

# EAST & WEST WORLINGTON PARISH PLAN



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

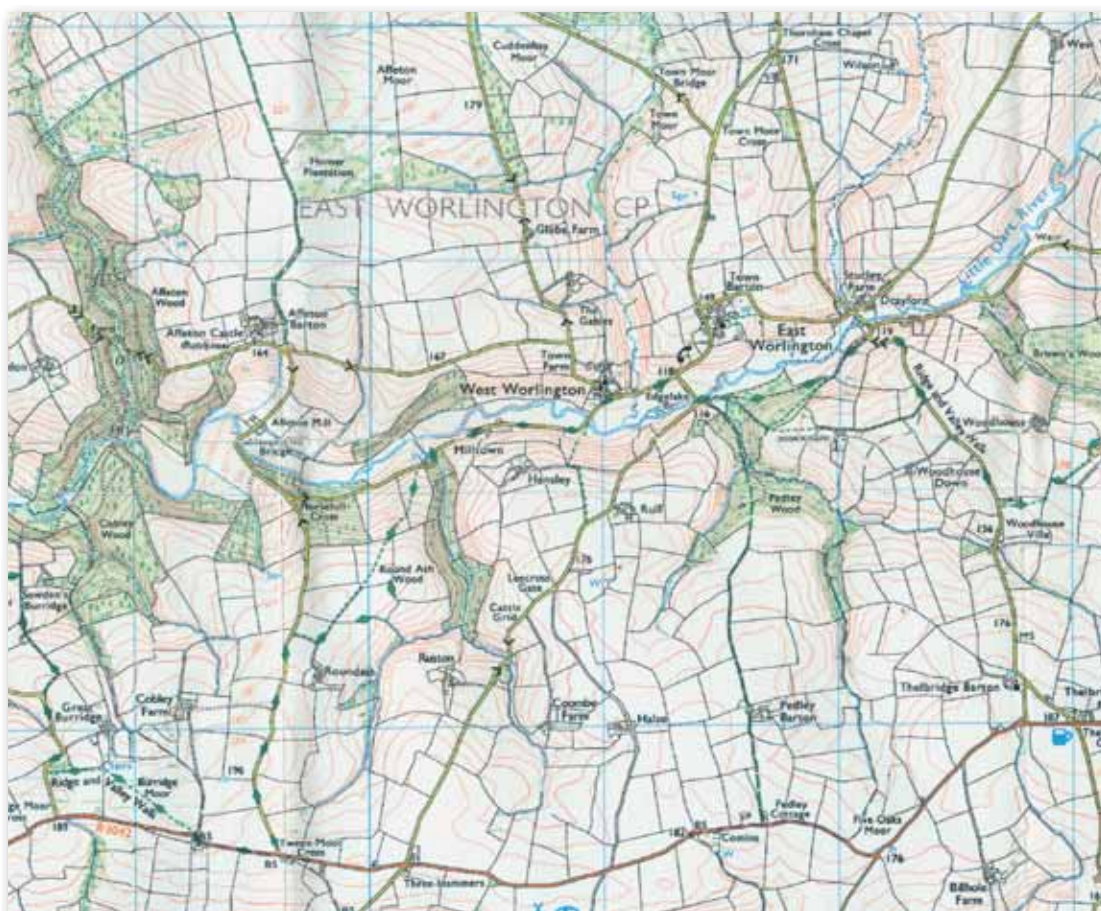
This Parish Plan reflects the results of a consultation process which saw a 78% return of the plan questionnaires along with real engagement by the community at both the 'issues' stage and the 'consideration of results' stage. The overall feeling was of a vibrant community content with what it has and the environment

in which it lives and works, and as such not looking for change. Clearly there were concerns and these are tabulated to fit in with the new Devon Communities in Action website [www.communitiesinaction.org.uk](http://www.communitiesinaction.org.uk) and form the basis for further action.

Copies of the full results and comments and the Parish Housing Needs Survey are available from the Steering Group.







# GEOGRAPHY

**E**ast Worlington civil parish covers an area some 4 km by 7 km lying some 3 km west of the large village of Witheridge and some 15 km south east of the market town of South Molton in North Devon. Spread out on elevated land between Exmoor and Dartmoor, farms and other dwellings are dotted throughout a predominantly pastoral landscape which is intersected east to west by the deep valley of the Little Dart on whose south facing slopes the twin settlements of East and West Worlington are situated; both consisting of

a cluster of houses around a church. Farther up the Little Dart lies the hamlet of Drayford half of which lies in the parish of East Worlington but many of whose residents look on themselves as part of the East and West Worlington community. East Worlington Community Primary School and the small, thatched Parish Hall sit next to the church in East Worlington. The nearest bus route runs along the B3137 Witheridge to South Molton road which borders the north-eastern corner of the parish some 3-4 km from the centres of East and West Worlington.

# A BRIEF HISTORY

Worlington in common with most parishes, was inhabited a considerable time prior to Domesday by native Britons and Saxons. Proof of ancient habitation is evident in the existence of Neolithic tumuli at East and

Middle Burrow, a standing stone at Stone Cross and earthworks at Burrridge. Three parishes were in existence in the mid 12th Century. East Worlington, West Worlington and Affeton and each had their own church. Affeton remained separate until the end of the 15th Century when it was merged with West Worlington, the church was then converted to a chapel and used by the principal land owners. East and West churches have records dating back

to 1261, both churches were built in the 14th and 15th Century. West remains relatively the same but East was rebuilt in 1879 although retaining its old Norman doorway. In 1885 both East and West Worlington were merged into one parish. After the

Norman conquest the original Saxon land owners were replaced by William, Duke of Normandy who shared out the holdings to be held in fee or held under the feudal tenure system. West was held by the de Worlingtons and then

went to Marwood who sold to de Affeton and in 1390 Stucley (then spelt Stewkley) and Affeton were joined by marriage and the Stucley family remain the principal land owners today.

West Worlington was given to the Bishop of Constaine in Normandy and later Richard Fily-Barnard held half a fee from Henry III and much later, in 1850, as part of the Eggesford Estate it was under the ownership of The Honorable Newton Fellowes who later became the 4th Earl of Portsmouth.

Prior to the Civil War the Stucley family were

the owners of a prosperous estate that held 13 manors. The property was described as one of the finest in the country with



St. Mary's  
West Worlington



Affeton Castle



St. Mary's  
West Worlington



St. Mary's  
East Worlington





a large manor house and a tower. Because the then owner was a defender of the City of Exeter, Fairfax's army then on their way to Torrington, dispatched a small party of men to destroy the house. It is suspected that the majority of the old buildings in East and West Worlington were built with the dressed stone from the ruined manor. Presumably some of this stone was also used on the 17th Century rectory in East Worlington and the adjacent Old Tythe Barn which is now the Village Hall.

The Old Toll House at Thornham Cross went out of use when the turnpike was built and Thornham Chapel was built on the old site. Northlake Chapel near Three Hammers was built by subscription



were finally metalled. This was because heavy machinery was removing local timber for use in the 1914-18 war effort causing degradation of the road surfaces.

After the 1914-18 War the War Memorial was sited at Boundy's Cross on which are recorded the names of the 13 men who fell during the First World War, (these include two of three Butt brothers from West Worlington who fought together, sadly only one survived). Added later were the names of the 4 men who gave their lives in the Second World War making a total of 17 fallen in the two World Wars. Following advice from English Heritage the East Worlington War

Memorial became a listed landmark at the end of 2009.

In 1939-45 during the Second World War a searchlight unit placed a searchlight in 'Camp Field' at Hensley Farm, West Worlington and this unfortunately, attracted the attention of the

Luftwaffe who registered its disapproval by dropping bombs in the area.

Worlington County Primary School was built by the Earl of Portsmouth in 1886 at approximately the same time East Church was being refurbished. Now, almost 125 years later the Primary School is still an integral part of the community.



in the late 19th Century. The 1850's saw the Turnpike built in the north east of the parish which is now the B3137. In 1915 Drayford Bridge was built across the Old Ford over the Little Dart River. It wasn't until 1923 that most of the roads in the parish



# PROCESS



In 2007 the Parish Council agreed to the formation of a Parish Plan and commissioned a Parish Plan Steering Group whose members are shown at the end of this report to carry out this task. Funding for the project was arranged through the Community Council of Devon. On 30th October 2007 the steering group ran a very successful drop-in day and evening “brainstorming” session to consider the issues affecting the parish. Based on the issues raised the group produced a questionnaire to be distributed throughout the parish. As the problem of housing for local people was high on the agenda at the drop-in day the group also worked with Colin Savage, North Devon Housing Enabler, to combine the questionnaire with a housing needs survey. Clearly there was a need to ensure confidentiality and so the questionnaire was distributed in three parts. A first part for all householders and a second part for all individuals who were 17 years and over; these needed to be entirely anonymous. A third part

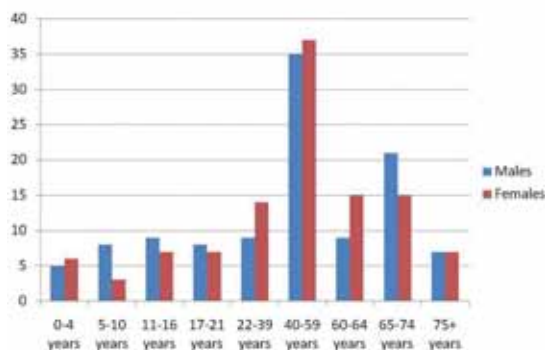
was made available for all individuals wishing to express a need for housing in the parish whether they lived in the parish at the time or not. This last had, of necessity, to include their names; a separate envelope was provided so that the third part might be sent directly to the North Devon Housing Enabler who was then able to return unattributed data back to the steering group in his Parish Housing Needs Survey Report. At the same time a separate children’s questionnaire was distributed to all those 16 years and under.

The numerical results were then collated by Devon County Council Corporate Consultation Services for the household and personal questionnaires, and “in house” for the children’s questionnaires. Sue Thomas and Donna Webber kindly transcribed all the many comments. At a public meeting on 10th February 2009 copies of the raw data and comments were distributed and the conclusions of the steering group presented for comment. This report and plan represents the culmination of that process.

# PARISH PROFILE

In addition to providing background to current issues the responses to the questionnaires gave a profile of the Parish at the time of collection. This showed a relatively static but ageing population.

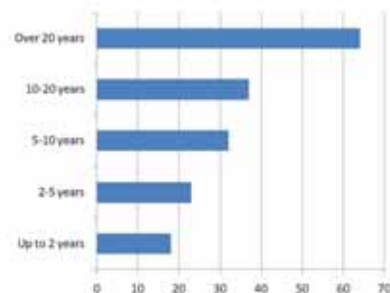
## Age & Gender Breakdown of Population



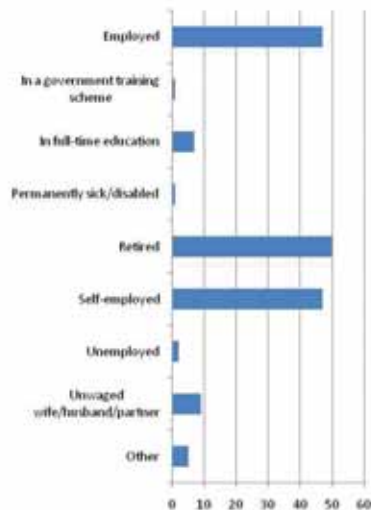
It also showed a high percentage of retired and self-employed residents with agriculture being the predominant employment.



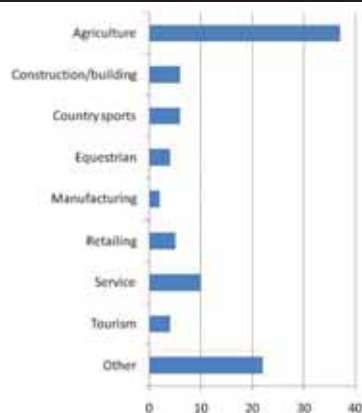
## How long have you lived in the Parish?



## Employment



## Work done





# WHAT CAN WE DRAW FROM THE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRES?

## OVERALL FEELING

The overall feeling was of a vibrant community content with what it has and the environment in which it lives and works. This is based on the response to **Question 2.50** as shown:

and the response to the children's **Question 4.4**

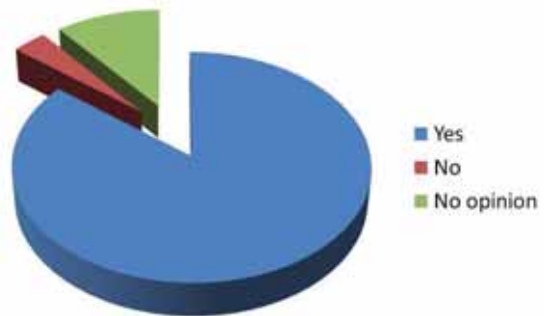
We suggest that this sense of well-being emanates from a strong sense of community as shown in the response to **Question 2.5**:



## Q2.50 How would you rate your quality of life?



## Q4.4 Do you like living in the Parish?



## Q2.5 How do you rate the Parish as a community?







This is backed up by the response to **Question 2.4** which shows how much the surviving community resources, namely the Village Hall, the Primary School and the Churches/Chapel, are appreciated.

Secondly there was a very positive response to the environment in which we live as shown in the response to **Question 2.51**:

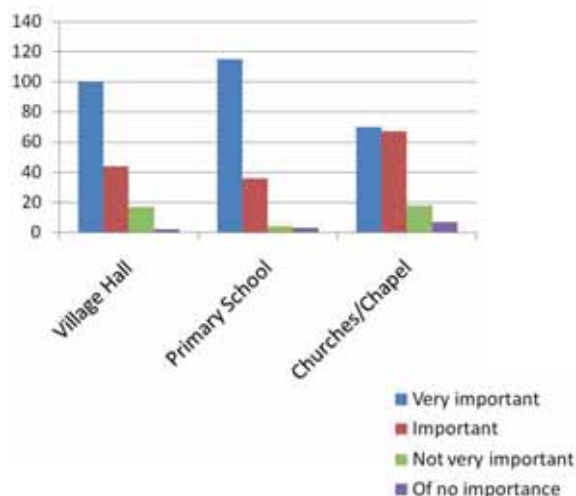
This question did put some people in a quandary so we had the following comments:

- 'The community' and 'the environment' go together.
- Community and environment both equally important (2 responses)
- It is both the community and the environment to a large degree - one helps create/sustain the other.

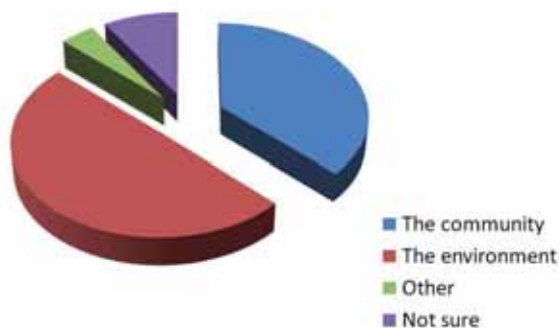
Or if you want it both ways:

- Privacy when I wish and access to community events when desired – choice is essential!

#### Q2.4 What importance do you put on the following resources?



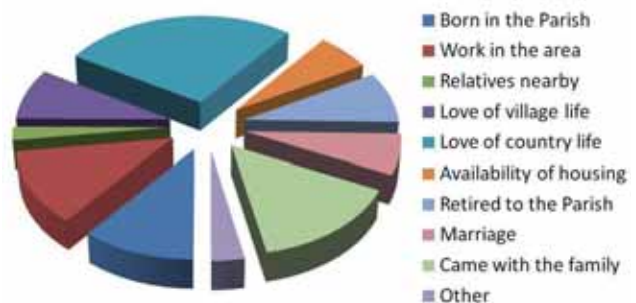
#### Q2.51 What is most important to you about this Parish?





This is also backed up by the response to **Question 2.8** and the community would be nothing without the people who make it up. This was accentuated by the 78% return rate and people's general cooperation in the whole project.

#### Q2.8 How did you come to live in the Parish?

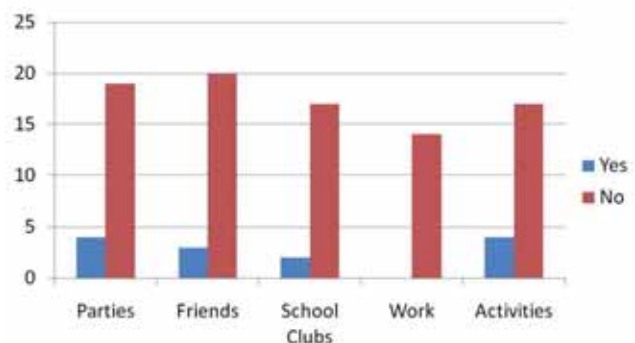


#### Q4.19 Do you have any problems getting to the following?

The dedication of parents was particularly brought out in the plethora of after-school activities shown by the children in the response to **Question 4.10**:

– Do you attend any after school clubs or activities? Yes 64% No 36% coupled to the response to **Question 4.19** shown here:

What dedicated parents we have!



# AREAS OF CONCERN RAISED

There were no overwhelming areas of concern!

## TRANSPORT

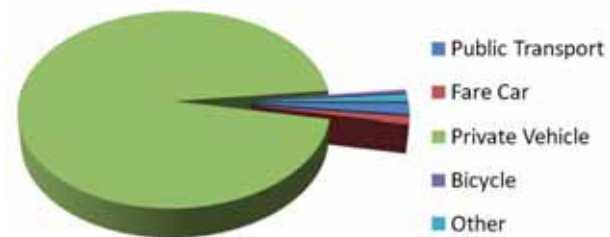
Although it may not necessarily be a concern, one thing that came out of the answers was the almost total reliance on private transport as shown in the responses to **Question 2.35**.

## ROAD SAFETY

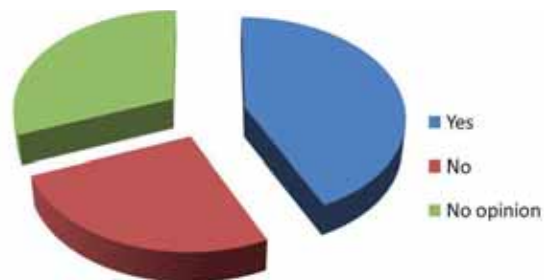
In a way this was perhaps why the two questions which generated the most comments were **Q2.39** and **Q2.40**, though the numerical results were not that clear the responses to “Where and what is the solution” came thick and fast with 84 suggestions. These particularly mentioned the road between Witheridge and East Worlington, through East Worlington to the War Memorial and also through West Worlington. Gidley Cross was also considered to be another danger spot. Many highlighted the contributory factor of excessive speed.

The same was true of the response to **Question 2.40** whereas “Where and what is the solution” brought some 51 suggestions, the ‘where’ was more generalised than for **2.39** though East Worlington was clearly a problem. Mention was made of agricultural vehicles (particularly contractors), hunt followers and parents on the school run. Solutions suggested were speed limits or clearer signs.

### Q2.35 What is your usual means of transport out of the Parish?



### Q2.39 Do you think there are any “danger - spots” on the roads in the Parish?



### Q2.40 Do you think there is a speeding problem in the Parish?





## PARKING

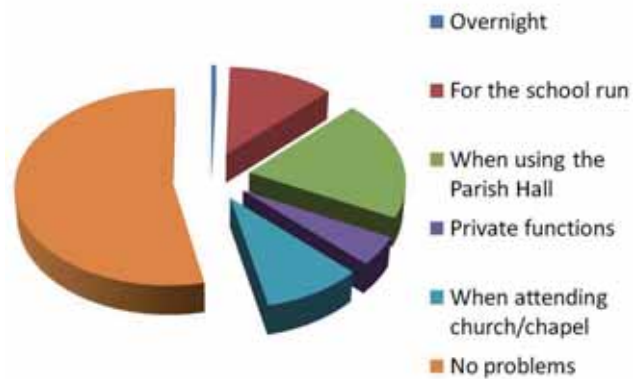
From the discussion of issues the steering group had expected a greater concern over parking but the response to **Question 2.37** showed:

And the response to **Question 2.38** was inconclusive but the responses to “if so where?” centred on the school, parish hall and church.

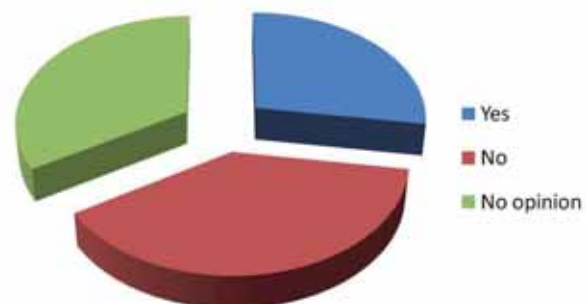
The steering group discussed this issue at length and made the following comments:

- The issue of parking only affects those who either live in the centres of East or West Worlington or have reason to visit these regularly – hence this distorts the figures – a lot of the school mums are from outside the Parish.
- The parking issue does have a cross-over with road safety.
- Although there is insufficient support to take positive action over a car park, this needs further investigation and the responses should be borne in mind if a suitable plot of land were to come up for sale.

### Q2.37 Do you have problems parking in East or West Worlington under the circumstances shown?



### Q2.38 Does the Parish need a car park?







# HOUSING NEEDS

The recommendations of the Rural Housing Enabler are as follows:

“Eight Part 3 forms were returned from people believing themselves to be in affordable housing need. All eight households appear to be in housing need, but one household did not meet the local connection criteria set out in the North Devon Council Local Plan. They cannot be considered for new housing on an Exception Site, which would be restricted to those meeting those local connection criteria.

One household indicate that they need housing in 5 years or more, demonstrating a longer term need for affordable housing if it is provided. All the other households require housing in the next three years.

Three of the households in need were young single people or couples looking to set up home for the first time. It is not normal practice to provide housing for all people in this category as some of them are likely to move elsewhere.

Most of the households identified as in housing need aspired to some form of low cost home ownership, but not all are in a financial position to afford it. A deposit of 10-20% of the purchase price, plus a mortgage, are required for this form of tenure.

The seven households meeting the local connection criteria require the following housing:-

HOUSE TYPE	RENTED	AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP
2 beds	2	2
3 beds	1	2

It is recommended that up to four affordable homes be provided. This could be rented or low cost home ownership, with the potential demand being there for two homes of each tenure.

HOUSE TYPE	RENTED	AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP
2 beds	2	2
3 beds	1	2

The preference of the Rural Housing Project is to see affordable rented housing provided, at low rent levels such as those set by the Homes and Communities Agency for housing associations and other Registered Social Landlords. This form of housing provides for those in greatest need, and there is always a demand for it.

Building affordable home ownership for sale is a potentially risky option, especially in the current market. Several of those expressing an interest in this option also indicated an interest in self-build. Supporting such individual initiatives may be the most secure way of meeting this type of need. This could be done by providing serviced self-build plots to be developed by individuals when they are in a position to do so, or by supporting them through the planning process if they identify an opportunity for a new build exception site, or for the conversion of an existing building. The Rural Housing Project is able to provide some support for individuals following these routes.”

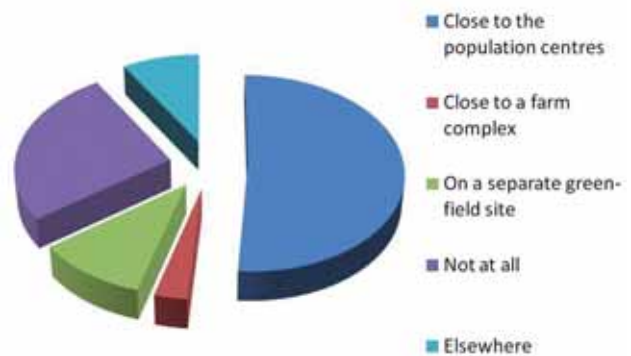




As previously stated, the full Parish Housing Needs Survey Report can be obtained from the steering group. However it is also relevant to consider the response to **Question 2.10** and the comments on where if elsewhere:

- In the village but to tie in with the existing style and contour of original buildings.
- Around centre of village
- North side of the road leading to Drayford out of East Worlington
- Edge of village with good, safe accessibility
- To north of current Council houses
- Along the main road/Three Hammers.
- Three Hammers X
- No need for multiple units. Single units more suitable for the Parish x 2
- Witheridge where there are good facilities x 2
- Pullens Old Coach Yard on Witheridge to South Molton Road
- Near Adworthy x 2
- Near the houses by Long Stone
- Somewhere where they don't look out of place
- Where it has least impact
- Anywhere, as long as everyone agrees! x 2
- Near employment

**Q2.10 If some low-cost housing for local people was to be built in the Parish, where would you prefer to see it built.**



## BRIDLEWAYS

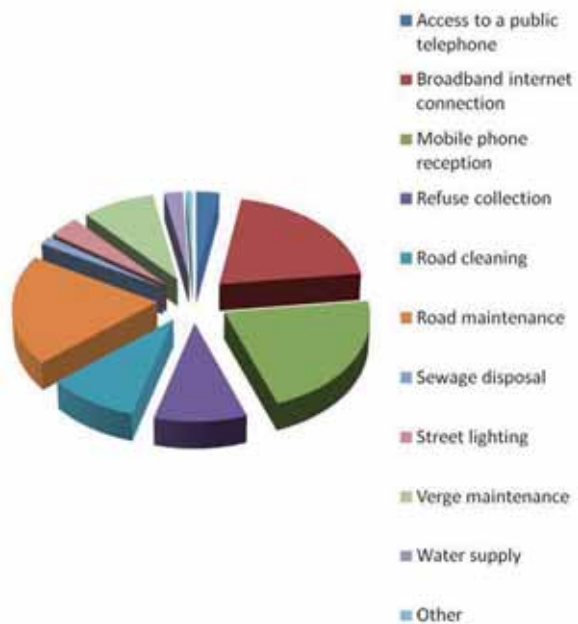
Although there was a general satisfaction with footpaths and bridleways (response to **Question 2.20**), there were a large number of comments on bridleways to the effect that the present ones needed attention and more were needed. There may have been confusion since some of the bridleways connecting to the Parish do not lie within the Parish. However the Steering Group considered that the number of comments justified further action.

## MOBILE PHONE RECEPTION AND BROADBAND INTERNET CONNECTION

Both mobile phone reception and broadband internet connection were highlighted in the response to **Question 2.48** as being a source of concern. Both accentuate the inequalities of rural life when compared to urban. This is particularly true for those seeking to set up businesses in the area. In addition lack of mobile phone coverage has serious implications in respect of safety when it comes to requesting assistance from emergency services.

The Steering Group considered that there was enough interest shown in the response to **Question 2.24** What do you think could be done to protect wild flowers and wildlife in the Parish? for them to recommend that a habitat/wildlife survey of the Parish be set up.

### Q2.48 Which of the following need improving in the Parish?



There was a clear endorsement in the response to **Questions 2.44a, 2.44b and 2.44c** for the Annual Parish Magazine and the Witheridge Group Newsletter whereas the ability of the Parish Council to communicate was called into question. The Steering Group therefore recommend that the Parish Council carry out a review of communications with a view to their improvement.

# THE CHILDREN OF THE PARISH

The children were very keen to be involved in the project from its earliest stages. They were given their own questionnaire and responded with an extensive range of answers. When asked about the future, half saw themselves remaining in the Parish, involved in a wide variety of employment ranging from hairdressing to farming.

Two-thirds of children participate in after school activities, the majority saying the provision is reasonably good. Around half the children said that they would like more communal playing facilities and were keen to participate in organised outdoor activities if they were offered. The same was the case for indoor activities.

It is clear from the questionnaire that car journeys are the predominant means of getting about for children locally, although they had obviously given a lot of thought to other means of transport, showing their concern for the speed of traffic travelling through the village. 25% of the children who responded felt that the environment was very important to the community. They are familiar with environmental issues, with 75% saying they don't want street lighting.

82% were unaware of who their Community Police Support Officer is. Only 25% of children use the mobile library service. The majority of children find out about what is going on in the Parish through their parents and friends. There might be an opportunity here to communicate with the children through their own version of the Parish Newsletter.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A great number of people have been involved in the production of this Parish Plan. Without the dedication of the Steering Group it would have been impossible. But the same goes for those distributing and collecting the questionnaires, the children and staff of the Primary School who helped identify some of the issues, the Parish Council who worked with the Steering Group throughout, Colin Savage and Diane Blackman from the Rural Housing Project, David Lines for

his work on the final document, the staff of the Community Council of Devon, Devon County Council Corporate Consultation Services and our local District and County Council representatives to name but a few. But above all thanks must go to the residents of East and West Worlington for their support in attending the 'Issues' day and 'brain-storming' evening, completing the questionnaires and their input into the final report. Thank you! Everyone.



## STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

Charles Hodgson – Chair,  
Philip Risdon – Vice-Chair,  
Sue Thomas – Administrator,  
Sally Fryer – Parish Council  
representative,  
Marion Crane,  
Geoff Hosegood,  
Suzy Wall  
Donna Webber.

<b>ISSUE</b> (broad heading in alphabetical order)		<b>PROPOSAL</b> (specific Communities in Action field suggestions)
<b>TITLE:</b> Environment (built & natural). <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> The community showed considerable interest in the protection of wild flowers and wildlife in the Parish.	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Habitat/wildlife survey of the Parish - carry out. Nominated Steering Group member to identify interested people to liaise with Devon Wildlife Trust and/or others to carry out a habitat/wildlife survey of the Parish. Level of interest shown in response 2.24.
<b>TITLE:</b> Government, politics and public administration. <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> Communications from the Parish Council to the community were not effective.	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Parish Council communications – improve. Parish Council to carry out a review of communications with a view to improvement. Responses 2.44c, 2.45 & 2.46.
<b>TITLE:</b> Housing. <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> Housing needs raised by the community in the housing survey element of the questionnaire.	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Housing Needs Survey. Rural Housing Enabler to carry out Housing Needs Survey in conjunction with Parish Plan questionnaire. Raised at issues day/evening.
	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Bring together the community and other partners to investigate housing opportunities as identified. Nominated Steering Group member to liaise with Parish Council and other partners to investigate housing opportunities as identified in Housing Needs Survey taking into consideration views expressed in the questionnaire responses. Housing Needs Survey and responses 2.9 & 2.10.
<b>TITLE:</b> Information and communication <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> The community showed concern at the poor mobile phone reception and low broadband internet speeds available in parts of the Parish	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Mobile phone reception – investigate. Nominated Steering Group member to seek coverage information and bring pressure to bear through the Parish Council on mobile phone companies. Response 2.48.
	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Internet facilities – investigate slow speeds. Nominated Steering Group member to seek information on broadband speeds and bring pressure to bear through the Parish Council on BT and ISPs. Response 2.48.
<b>TITLE:</b> Leisure and culture (& sport). <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> Although in general satisfied with public footpaths and bridleways, the community showed a considerable interest in upgrading existing and seeking new bridleways.	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Bridleways in the Parish – carry out survey and report on. Nominated Steering Group member to liaise with the Parish Footpaths and Bridleways Officer (and perhaps a group of interested users) with a view to a review of bridleways, connections with neighbouring parishes and possible new bridleways under DEFRA Countryside Stewardship schemes. Level of interest shown in response 2.20.
<b>TITLE:</b> Transport and infrastructure. <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> The community raised the following concerns: road safety, speeding, road maintenance and car parking in East Worlington	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Road Safety - Liaise with Highways. Parish Council & nominated Steering Group member to liaise with Highways over blackspots highlighted in questionnaire responses. High level of concern shown in responses 2.21, 2.39, 2.40, 2.41 & 2.42.
	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Speeding - Liaise with Community Police Officer. Parish Council & nominated steering Group member to liaise with Community Police Officer over speeding highlighted in questionnaire responses. High level of concern shown in responses 2.21, 2.39, 2.40, 2.41 & 2.42.
	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Road Maintenance - Liaise with Highways. Parish Council & nominated Steering Group member to liaise with Highways over road maintenance, drainage maintenance and verge maintenance as highlighted by questionnaire responses. Concern shown in response 2.21.
	<b>TITLE:</b> <b>DESCRIPTION:</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION:</b>	Car parking in East Worlington - Identify problems & seek solutions. Parish Council and nominated Steering Group member to convene a meeting of all interested parties to identify problems and seek solutions to car parking in East Worlington as highlighted in questionnaire responses. Concern shown in response 2.37, 2.38 & 2.39

