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Your Local Café



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Yaxham Waters Holiday Park

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Your Yaxham

Community Led Plan

The Yaxham Community Plan Steering Group was formed after a public meeting in May 2011.

Statutory guidance called “Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities” had been issued making it a requirement for local authorities, like Breckland, to involve communities in the decision-making process which shapes amenities and services affecting everyday life. The aim of the Steering Group has been to find out what people think about village life and village facilities, to ask what changes they would like to see and, indeed, what needs to remain unchanged.

We met regularly to draft the questionnaire which would provide an objective view of people’s feelings about village life. Great emphasis was placed on writing questions which were neutral and unbiased and were as a result of your feedback in the suggestion leaflets.

Many rewrites, edits, additions and subtractions took place before we came to a consensus.

The questionnaires were finally distributed in September 2012 to every household and a very satisfactory 76% of the village responded. The data that has been collected is a valuable source of information for the community and gives excellent information from which we can improve things for the future of Yaxham.

The breakdown of respondents covers all parts of the population and can be considered to be a representative sample for research purposes, which will be important when the results of this survey are shared with relevant parties.

The responses received cover a wide range of views, but what becomes clear in many instances is consensus, which is important when formulating a way forward through the various issues covered by the plan.

This report looks at the responses for all the sections in the questionnaire. It is not for the Steering Group to make judgements, although we have had to draw some conclusions from the replies. A wide range of comments were reported in the replies received. Most were very constructive and helpful to the project; we have excluded any remarks that are not seen to add value to the Plan.

This exercise has been time-consuming and the Steering Group has put in many hours to produce this report. It is hoped that the Action Plan will be adopted by those it relates to and that the community will be able to generate the support required to bring a number of opportunities which arise from this report into reality.

The Steering Group that has put so much work into this plan is from a cross-section of the community. I would like to put on record my huge thanks for the help and input they have given.

A very special mention has to go to Jo Robinson and Margaret Peters who spent many hours diligently analysing all the responses and data. The full analysis will be made accessible through the Yaxham website at a later date.

The other Steering Group members are: Ann Futter, Trudy Gust, Sue Lake, Peter Lowings, Ian Martin, Maggie Oechsle, Paul Phillips, Jennie Smith, David Stallion and Sally Thurgill.

Other members of the community have helped with various stages, but I cannot finish without thanking The Mill Café Bar and Restaurant for sponsoring our questionnaire, Norfolk RCC for their valuable financial support and expert advice and also Breckland Council and Ian Martin Associates for a contribution towards our costs.

This really is an opportunity for the residents of Yaxham to make our wonderful village even better and I look forward to some of the ideas and thoughts raised in this plan becoming reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter Smith', enclosed within a light grey rectangular border.

Peter Smith

Chair

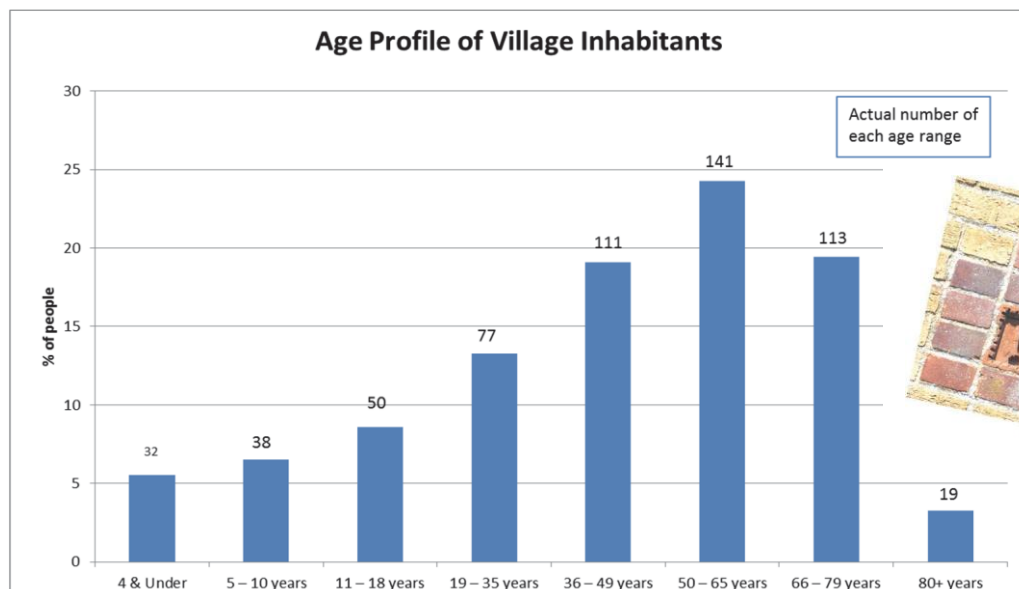
Yaxham Community Led Plan Steering Group

About your household

331 Households were identified as being eligible to participate in the Yaxham parish survey, however 16 of these were unoccupied at the time the survey was carried out. Of those households occupied, 241 responses were received to the main survey and 27 young persons' questionnaires were completed. This gives a response of **76.5%** for the occupied households.

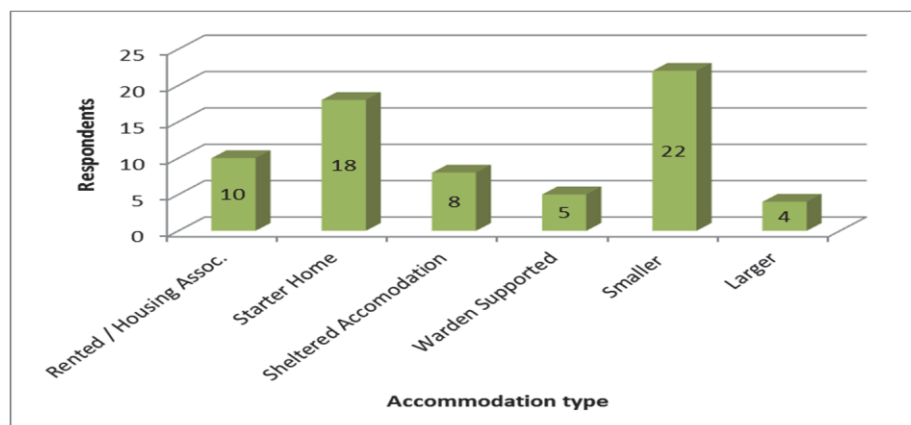
58% of respondents were from the Yaxham part of the Parish and 40% were from Clint Green, with the remainder being from other areas such as Brakefield Green. 44% of households have 2 occupants whilst 15-18% of households have 1, 3 or 4 members, with only 4% having 5 or more.

The age profile of the village is centred on the 50-65 year olds.



Housing

67 Households will be in need of alternative housing within the parish within the next 5 years, the majority of these require smaller properties or starter homes.

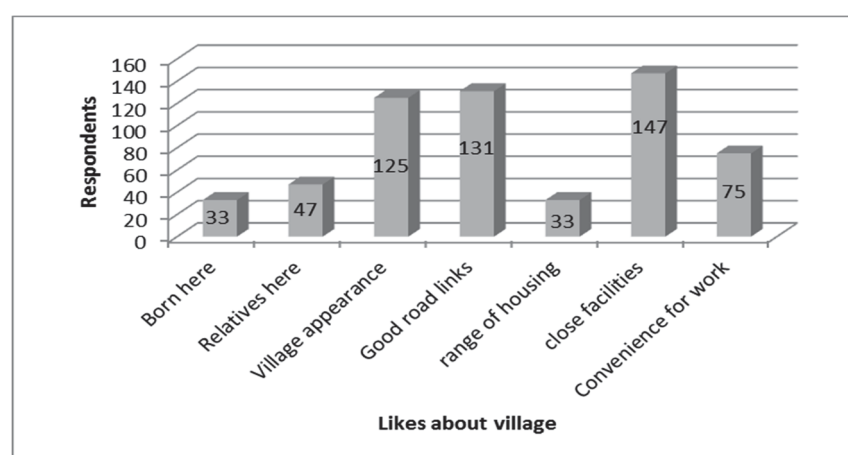


Action: Planning authorities to take note of specific needs in the community, especially future requirements for smaller properties and starter homes.

31% of the village has lived in Yaxham for 25 years or more, whilst around 50% have moved into the village within the last 10 years.

Number of years lived in the village	Total	%
Less than 1 year	18	7.5
1 – 5 years	51	21.2
6 – 10 years	43	17.9
11 – 25 years	51	21.2
More than 25 years	76	31.5
No response	2	0.8

The table below illustrates responses to the question: What does your household like / dislike about living in the village?



"I like this village because it is a small quiet place with a friendly community"

"The right distance from main facilities, Norwich, Coast and yet in the countryside"

"Village life at a more sedate pace than Dereham"

"Respectable area - Decent people - Pretty place"

Yaxham residents like the friendly community and peaceful nature of village life here. The benefit of being rural, but linked well to the facilities of Dereham and Norwich, was mentioned by a number of respondents.

81% of the comments gave "Areas for Improvement"; the remaining 19% didn't put anything.

"Poor facilities for young children, no groups / playgroup"

"Would like to have a pub again"

"I dislike the tribal/parochial attitude of some...Newcomers have chosen to like Yaxham, and their ideas may be of benefit to us all. They should be welcomed rather than discouraged"

The main issues were:

- Speeding traffic
- The closing of the public house
- Lack of a convenience store/post office in Clint Green
- The perceived division between the newcomers to Yaxham and those who have lived in Yaxham for a long time
- Inadequate broadband connection

"The junction at Well Hill is very dangerous opposite the school"

Regarding those who had recently moved to the village

85% of newcomers to the village were made to feel welcome when they moved to Yaxham, however the majority of those who replied felt that it would have been helpful to receive a welcome pack when they arrived.

Action: Consider having a welcome pack for new comers to the village and a system for distribution.

Traffic

Speeding:

The consensus of opinion (90% of households) is that traffic speed through the village is a major problem. Areas specifically listed were Norwich Road, Yaxham (122), Norwich Road, Clint Green (102), with Station Road (35) Cutthroat Lane (23), Well Hill (14), Paper Street (10), Stone Road (7), and Spring Lane (3) also being specifically mentioned. One or two areas were considered dangerous, these being: Church Lane/Whinburgh Road crossroads with Norwich Road; the corner of Station Road into Dereham Road and the junction of Well Hill with Norwich Road, opposite the school.



Slowing of Traffic:

Suggestions for effective ways of slowing the traffic were very mixed and it was possible for several options to be selected. 'Your Speed' displays were the most popular choice, followed by rumble strips, extra signage, more police presence and lowering speed limits. The suggestion of repositioning speed signs and tree/shrub planting were not so popular.

	Total	Percentage of those who said 'yes' (%)
'Your Speed' display	119	62.6
Rumble strips	61	32.1
Extra signage	54	28.4
More police presence	50	26.3
Lowering speed limits	48	25.3
Pinch points	35	18.4
More community speedwatch	35	18.4
Reposition speed signs	18	9.5
Tree/shrub planting	12	6.3
Other	45	23.7

In the comments section people felt that speed bumps, traffic calming or a 20mph speed limit, similar to those in Mattishall, would be effective. There was also a general support for lowering the 60mph speed limit between villages to a maximum of 40mph and many felt the 40mph speed limit should extend to the sections of road between Yaxham to Dereham (Tesco roundabout).

Parking:

Main areas where there are concerns for parking appear to be Well Hill at school times and Norwich Road, Yaxham on the eastern side of St Peter's Close.

Pedestrian Safety:

Once again, a high proportion of people (97) felt that the traffic speed was the main issue and the other categories, ie lack of pavement, poor maintenance of pavements, commercial traffic and street lighting receiving more or less equal responses. Many were additionally asking for pavements to be installed in Station Road and between Yaxham and Dereham. The key suggestions are for footpath/cycle path between Yaxham and Dereham and clearer marking of public footpaths across farmland. Many felt that we needed a pedestrian crossing at the school or for a pinch point with pavement opposite the school to slow down traffic and several commented on the lack of pavement on Station Road.

Reasons for issues with pedestrian safety

	Total Responses
Lack of pavements	54
Poor maintenance of pavements	38
Speed of traffic	97
Commercial traffic	41
Poor lighting	49
Other - excluding "No" & "N/A"	50

Safety for cyclists:

The response was mixed but 56% felt there were safety issues. Many people felt unsafe due to the speed of traffic but that cycle paths or reducing the speed limit would make this less of a problem as there was a general lack of respect from other road users, especially those driving HGVs, LGVs and vans. Refreshingly, 17% of those responding would be interested in joining a village cycling club.



Willing to help with community speedwatch?

Whilst speeding is considered to be a problem, willingness to help is sadly lacking, although 6 new volunteers have come forward

	Total	%
Yes	6	2.3
No	200	92.2
No response	24	

Environment

Waste and Recycling

Over 80% of those who responded felt that the current waste collection meets their needs although many commented that they would prefer weekly collections, particularly during the Summer. Additional comments focussed on restrictions upon items that can be recycled in Breckland, with respondents commenting that more plastic should be collected for recycling. When questioned about glass recycling at the Village Hall, 80% of respondents declared that they use this facility, which is excellent news as funds raised benefit the Yaxham Village Amenities Association

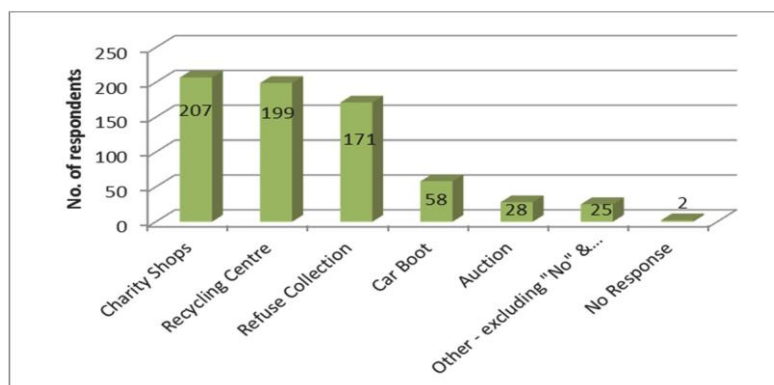
The majority of respondents dispose of unwanted goods through charity shops, at the recycling centre or via the refuse collection, with a small number using car boot sales or auctions. Other suggested methods of recycling included the use internet sites: Freecycle, Gumtree and Ebay.



There is no easy way for small home-based businesses to dispose of their commercial waste other than illegally as domestic waste"

Whilst over 46% of respondents stated that they would consider selling or purchasing items through a village facility if one were available, volunteers would be needed to help run such a facility.

How do you dispose of unwanted goods?



Renewable Energy

More than a quarter of respondents have some form of renewal energy at their property, the majority having wood burners. Over 3% have Thermal Solar Panels or Photovoltaic Solar Panels, with a smaller percentage having air or ground source heating systems or use biofuels. Currently no residents have had a wind turbine installed, although some stated that they are considering such a system. There was a positive response from respondents in local authority/housing association properties to the possibility of solar panels. Just over a quarter of residents stated an interest in a renewable energy and carbon reduction group.

"Solar Panels would be too expensive for me to install, but I think they are a good idea"

Litter

Just under 70% of respondents felt that there were litter and fly tipping problems, with a number of locations being identified including Cutthroat Lane, Well Hill, Station Road and Whinburgh Road. The football field/Village Hall recreation area was also identified as

	Total	Respondents (%)
Yes	49	22.9
No	165	77.1
No Response	27	

having a problem. Twenty per cent of respondents stated that they would be prepared to be involved in a village litter pick.

Dog fouling is an issue that prompted a lot of comments, including suggestions that those who fail to clean up after their pets should be named and shamed; investigation as to what authority could be obtained to fine those who don't comply and clearer signs telling people to 'pick up' and signage to dog waste bins. Suggestions as to where additional waste bins could be located included Well Hill, Pinns Lane and the playing fields. It was also noted that bins are sometimes full.

Fly-tipping was identified as a problem in Pinns Lane and Cutthroat Lane and there were many comments about litter being thrown from cars (drink cans/bottles and fast food packaging) all around the village.

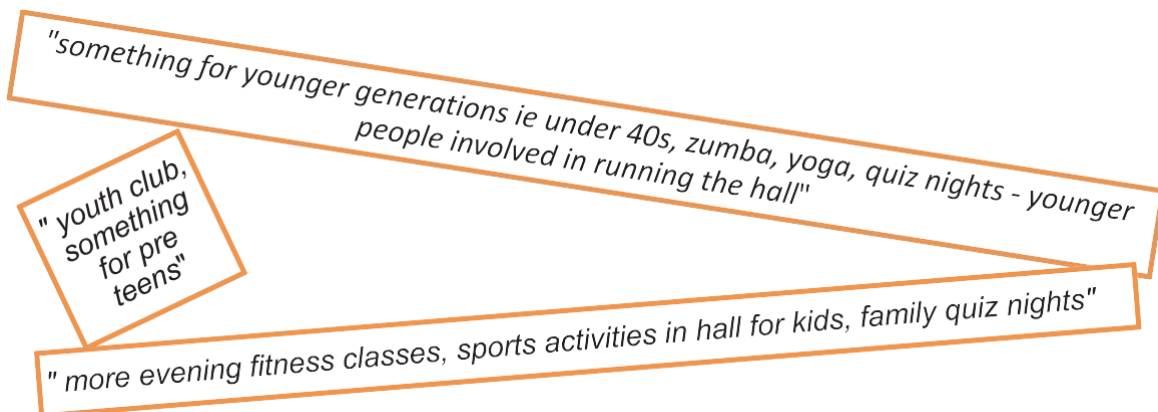


Village Facilities



Yaxham has one of the finest Village Hall facilities in the area and already has a busy schedule of events run by the Yaxham Village Amenities association.

One third of those respondents replying to the questionnaire currently use the facilities or are members of clubs associated with the hall. However it is clear from individual responses that there are more residents who would use the hall if additional events were added. A large number of suggestions for new clubs/activities were put forward, with 28 people volunteering their support or help in running these.



Other suggestions for new clubs/social activities were as follows:

Cribbage, quiz league, football training for younger people, gardening club, badminton and table tennis, ballroom dancing, local history club, book exchange and book club, playgroup, art/craft classes.

26% of those responding to the questions said they did not use the Village Hall at all and 91% are not using the church hall. 41% never use the sports field and 44% never use the play area.

Just under a third of those replying thought the community needed more facilities, the most common number of requests were made as follows:

- Village pub in Clint Green
- Convenience store in Clint Green
- Play area in Clint Green
- Better and improved play area at sports field and something for older children.

Allotment and community growing scheme

23 were interested in renting an allotment and 16% in a community growing scheme with 38 people putting their names forward.



Action: Parish Council to investigate acquisition of land for community use.

Generally, most people appear to be well-informed with what's going on in the village, with the amenities letter supplying 84% of the information to the residents. 20% rely on noticeboards and bus shelter information, 22% get their information from the website, however only 16% rely on the Village Hall notice board.

A third of those questioned would however like to see more regular information with some of the main suggestions as follows:

- Monthly newsletter
- Parish magazine
- Good village newsletter
- Consolidated newsletter not just the amenities
- Co-ordinated newsletter with website and more up-to-date information
- Details of village groups.

Education

Whilst there is little provision for under 5s in Yaxham, the Primary School for the rising 5s to 11 year-olds has a high reputation and appears valued within the community. For secondary education the vast majority go to the three Dereham schools – Neatherd and

Northgate High Schools, and the joint Sixth Form College, with a small number going further afield for very specific reasons. It is interesting to note that, amongst the responding households, 23 have children under 5, 32 of primary school age, and 41 of secondary school age. Although there may be some overlaps, 96 questionnaires indicated members of their household are at school or younger, ie 40% of completed questionnaires. This is a significant proportion of the village.

In answer to a question asking why villagers chose Yaxham Church of England Primary School, answers given were:



- It's local
- It has a good reputation
- It is a Church of England school
- It has good Ofsted results
- It's location
- It is a small school, and
- "It's our village school"!

Around 60% of those with children under 5 make use of playgroups, pre-school or nursery facilities nearby. However, there are currently no such facilities in Yaxham itself. There was some interest (10 responses) in having some form of pre-school arrangements in Yaxham and this needs actively exploring.

For 5 - 11 year olds, 32 households said they had children in this age-group. Of the respondents, 75% said their children went to Yaxham – because of its reputation, the local school, its Christian values, friends already there, being small and very welcoming. Of the 25% who send their children elsewhere, the reasons given included convenience, siblings already there and large enough to put siblings in different classes.

The following responses show views about the village primary school and its place in the village:

% Respondents	Very low (%)	Low (%)	Good (%)	Very Good (%)
School involvement in the village	1.1	13.1	60.2	25.6
Village involvement in the school	1.8	15.5	67.3	15.5
Reputation of the school in the village	0.6	4.0	53.0	43.4

The reputation of the primary school in the village is high. Of the respondents some two-thirds expressed a view, and of these over 90% said it had a good or very good reputation, over 80% thought there was good village involvement in the school (governors, volunteers, friends) and 85% that there was good involvement of the school in the village (the Jubilee Carnival, involvement in the church). Other comments regarding the village school included: making the school premises available for wider community use, parking issues on Well Hill and surrounding area, and greater involvement with the local church and with the older village residents.

Electronic Communication



Computer and internet use in the village appears to be higher than expected with around 83% (199) of respondents using both. This still leaves up to 20% without access and it is important to recognise this. A third of those without access (17) would be interested in communal use of computers with internet access.

The primary use is, as expected, personal and it is also clear that some people need help in making the most of the internet (4%) and, pleasingly, 11% are willing to provide such help.

	Total	Respondents (%)
Personal Use	199	96.1
Business Use	89	43.0
Education	79	38.2

Experience with the speed of the internet varies across the parish. Download rates (one indicator of internet speed) varies amongst respondents from a high of 3.6 mbps (megabits per second) to some with less than 0.5 mbps

The reason for asking these questions was to see if we could build a case for lobbying for better internet connection speeds. However, since the survey was undertaken, fibre-optic cabling is being rolled-out through the village and this should make quite a difference – Current experience from those now connected to the new service is very encouraging

Use of the internet for village matters is not good. The main village website – www.yaxham.com - is open to all organisations in the village but use is patchy and some of

www.yaxham.com

"It needs to be kept up to date!"

"More local news"

"Have not seen it yet"

"Did not know it was there"

"Only looked once, was not impressed"

the answers to the questionnaire were contradictory – only 41 respondents say they ever look at the website, but 113 say they look at it sometimes/once a month or once a week. Of these the most viewed pages are: What's on (81), Parish Council (66), the school (26) and the church (20). Less than half the respondents (47%) look at it at all.

How to improve matters? Suggestions for improvement of the website included:

- More space for young people,
- More village history,
- More local information, eg Doctors, chemists, police, the football club etc,
- That the website needs to be kept up-to-date by all the organisations on it.

One suggestion is that no-one currently takes responsibility for the site, and that maybe a steering-group be set up of users to oversee its development and make it more relevant to villagers to use.

If the village website has poor levels of use – then the Facebook pages maintained by the school, the Woodland Group and Your Yaxham have very little recognition in the wider community with around a dozen respondents looking at each, although the school Facebook page (which is for parents and friends – not for children under 13) regularly sees around 36 visits a week and has 50 “likes”. Facebook therefore only has limited use at this stage for communicating within the wider community.

“Wasn’t aware of them – will look now”

“Don’t agree with FB”

“Facebook hinders proper communication”

“Every organisation that is serious should have one”

“What about the football club?”

Another area of concern is mobile phone signal which appears to be inconsistent from a wide range of providers.

Local Government Services

There is a lack of knowledge when it comes to knowing who is representing us at the various levels of government

Responses to the question asking who knows their government representatives are as follows:

Representative	% answering Yes
Parish Councillors	68.5
Breckland District Councillors	41.1
Norfolk County Councillors	24.5
Member of Parliament	48.1
Member of European Parliament	7.5
Do You Care?	37.8

There is clearly a need for better communication from all parties, particularly our political representatives; it would be expected that local residents would have greater knowledge of their Parish Councillors. Given the size of the community, an awareness of under 70% is surprising.

Only 24% of respondents felt that the Parish Council effectively represents their interests, the majority being unaware of the outcome of parish council decisions (57%). This would indicate that the Parish Council needs to be more effective in communicating with parishioners.



When asked about issues that local councils should be made aware of, a wide range of subjects was raised which are covered in other sections of this report.

Top of the list is speeding, followed by parking. The issue of the apparent change of use of the public house in Clint Green is mentioned.

Action: The Parish Council needs to take note of concerns and, where possible, raise issues with relevant bodies.

Although very few people seem to have had the need to contact local government or services, those who did were mainly satisfied. In all cases, the level of dissatisfaction was in single figures.

There is a general satisfaction with village services, although maintenance of roads and verges, together with surface water, comes in for criticism.

There is a need for the County Council to improve road maintenance, especially pot-hole repair and surface water issues.

Police

This section of the questionnaire focused on how safe the residents of Yaxham felt.

The table below shows responses to the question: Do you feel safe living in Yaxham?

	Total	Respondents (%)
Yes	233	99.2
No	2	0.9
No Response	6	

"By car feel safe but on foot would not feel safe"

"Lack of some form of lighting – but not too bright to destroy village ambience"

"Station Road – no path or street lights"

This is a very positive result. However, in the hours of darkness, 37 of the 220 respondents expressed concerns.

There were 30 replies to the question asking where and why people felt unsafe. The main reasons given were lack of street lighting and the traffic (this is covered in Section 4), especially in Station Road where there is no footpath.

In response to the question "Should street lights be installed?" 225 replies were received, of which 73% were opposed, giving 27% in favour.

"No to light pollution – we want to see the stars"

"Definitely not – this is a country village – not suburbia"

"From Station Road to the speed de-restriction toward Clint Green"

"Maybe just key points at Bus Stops"

28% of the 206 respondents were interested in joining a Home Watch scheme, while 72% were not interested. Of the 58 in favour only 26 returned their details to become involved.

There is limited awareness of how to contact our local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). Of the 223 replies, just 34% know how to make contact, giving 66% who had no awareness. These results will be passed to our PCSO for a method of raising awareness to be devised.

Concerns about anti-social behaviour in Yaxham were raised by 15 (7%) of the 233 respondents, giving 93% who had no concerns.

Note: Since the completion of the questionnaire there have been two incidents of theft of gates and another drunken intruder, all in Cutthroat Lane.

There is a need for liaison with local PCSO to identify potential ways of increasing security and also providing feedback on action taken on offenders, (when they are identified).

See Part 2 for the second half of this report.