

Stowford Parish Plan Questionnaire

Community response report July 2017

The purpose of the questionnaire is to establish what the residents of Stowford Parish wanted for the future of the Parish and how they could see it being maintained and/or developed further.

Residents on the 2016 - 2017 West Devon Borough Council full register of electors list were individually posted the questionnaire on 24th April 2017. 24% of the residents have responded, making a total of 29 replies as of 9th July 2017. Not all respondents have replied to all the questions.

A list of five questions were presented for parishioners to answer anonymously.

The questions tabled were;

Question 1. Describe why living in Stowford is appealing for you?

Question 2. Looking to the future, would you see living in Stowford remaining a positive experience?

Question 3. What would you list as pressures in preserving Stowford as a flourishing place to live?

Question 4. The parish council is looking to the future of Stowford, would you list 3 priorities important to your family and neighbours?

Question 5. Would you like to help in the process of developing a Parish Plan for the future and how much time could you offer each month, this process may take up to 2 years?

Members of the public are encouraged to attend the meeting scheduled on 11th July at Stowford Parish Hall to openly discuss the findings and results from the questionnaire. Following this consultation, the council will finally consider all the issues raised by the questionnaire to determine if the inhabitants of the Parish wish to undergo a 'Parish Plan'.

Further consideration may be made from the questionnaire results, this to determine whether there are issues that have been raised for the council and West Devon Borough Council to address if possible.

A brief synopsis of the answers for each question has been provided by the Parish clerk.

Individual responses from the Parish community for the above questions are on the following pages:-

Question 1.

Describe why living in Stowford is appealing for you?

Answers

1. Peace and quiet.
2. Very nice rural area of Devon, people very helpful and friendly.
3. I live in Portgate
4. Tranquil rurality, tucked away from main roads, but easily accessible trunk roads, a choice of 3 towns in easy reach for shopping and other essential and leisure amenities. Only 40 minutes from Exeter airport. Several possible urban areas for jobs in reasonable travelling distance.
5. Proximity to employment. Abundance of wildlife.
6. Local community, living amongst people that you have socialised with for years, access to good roads.
7. Living in Sprytown and surrounding valleys are generally unspoilt. Delightful rivers ambling from high Tors of Dartmoor down the Tamar. These upper tributaries remain the same for generations.
8. Open countryside, access to A30
9. It's quite, no main road and traffic, yet accessible.
10. In Stowford we are near to family and friends within Lifton, Lewdown & Launceston. Close to the A30 for travelling.
11. Quiet area, away from the busy towns and villages.
12. Its peaceful and rural, Very unspoilt and special.
13. It's got a strong community and offers good road connections. Lewdown & Lifton are either direction with good facilities.
14. Nice views, friendly community.
15. Privacy, safety, natural beauty, good dog walking and cycling routes, respectful neighbours.
16. It is a beautiful and relatively peaceful rural area.
17. Good access to A30 trunk route. Stunning landscape. Location between north and south coast. Close to Lewdown and Lifton. Sense of community.
- 18 I live at Portgate Hill and over the years it has got very noisy and it is going to change if too much traffic.
19. Stowford is a quiet, unspoilt, relatively crime free rural idyll.
20. As I don't actually live in Stowford, I am on the border of Lifton, but in Stowford Parish this doesn't really apply to me. Apart from coming to vote and the odd times to the church, I don't really go to the village.
21. Quiet and community.
22. No wind turbines
23. It's a lovely unspoilt rural setting with a real sense of community. It's a very peaceful friendly and safe environment for families living in the village but within its heritage as a farming community.

Synopsis for question 1.

Good access to A30 and nearby villages and towns.
Quiet, rural, farming, community life/spirit.
Unspoilt, natural beauty.
Friendly and safe.

Question 2.

Looking to the future, would you see living in Stowford remaining a positive experience?

Answers

1. Why not.
2. Yes.
3. Yes
4. Definitely, what's not to love? Best of both worlds. Also not as far from coast and close to Dartmoor. Lots to see and do, beautiful countryside.
5. Yes, until no longer able to drive.
6. Yes
7. Yes, providing that the parish grows to reflect the growing community in a managed and sympathetic way.
8. Would like to see the tranquil settings protected. We feel it is important that any development is in keeping with its past and the needs of the people living in this environment.
9. Yes
10. Yes
11. Yes
12. Yes, if it stays quiet.
13. Yes
14. Yes
15. Yes – particularly if Broadband improves.
16. Yes
17. Yes.
18. Yes, we think it's important to maintain and encourage residents to come together through well advertised functions which include all age groups. In Portgate we now suffer more heavy traffic due to new heavy machinery business in Allerford Farm. This has impacted us!!
19. Yes, cannot afford to move.
20. Yes, certainly.
21. Yes
22. Yes but on the proviso that the reasons given in question 1 aren't compromised or change for the worse. Small communities like ours can be susceptible to little changes having a major impact and so we just need to be mindful of this with any future plans for the village.

Synopsis to question 2

A positive experience from all respondents.

Improvement to broadband.

Better advertising of functions.

If any development was considered, this should be done for meeting the needs of the parish and done sympathetically to blend into the local environment.

Question 3.

What would you list as pressures in preserving Stowford as a flourishing place to live?

Answers

1. Increase in vehicles on our country roads.
2. Maintaining a mix of age groups in the village and engaging younger people in community life. Housing availability for young people at affordable prices. Post Offices at Lewdown and Lifton vital to community.
3. Lack of public transport, no village shop within walking distance, lack of affordable housing to purchase or rent.
4. Parking controls
5. Allowing local people to build/develop their own houses within the community that they already support. Encourage/support the younger generations to remain in the community.
6. Inappropriate pressures for large developments. Development of green energy- turbines/solar farms. Erosion of woodlands. Increased population. House prices too expensive for many young buyers.
7. House prices, poor public transport.
8. More affordable housing for young people to keep the village alive.
9. Further housing developments, conditions of roads.
10. I wouldn't want to see it change.
11. The use of homes/buildings for holiday accommodation instead of people who work locally.
12. Maintaining community buildings – church/hall. Road maintenance for more rural properties. Mobile and broadband. Local amenities remain - doctors in Lifton, shop in Lewdown.
13. Ongoing facilities – shop, pub, Post Office, school and bus service. A need for social housing- all wards should be considered.
14. Not too sure.
15. We think it important to maintain and encourage residents to come together through well advertised functions which include all age groups. In Portgate we now suffer more heavy traffic due to new heavy machinery business in Allerford Farm. This has impacted on us!!
16. Bigger and larger traffic: ie, contractor at Allerford with larger swing-shovels.
17. A bus coming down into Stowford once a week, preferably Tuesdays, also the mobile library.
18. I'm not sure flourishing is appropriate, retaining its present image, not too much additional development, hanging on to its farming origins.
19. Keeping shop and Post Office and bus service.
20. A bus service once a week or fortnight to a town and back someday.
21. I think we all recognise the pressures on housing across the county for young couples and families. Perhaps those pressures aren't so great here in West Devon but we probably accept that there will be a need to build new properties. The issue will be where these new properties will be sited and the number that are built. The installation of a wind turbine in close proximity to the village was rejected at planning application last year but there is concern that similar such applications may be made in the future.

Synopsis to question 3

Increase in heavy vehicles.

Housing availability and affordable housing for young and first-time house buyers.

Mix of age groups in villages.

Lack of public transport.

No village shop, mobile library or post-office.

Mobile and broadband service.

Development of green energy,

Concerns for any future turbine applications.

Question 4

The Parish council is looking to the future of Stowford, would you list 3 priorities important to your family and neighbours?

Answers

1. If there were a way of getting some kind of public transport i.e mini-bus or similar maybe twice a week, to drop down the hill, this would be a big help.
2. Broadband. Mobile phone signal. Country life.
3. We have only lived here 18 months so it is difficult to say. 1. Maintaining the rural character and historic aspect of the village 2. Keeping an active village hall and local schools. 3. Helping support sustainability of businesses – internet links.
4. Maintain and strengthen community spirit, achieve a balanced age group. A small number of affordable housing.
5. Maintenance of roads and hedges.
6. Community spirit/ ethos. Supporting the next generation to stay within the community. Sympathetic growth/development.
7. Preservation of our natural beautiful environment. Encouraging the diversity and protection of woodlands, streams and green area's. Ensuring any future developments are in keeping.
8. 1. Public transport to Exeter/Plymouth. 2. Good internet access- currently average to poor.
9. No more wind turbines which spoil the area. More affordable housing for young people to keep the village alive. To keep the Lewdown shop.
10. Safe footpath/accessibility to walk to Lifton. To have more support for planning - mainly WDBC, especially where longstanding residents and families of the community are concerned. Better public transport facilities. To re-open the Harris Arms as a public house.
11. Maintain quiet/peaceful environment. Maintain good roads throughout the hamlet.
12. I would like it to stay as it is. No developments. 30 mph speed limit.
13. Increased affordable housing for young people. Maintenance of roadside & hedging (fly tipping).
14. Planning concerns-wind turbines spoiling the area and health concerns. Affordable housing. Connectivity to the world - roads, mobile, internet.
15. 1. Bus service. 2. Local amenities. 3. Safety. 4. Sensible/realistic planning permission.
16. Keeping the valuable service of Cooper's deliveries.
17. Pub, Post Office, Shop.
18. No new buildings, slower traffic down Portgate Hill.
19. Keeping the church and hall going and more communications.
20. Low crime and little development and 30 mph speed limit.
21. Keeping traditions going and keeping a rural environment.
22. More information on what's going on or will be before it happens. No wind turbines.
23. (a.) Preservation of the area. That any development is in keeping with the existing surroundings and does not spoil the character of the village. (b.) Housing. It would be nice to see one or two new houses being developed but with the local residents in mind. There is a need for young couples and families to have affordable housing in the area. Equally, the requirement for more holiday lets should also be considered a lower priority. (c.) The reason for the appearance of the village is mainly down to residents volunteering and giving up their own time for the sake of the community. Many new incomers to the area don't wish to get involved and therefore we risk losing the look and feel of the village. Any support the Parish council can give to help promote community coming together more would be a good thing.

Synopsis to question 4

Public transport.

Mobile and broadband services.

Maintaining rural and community life.

A better balanced age group with-in the community.

Availability of affordable housing.

Consideration for more holiday lets

Maintaining highways, hedges

Maintaining a quiet and peaceful environment.

Parish council support also promoting more community events.

Question 5.

Would you like to help in the process of developing a Parish Plan for the future and how much time could you offer each month, this process may take up to 2 years?

Answers

1. No
2. We are both still working, so at the present time is limited, but possibly 2-3 hours a month.
3. No
4. 3 hrs per month
5. No, too committed to other projects.
6. Both my partner & I work away during the week, I would be unable to commit.
7. N/A
8. No
9. Sorry no.
10. Yes, 4 hours a month.
11. Yes, but both work full time in education and social care.
12. Sorry but not available at present.
13. 4 hours per month each.
14. Sorry I'm getting to old.
15. If able.
16. Yes, but 2 hours per month.

Synopsis to question 5

No.

Committed to other projects.

Unavailable, at work

2-3hrs per month

3 hrs per month

4 hrs per month

4hrs each per month

2 hrs per month

Parish Plan Questionnaire for Stowford – Late replies – 9th July 2017

1. Describe why living in Stowford is appealing for you?

Answers – Stowford is a tranquil, clean and healthy, beautiful countryside with visible wildlife. No trains or planes and friendly neighbours.

Stowford is a pleasant and quite village, with lots of friendly people.

It is a peaceful, clean, full of wildlife, very pretty village & church, only noise of a few tractors and cars of people living in the village.

It's a very nice rural community with plenty of kind people, the local area is great for a variety of my hobbies, cycling, climbing etc.

2. Looking to the future would you see living in Stowford remaining a positive experience?

Answers – Yes

Maybe

Yes

In any distant future, I could definitely find myself very happy in the area, however still being young I have yet to experience life.

3. What would you list as pressures in preserving Stowford as a flourishing place to live?

Answers – The lack of decent timely bus services, lack of proper high speed internet connectivity, increasing road traffic, increasing population and the development of more housing.

The bus service to be improved, reducing the speed limit of the old A30.

Better bus services to Launceston, Okehampton is better serviced but could do with more services.

Internet is slow. The old A30 traffic goes too fast – need to reduce speed to 40 and 30 mph or 20 near houses and school.

Preservation of our historical buildings – church.

4. The Parish council is looking to the future of Stowford, would you list 3 priorities important to your family and neighbours?

Answers – Reduction in the speed limit on the old A30 – West Devon Drive.

Provision of proper high speed internet connectivity.

Provision of bus service to/from Launceston/Okehampton at sensible times.

Provide a better bus service

Lower speed limit on old A30.

Improve internet connectivity.

Lower the speed limit on old A30

Better bus service to Launceston.

Faster Internet.

Bus services, specifically the frequency, its very one sided travel

Internet service improvements.

5. Would you like to help in the process of developing a Parish Plan for the future and how much time could you offer each month, this process may take up to 2 years?

Answers – Yes – 2-4 hrs , Yes 1 hr, Yes 2 hours

As I am soon moving out to go to uni, and not being a permanent resident I feel I have less time.