama, Arts & Crafts, A 'place to hang out'.</p>	<p>Village Hall and Pavilion Committees, FOBS, School Parents, Youth Group, Brownies</p>	<p>Investigate available grants.</p>

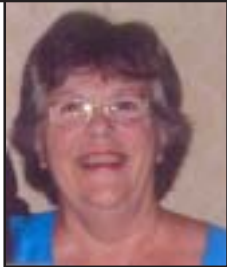
<u>ASPECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WHO COULD BE INVOLVED</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
<p>Parish facilities</p> <p>Mobile library – make timings more convenient</p>	<p>Parish Council to investigate the setting up of a mini library in the Village Hall with Warwickshire Library Service. The service may provide a change of books each week and the times of opening can be tailored to fit the needs of the village. Volunteers needed to staff the opening hours. (Maybe link with café/book club to provide a meeting place for residents).</p>	<p>Parish Council, County Mobile Library service, Village Hall Committee, School</p>	<p>No cost</p>
<p>Pavilion – increase its use</p>	<p>Village Hall Pavilion Committee to increase awareness of this facility and its availability for hire.</p>	<p>Village Hall Committee, Feldon News, Pavilion Committee</p>	<p>No cost</p>
<p>Child care arrangements</p>	<p>Make people aware of what is available now for pre school children. Consider using school facilities for a homework club for older youths. Check the survey done by the school, assessing the need for extended school hours care, is up to date.</p>	<p>Parish Council, School, FOBS. Dunsmore Childcare Initiative</p>	<p>No cost</p>
<p>Accessing doctors and NHS dentists</p>	<p><u>Note</u> this is a problem for the 21-39 year age group who are probably working during the day. Could we alert the medical centres to the problem and is there any information which could be circulated to parents?</p>	<p>Local medical centres</p>	<p>No cost</p>
<p>Information about the village</p>	<p>Co-ordinate and combine currently available web sites. Fund a web site manager.</p>	<p>Parish Council WCC provides free web space on its site and help in setting up a site.</p>	<p>Parish Council</p>

<u>ASPECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WHO COULD BE INVOLVED</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
<u>Parish Housing and Business</u> Help people understand the processes involved in obtaining Social Housing	Produce a simplified guide showing step by step information on how to get on a Social Housing list and find out what is available.	Parish Council, South Warwickshire Housing	Printing and distribution costs
Housing Needs	Carry out a further Housing Needs Survey in 18 months - 2 years time. when the effects of the Sutton Lane development are known. Include a feasibility study for residential unit accommodation suitable for the elderly in the parish.	Parish Council, SDC Housing Enabler	
Business services available in the Parish	Develop a Services Directory, both printed and web based. To be updated annually. Businesses to register and from this a networking group could be developed. To be available to all residents and to form part of a 'Welcome Pack' for newcomers.	Parish Council to delegate Other local communities who have already done this/ WRCC can help & advise businesses and retailers.	Parish Council
<u>Transportation and Roads</u> Speeding	Maintain the work of Brailles Speed Reduction Committee and extend its concern to the lanes around the Parish.	Parish Council, Brailles Speed Reduction Committee.	Parish Council
Parking	Awareness campaign relating to the difficulties caused by inconsiderate parking. Consultation on where cars should be parked.	Parish Council, Brailles Speed Reduction Committee.	Minimal extra costs
Transport for the Community	Look at alternatives to bus service for public transport e.g. Dial-a-Ride Schemes, Taxi Share Schemes, parent volunteer group for youth social outings	Parish Council to delegate Rural Transport co-ordinator for the County Council.	No initial cost
Transport for medical needs	Awareness campaign for volunteers to provide transport to hospital or for surgery visits.	Parish Council, Feldon News Local communities who have experience.	No cost

<u>ASPECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WHO COULD BE INVOLVED</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
<u>Environmental Improvements</u>			
Capture the enthusiasm which exists for developing a 'greener' parish	Set up and sponsor an Environmental Group to develop a Parish Environmental Policy, provide advice and an action plan to cover areas highlighted in the survey.	Parish Council to delegate Agenda 21, Energy Advice Centre, local environmental groups.	Parish Council
Recycle more	Lobby to bring back our own recycling collection point	Parish Council, District Council	
<u>General</u>			
Communication	Action Plan Steering Group to communicate survey findings to interest groups already existing in the parish.	Brailles Footpath Group, Brailles Speed Reduction Committee, . . local businesses.	No cost

Notes ...

Brailes and Winderton Parish Councillors



Brenda Foster

I moved to Brailes with my husband and four young sons in 1969. My involvement in the village consists of belonging to various organisations and having served on the Parish Council for 15 years.



*Glenda Woods -
chairman*

I am passionate about Brailes and will do everything I can to keep it a vibrant working village with its wonderful community spirit, range of shops and other businesses, village organisations and variety of housing. My other passions are gardening, walking and family life!



Nicholas Drury

I am rapidly approaching 50 years within the parish and have always enjoyed living here. The welfare of the village is very important to me and this is my primary reason for being on the Parish Council.



Barbara Manley

I moved to Brailes in 1953 and have been involved in the family farm for 40 years. This is the first time I have served on the PC and I have learnt a lot. My interests include the Chapel, St. George's, Brailes Show, the Village Hall and the WI.



Malcolm Pendery

Malcolm was born in Warwickshire, is married to Helen and they have 4 children. Malcolm is a retired-chartered engineer and now works part time as a business consultant. He was previously chairman of Brailes Millennium Association.



Christopher Righton

Chris has lived and farmed in Brailes and has served on the Parish Council for many years. He takes an active interest in a number of those aspects that affect day to day village life.

Also on the Parish Council is Anthony Jervis who lives and farms in Winderton.