

Great Horwood Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Survey Results

October 2025

Summary

This report presents the findings from a community survey conducted in October 2025, focusing on future development, infrastructure, environmental priorities, and design policies for Great Horwood Parish. A total of 116 household responses were received; one was excluded due to incomplete verification of residency and missing survey reference details, and another an unequivocal duplication of both an online and paper submission leaving 114 valid responses for analysis. Based on the 2021 Census figure of 454 households, this represents a response rate of approximately 25.1%

The overriding view expressed by residents of the Parish is that future housing growth should remain minimal unless infrastructure capacity is significantly improved.

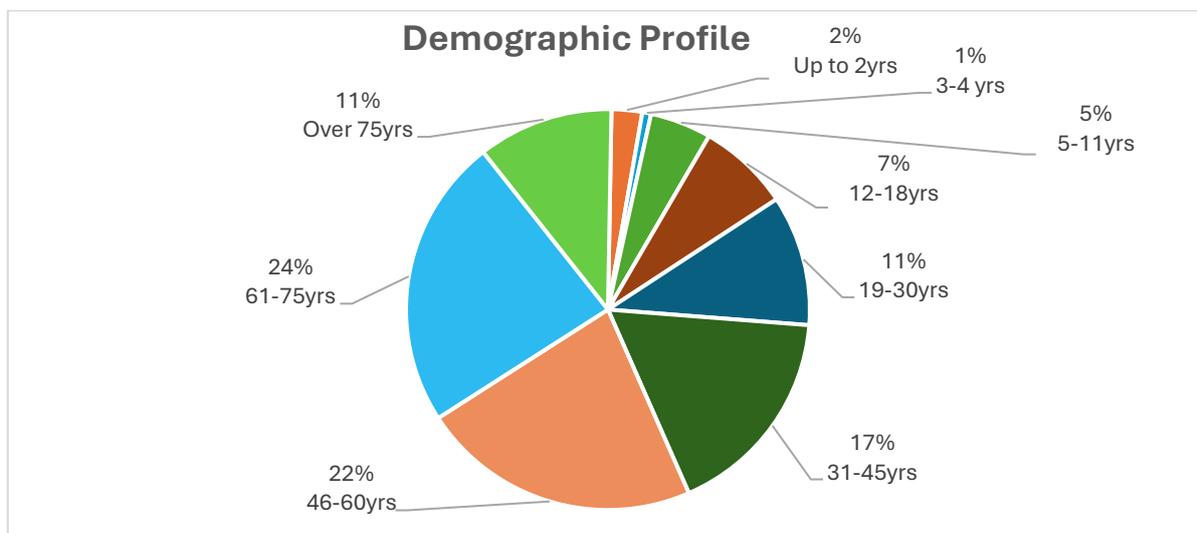
A clear majority of respondents emphasised the importance of protecting the village's rural character and safeguarding green spaces.

Sustainability and climate resilience were also seen as essential elements to be embedded in all development plans.

Above all, preserving community identity and heritage emerged as a central concern, shaping expectations for any future planning decisions

Section A – Household Profile

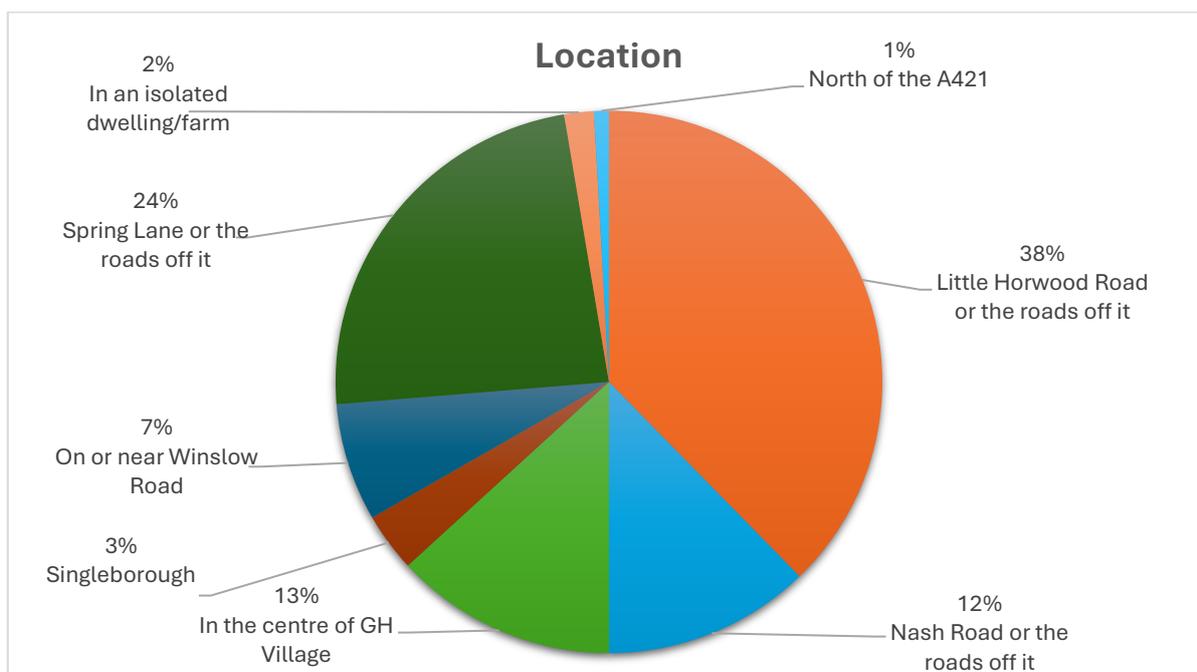
A1 - How many people are there in your household in each age group?



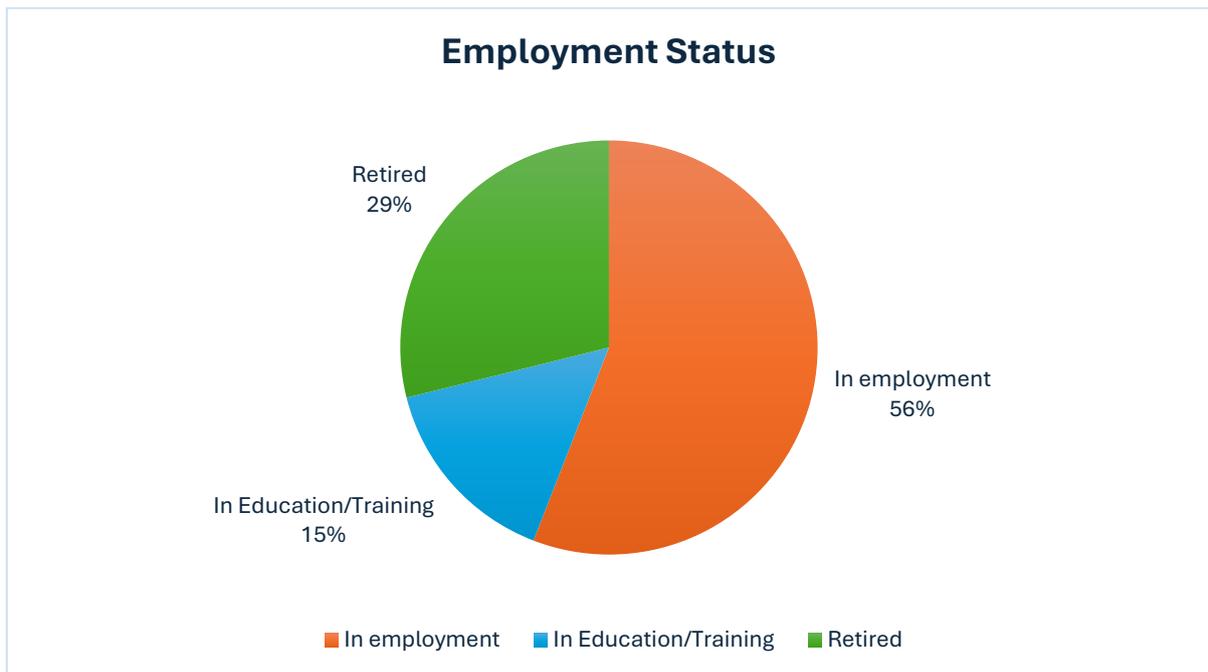
A2 - How long have you lived in GH?

The average length of residency among respondents is 18.4 years, with a median of 13 years and a range from less than one year to 62 years.

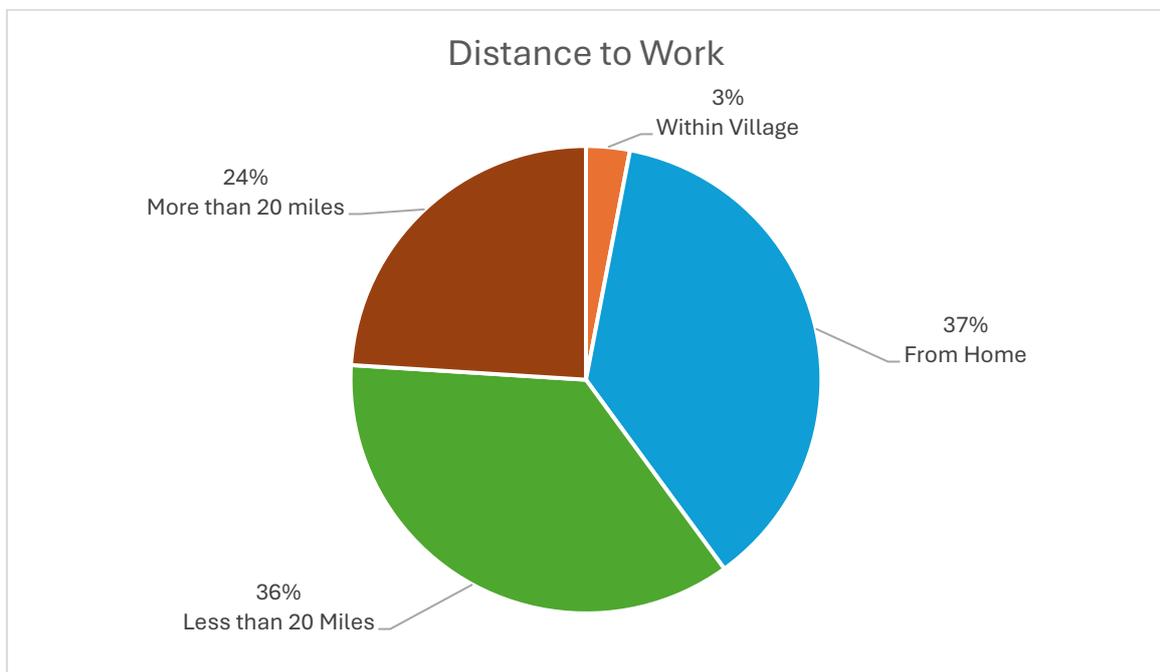
A3 - Where in the parish do you live?



A4 - How many in your household are:

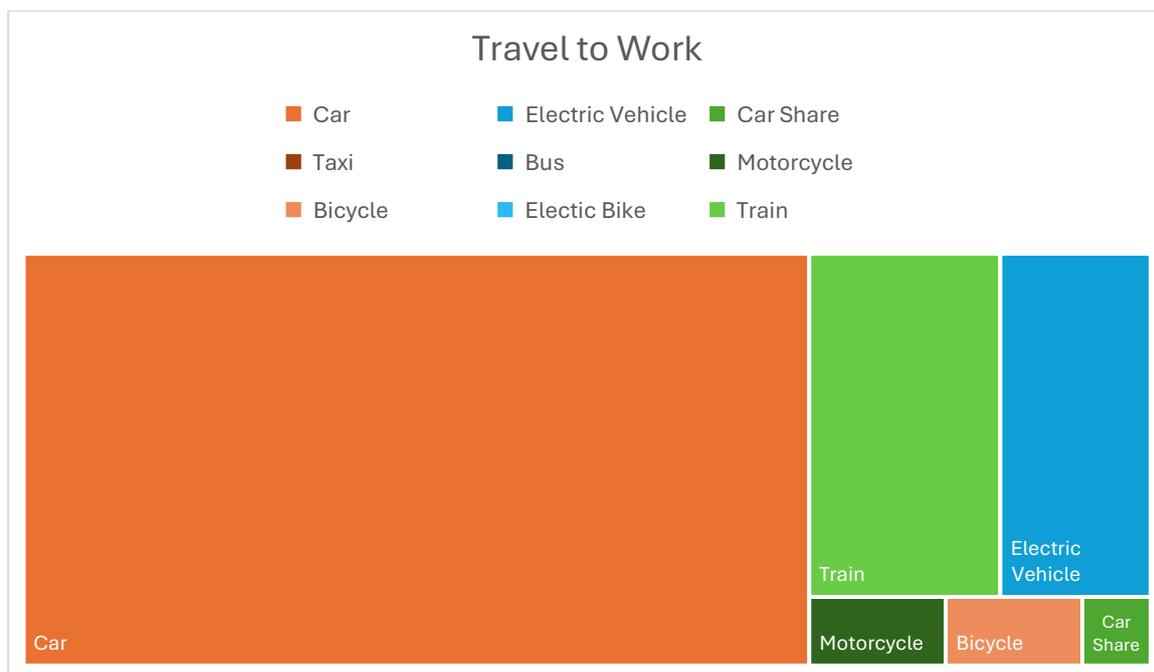


A5 - For those in paid employment how many work...



A6 - How do you travel to work?

The majority of respondents (82%) commute to work by car or electric vehicle, while 14% travel by train. No respondents reported using a bus for their commute.



A13 - How many Cars in your household?

There is an average of 2.14 cars per household. Total of 242 vehicles across the 114 households.

A14 - Are any of these Electric?

10% of household cars are electric, and 2% are hybrid vehicles.

A15 – Do you have a charging point?

Only 21% of respondents have a charging point, compared to 75% who do not. A further 4% did not answer this question

A16 – Would you use a public EV Charger?

72% of those who responded to this question (106 No) stated that they would not use a public EV charging point. 8% said “yes” they would use if for themselves and 20% for visiting friends.

A7 - Do any of you commute on train?

Among train commuters, 32% travel to London from Bletchley, 27% from Milton Keynes, 14% from other locations, and 27% travel to cities other than London.

A17 - Do you expect to Use Winslow Train Station?

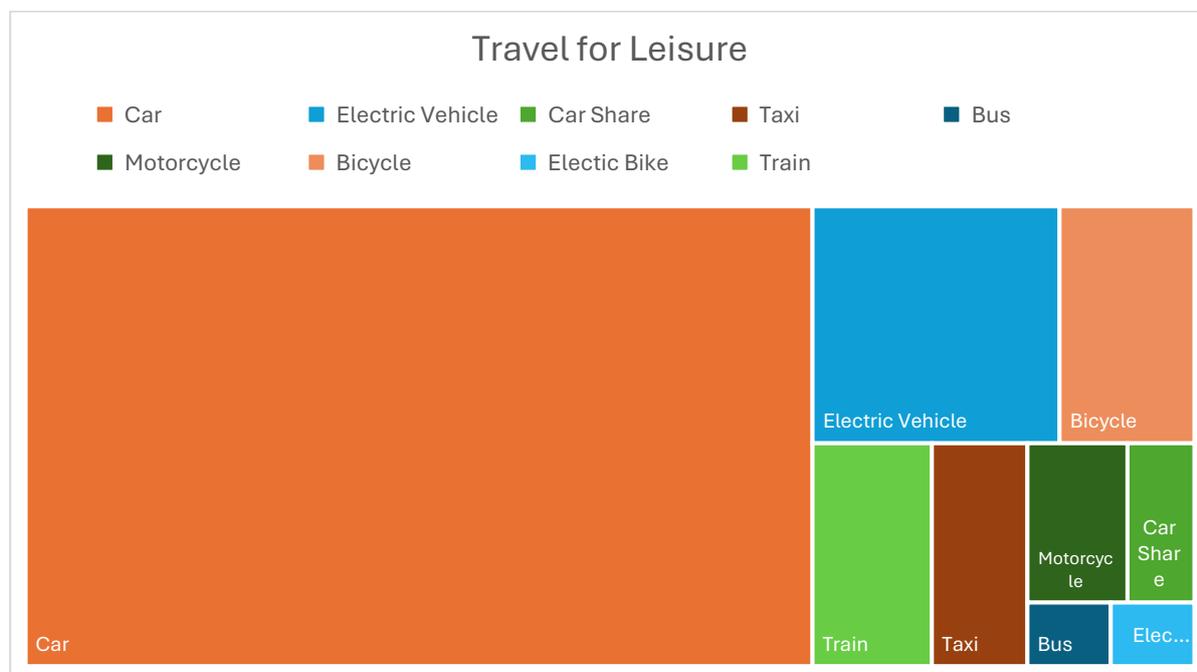
Only 5% of respondents expect to use Winslow Train Station for commuting to work, while 79% anticipate using it for leisure travel. Additionally, 15% do not expect to use the station at all, and 1% did not provide a response.

A18 - Would you use it more if there was a Bus?

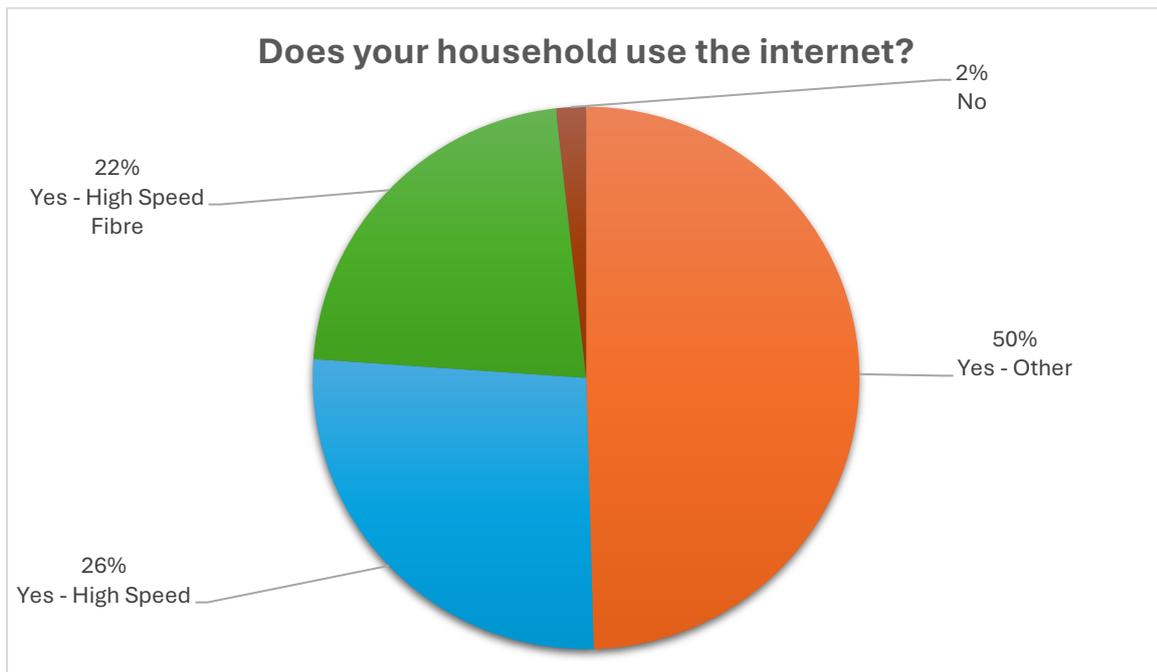
68% of respondents indicated they would be more likely to use the station if a bus service were available, while 31% said it would not influence their usage. Additionally, 1% did not provide a response.

A8 - How do you travel to leisure activities?

84% of respondents travel for leisure by car (including personal vehicles, electric vehicles, car shares, or taxis), 5% by train, 1% by bus, 3% by motorcycle, and 7% by bicycle or electric bike.

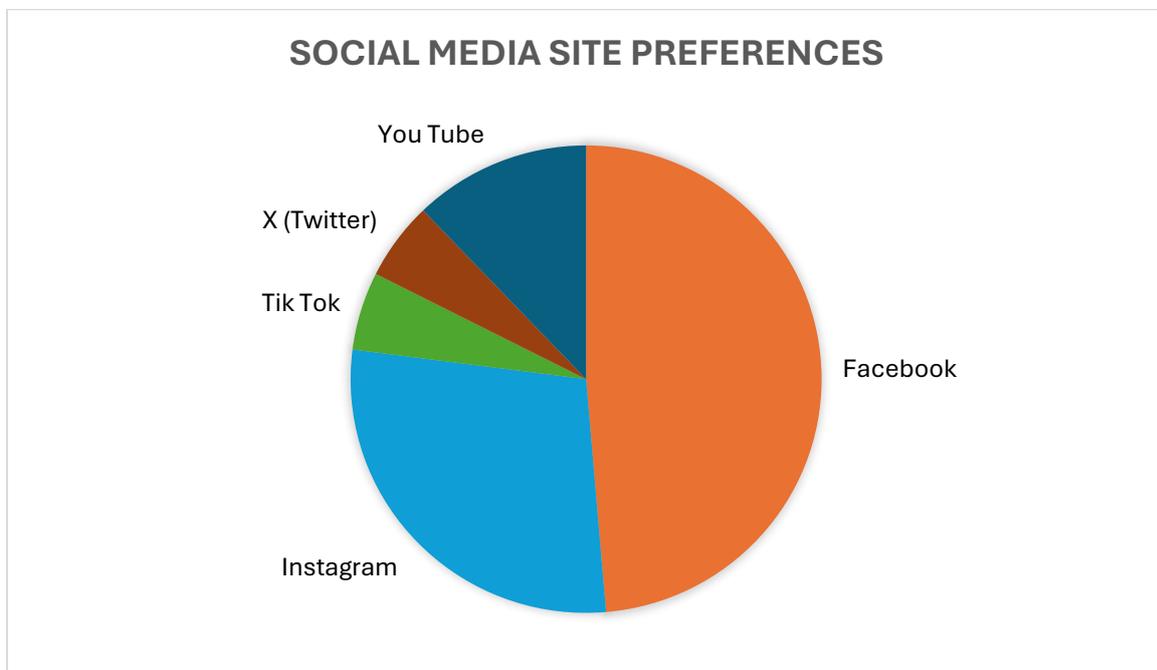


A9 – Does your household use the internet?



A10 – Do you use social media?

82% of households use social media.

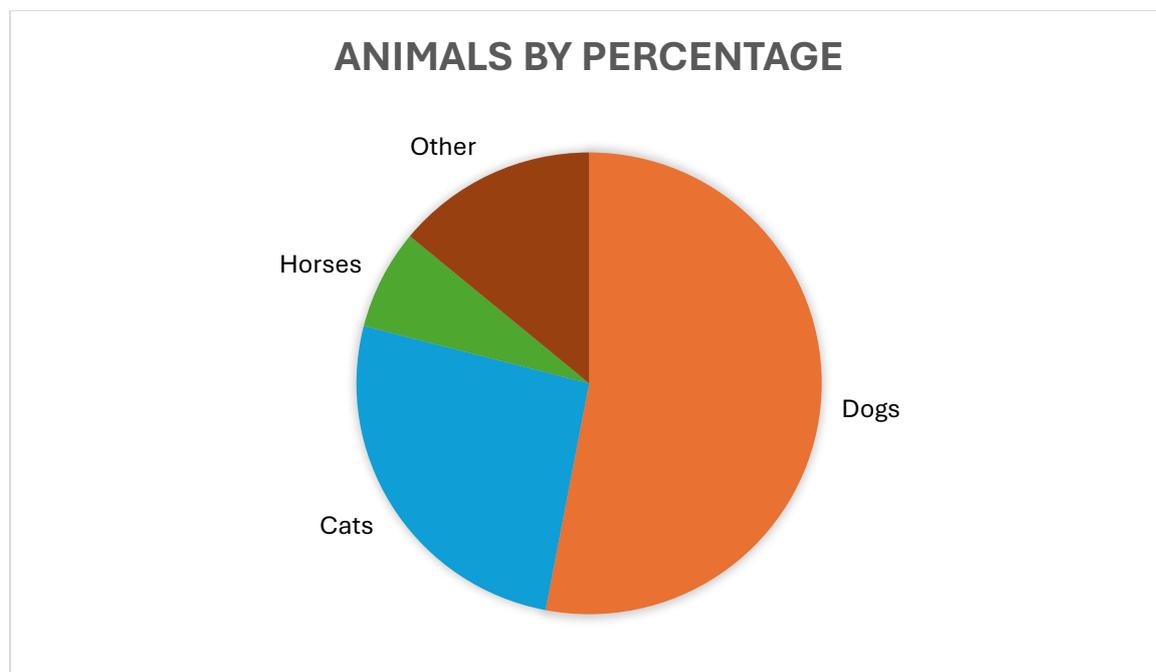


A11 – Do you read Focus?

Survey results show that 96% of respondents read the paper copy of *Focus*, indicating its significance as a primary communication medium within the village. Only 2% did not receive a copy, and 2% chose not to read it.

A12 – Do you keep animals

54% of households responding keep animals. With animals in “other” including rabbits, fish, chickens and sheep.



A19 – Is Housing in the village difficult to afford?

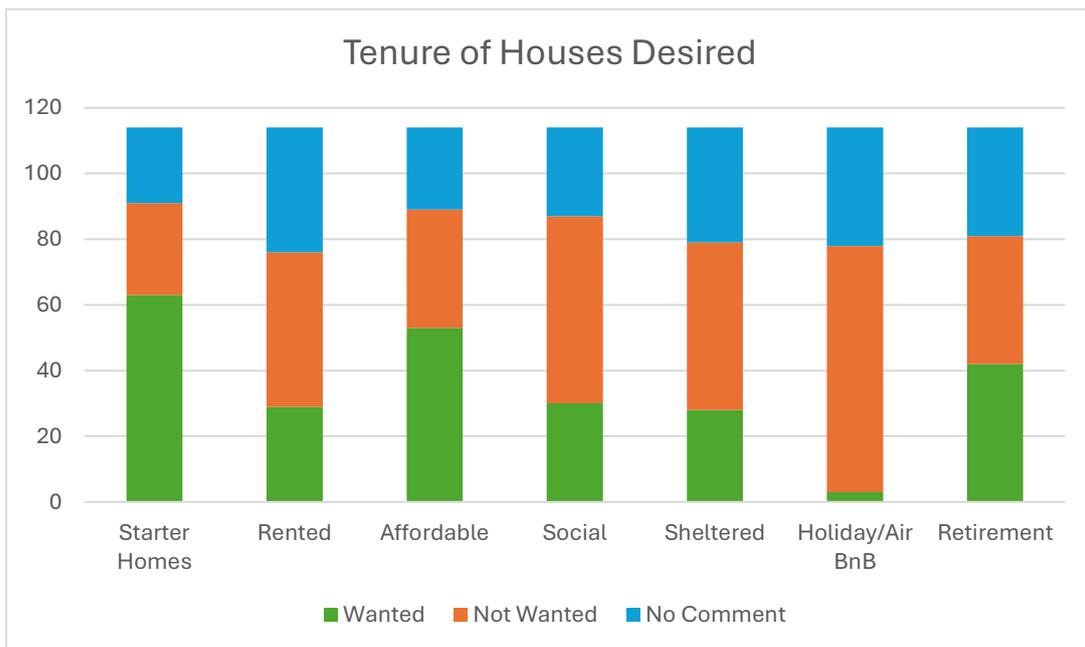
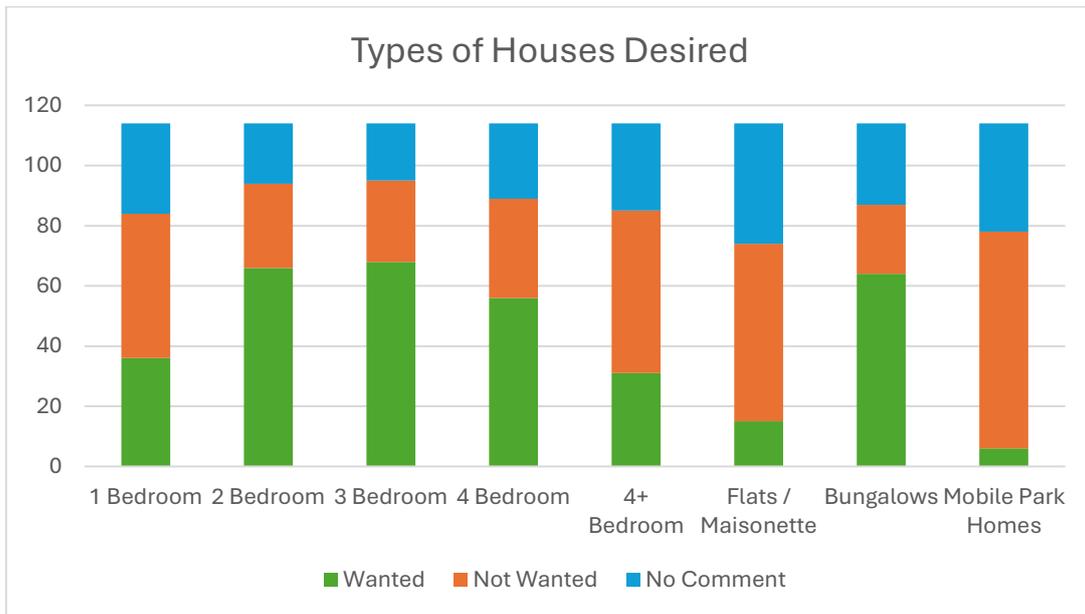
80% of respondents stated “No”. housing in the village is not difficult to afford. 18% stated “yes” and 2% did not respond.

Respondents who felt housing was affordable were more likely to be aged 31–45, and less likely to be younger adults (19–30) or mid-life adults (46–60) compared to those who answered ‘Yes.’ They were also less likely to include someone aged 61–75.

Section B – Housing Development & Section D – Development Sites

B1 - What kinds of new housing developments would you want or not want?

Most respondents strongly favour very limited or small-scale growth, with many preferring 10 homes or fewer and some even advocating for zero new development. Concerns centre on infrastructure capacity, preserving the village’s rural character, and maintaining community cohesion. While a minority support moderate or larger growth, this is typically conditional on phased development and improved facilities.



1. Very Limited Growth (10 homes or fewer)

Many respondents felt that 10 homes, or even none, would be acceptable, citing infrastructure constraints and a desire to maintain the village's small character.

Example comments:

- "10 homes – keep as village"
- "If I was given the option, I would say zero homes. Current infrastructure, particularly roads and sewage, is already at maximum capacity."
- "Minimal facilities available."

2. Small Growth (Up to 20 homes)

Some respondents were open to up to 20 homes, emphasising the importance of preserving the village character.

Example comments:

- "Up to 20 homes – services overstretched."
- "Up to 20 homes – small villages should remain small villages."

3. Moderate Growth (Up to 40 homes)

A smaller group supported up to 40 homes, often with conditions such as phased development.

Example comments:

- "Up to 40 homes – must be phased over 20 years, not all at once."
- "Up to 40 homes – only if facilities were available."

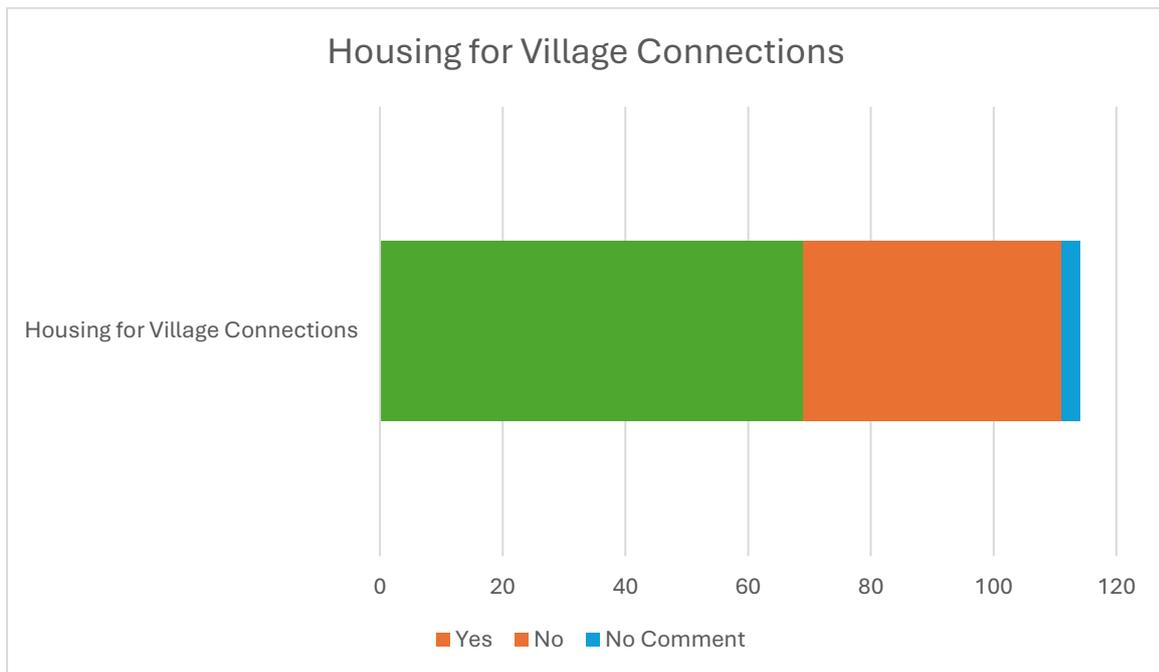
4. Larger Growth (Up to 80 homes or more)

Few respondents favoured up to 80 homes, typically linking this to the village's survival or national housing needs.

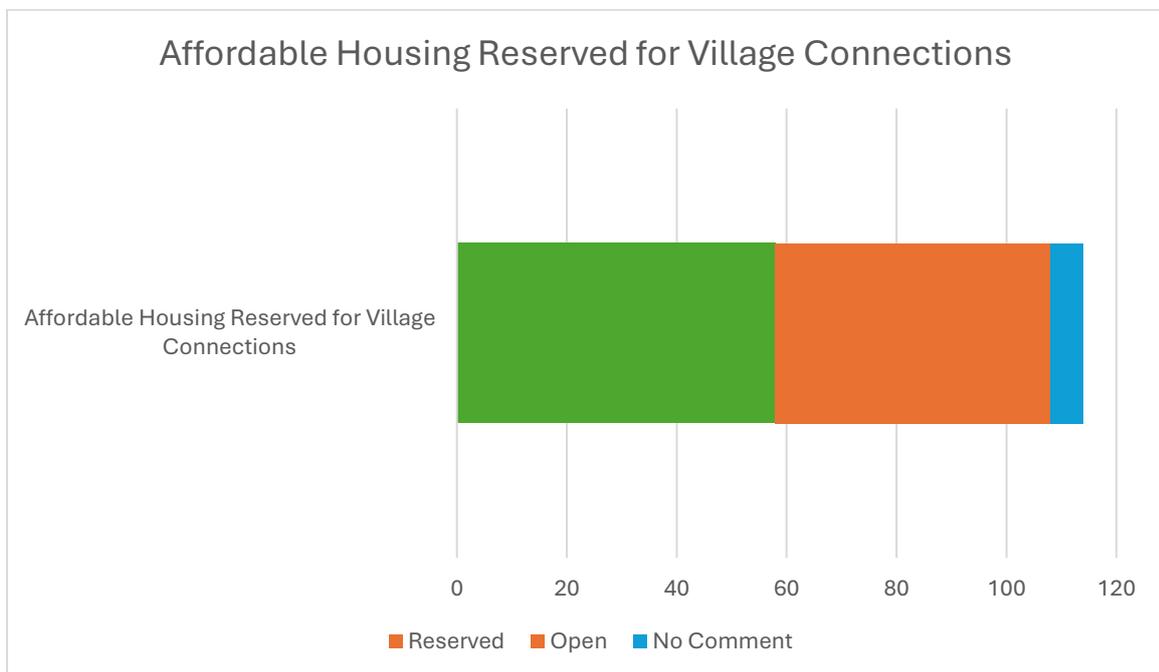
Example comments:

- "Up to 80 homes – the village needs to grow to survive."
- "UK needs more homes."

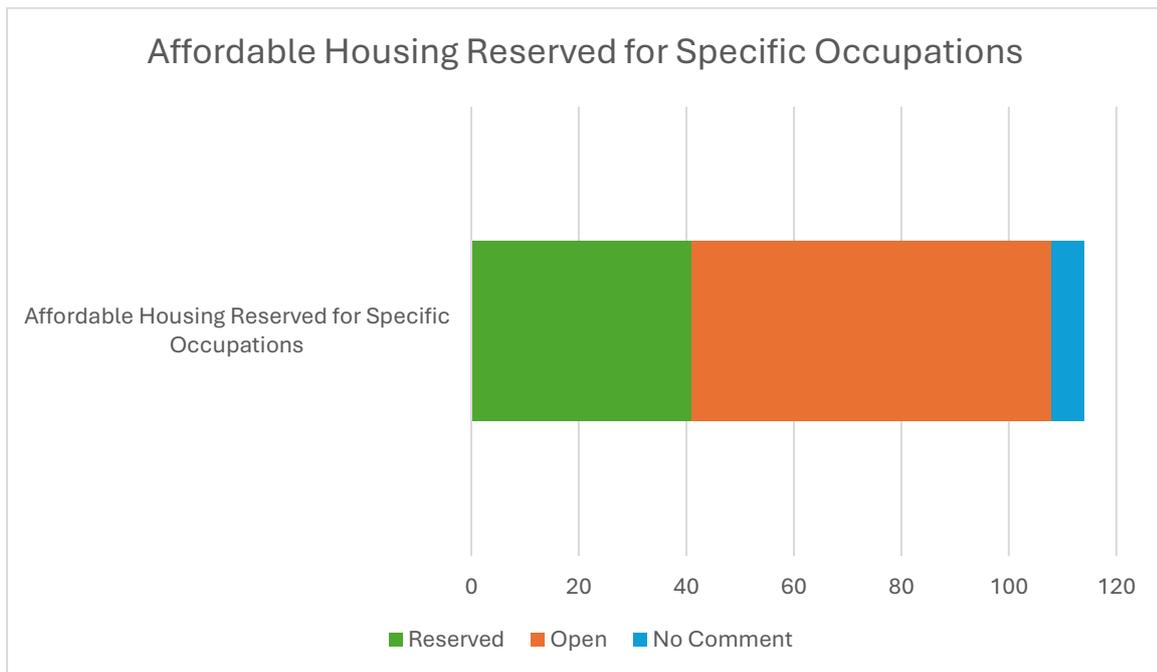
B4 - Additional housing should be made available to Village Connections



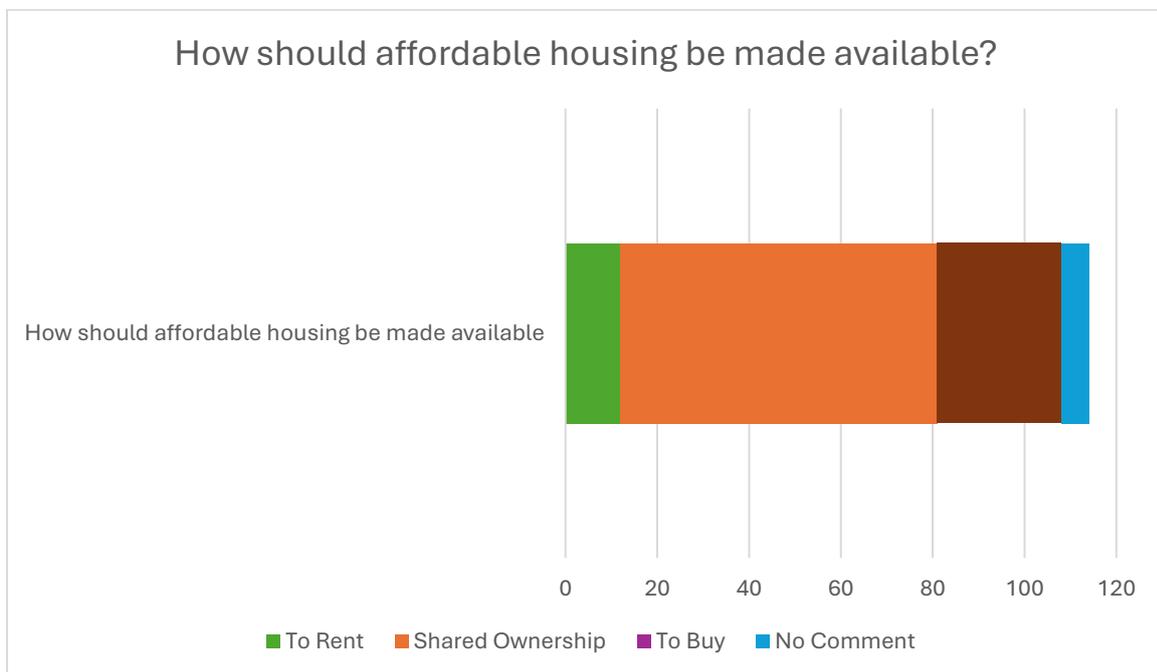
B5 - Affordable Housing Reserved for village connections



B6 - Affordable Housing Reserved for specific occupations



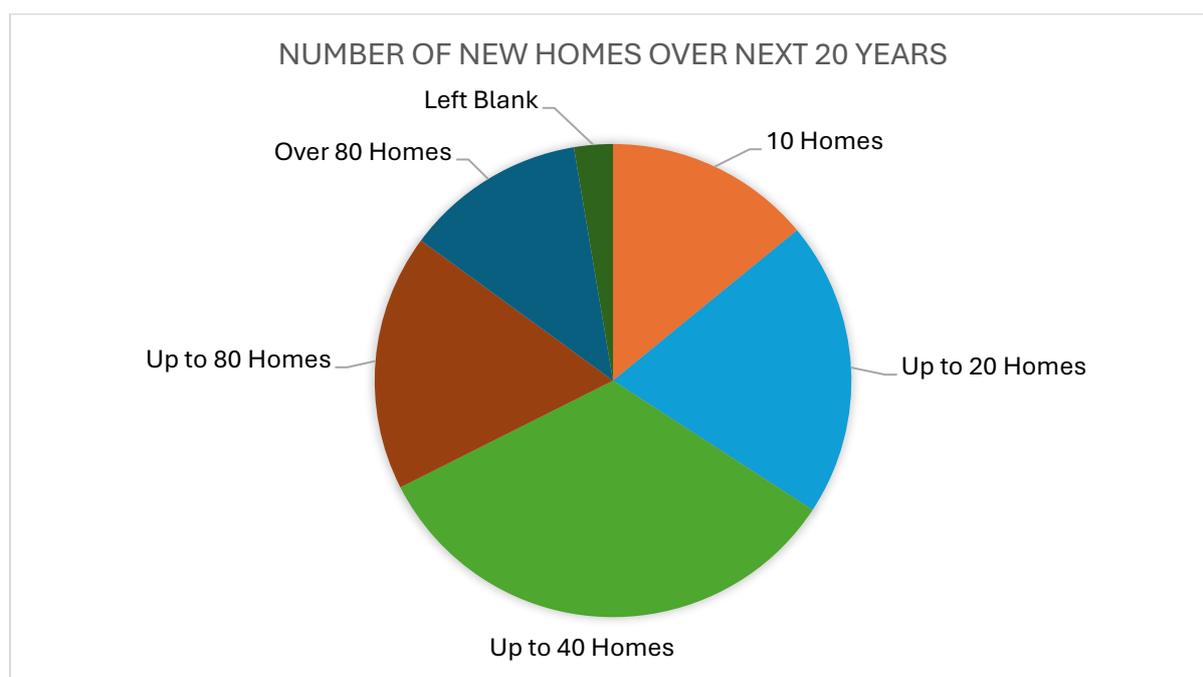
B7 - How should affordable housing be made available?



B2 - With no changes to facilities, how many new homes would be acceptable over the next 20 years and why?

When asked how many new homes would be acceptable over the next 20 years without changes to existing facilities, most respondents favoured strict limits, typically 10, 20, or 40 homes, with occasional mentions of up to 80 homes, usually tied to phased development. The dominant concerns were preserving the village’s rural character, avoiding overdevelopment, and preventing coalescence with Winslow or Milton Keynes. Infrastructure capacity, particularly roads, sewerage, health services, and parking, was repeatedly cited as a major constraint. Where additional housing was considered acceptable, respondents stressed the need for improved facilities such as a GP surgery, village shop, better transport links, and community amenities to maintain quality of life and village identity.

B3 - If additional facilities and services could be added, how many new homes would be acceptable over the next 20 years and why?



68% of respondents believe that no more than 40 new homes should be built over the next 20 years, while only 12% support development of more than 80 homes.

Residents consistently emphasised that major infrastructure upgrades are essential before any substantial housing growth. The most frequently mentioned priorities include:

Transport Improvements

- Regular bus services to Winslow, Buckingham, and Milton Keynes.

- Safe cycle paths and pedestrian walkways, particularly linking to Winslow and the new train station.

Road Safety

- Speed limit reductions (often to 20mph).
- Traffic calming measures and improved signage to manage increased traffic.

Parking Solutions

- Adequate off-street parking within new developments to prevent congestion on village roads.

Health and Community Facilities

- A GP surgery or improved access to healthcare.
- Additional services for youth, elderly care, and community spaces.

Retail and Amenities

- A village shop or convenience store to reduce car dependency.

Utilities and Drainage

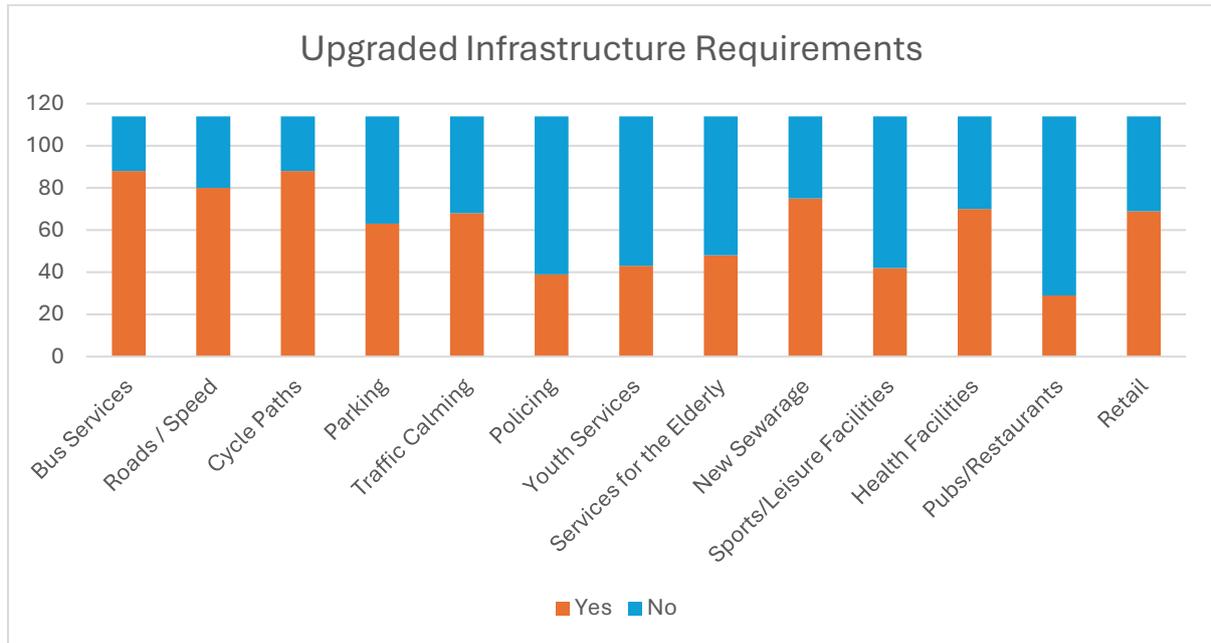
- Upgraded sewerage systems and sustainable drainage to support additional housing.

Other Suggestions

- Sports and leisure facilities, policing presence, and protection of green spaces.

Overall sentiment: Residents are clear that without these upgrades, further development would be unsustainable and detrimental to village life.

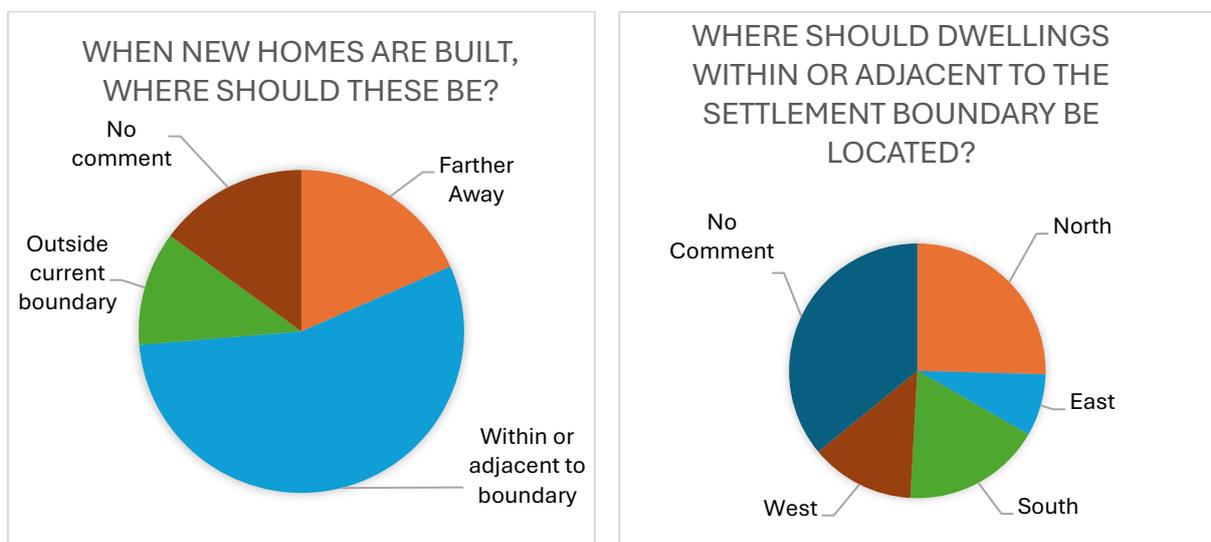
B8 - Upgraded Infrastructure



Respondents primarily suggested location-specific improvements to infrastructure and services. Common priorities include a village shop, better bus services, safe cycle routes to Winslow, and enhanced road safety through speed limits and traffic calming. Other recurring themes include upgraded sewerage systems, improved healthcare, parking solutions, and facilities for sports, leisure, and youth activities. Calls for better pedestrian access also featured prominently. Overall, feedback emphasises the need to link new development with tangible enhancements in amenities and connectivity.

Section D – Development Sites

D1 - When new homes are built, where should these be?



D2 - Do you have an Ideal number of new homes on any new site? & D3 - Should there be a Maximum number of new homes on any new site? if so, how many?

The vast majority of respondents support setting a maximum limit on the number of homes per new development site. Of 114 responses, 101 (89%) said “Yes”, indicating strong consensus for controlled growth.

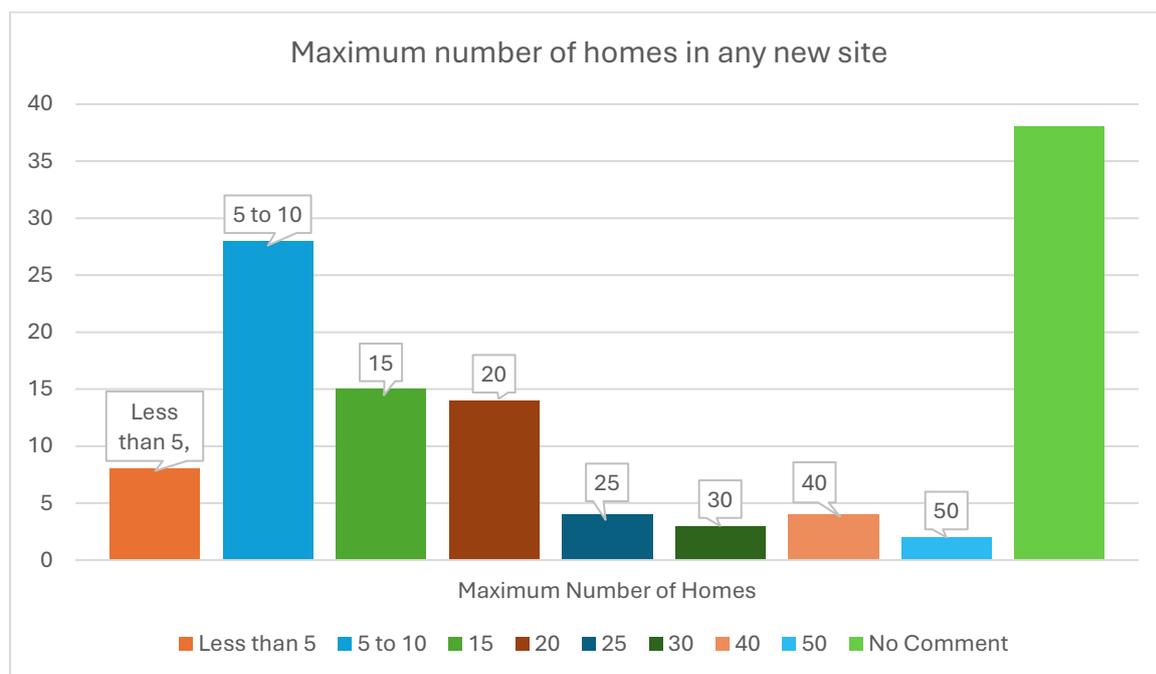
Minimal Opposition

Only 3 respondents (2%) said “No”, showing very little appetite for unrestricted development.

Non-Response

10 responses (9%) were left blank.

This clear majority reflects a strong community preference for small-scale, managed development rather than large housing estates. Comments reinforce this, frequently suggesting ideal site sizes of 5–20 homes and emphasising that new developments should respect the village’s character and infrastructure capacity.



Section C – Commercial/Industrial Growth

C1 - Do you agree that there should be some growth in the number of commercial/ industrial employers in the parish over the next 20 years?

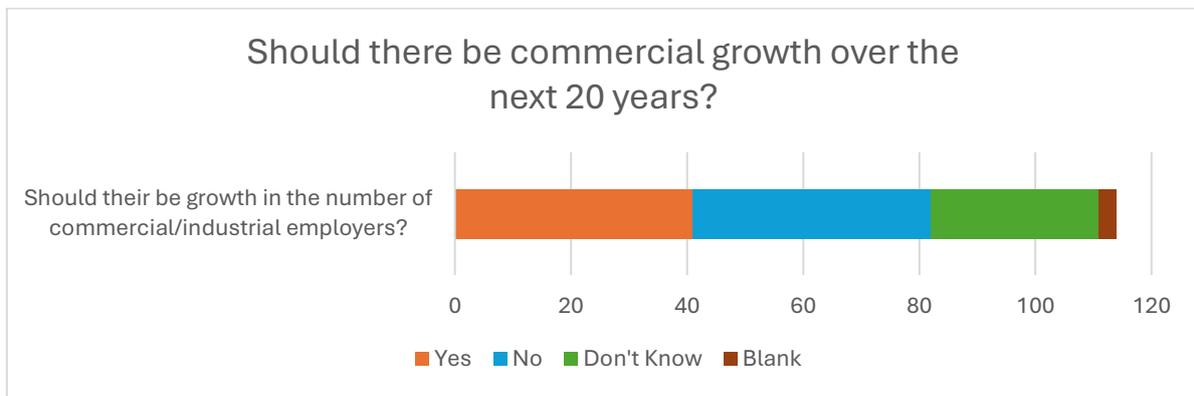
The comments reflect mixed views on development in the area. Some oppose it, citing concerns about sustainability, traffic, infrastructure, and the rural character of the parish. Others support development if it provides local employment, artisan opportunities, and services, particularly when limited to existing business sites.

“Shop needed”; “There is already an industrial estate”; “Unsustainable location.”

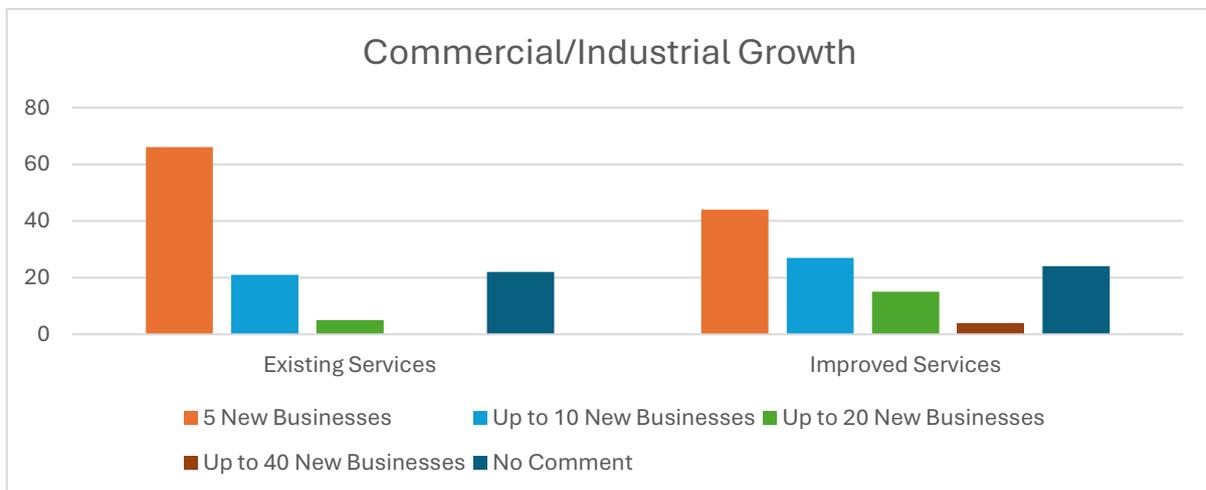
“Without proper infrastructure more heavy lorries and traffic ... dangerous.”

“This is a rural parish, not an urban one.”

“The development should have local employment opportunities.”

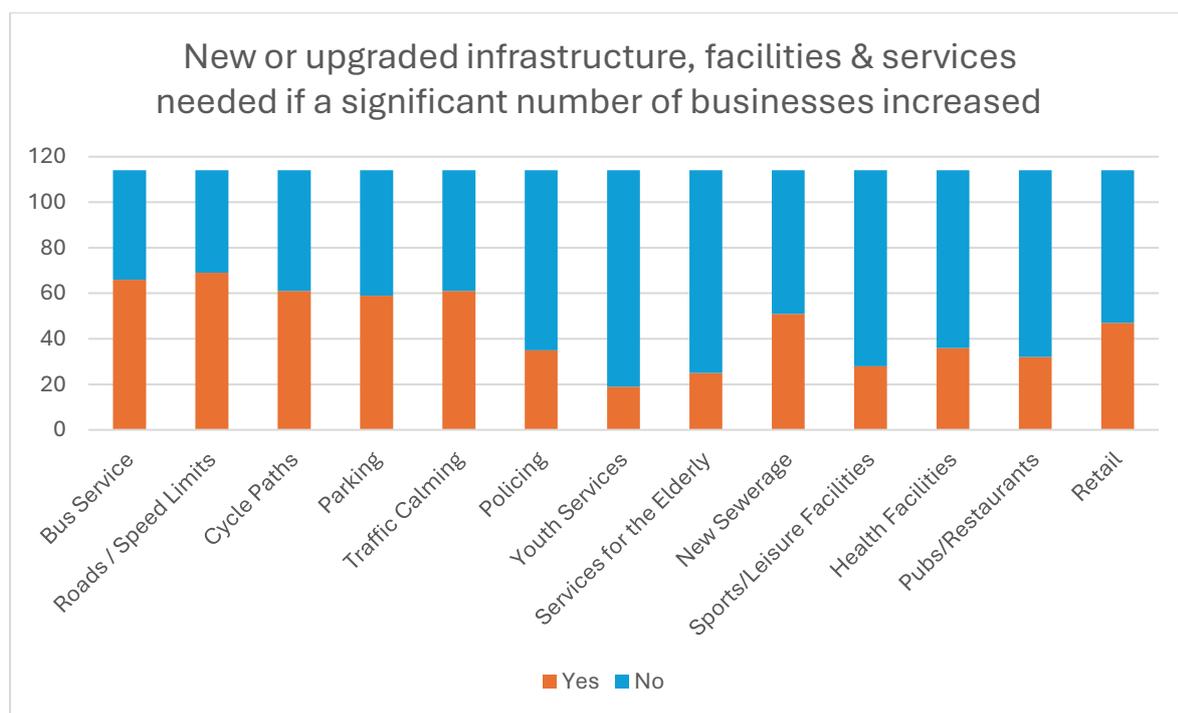


C2 - With no changes to facilities, how much over commercial/industrial growth over the next 20 years? & C3 - If additional facilities and services added, how much over next 20 years?



C4 - New or Upgraded infrastructure, facilities & services needed if a significant number of businesses were to be built.

The most common “Other” request is for a village shop or local store to complement any business growth. Parking provision and good connections to Winslow and the station are recurring priorities. Several respondents emphasise that new business activity should be confined to existing or peripheral sites—such as Greenway Business Park or the A421 corridor—rather than the village core.



Section E – Green Gap Policy

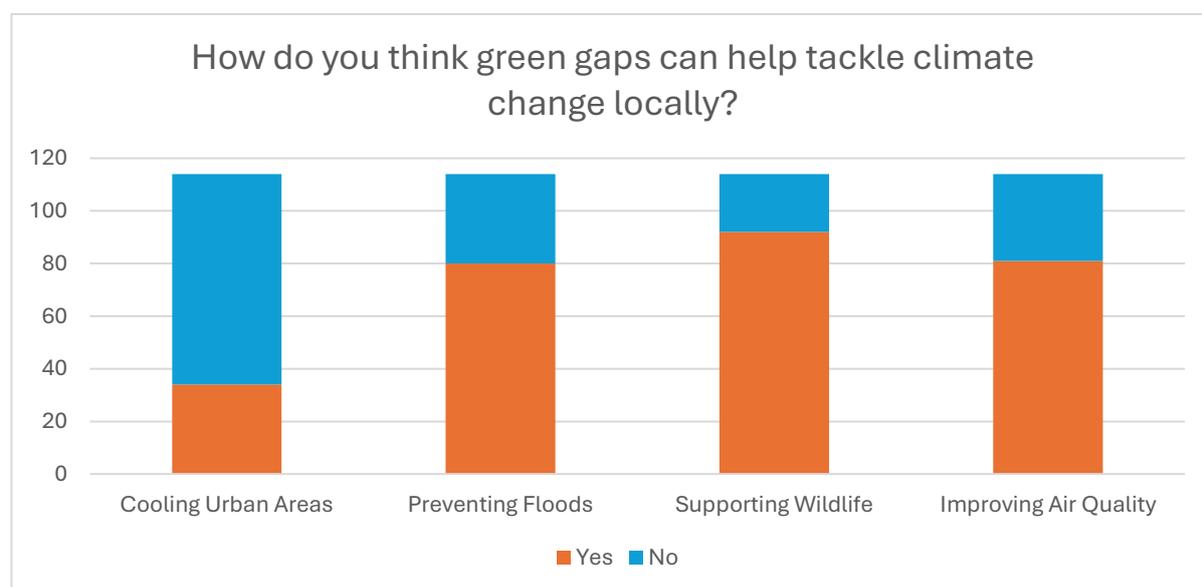
E1 - What do you value most and how do you benefit from our current Green Gaps?

Responses indicate that Green Gaps are most valued for preserving the village’s rural character and preventing urban sprawl, which was the dominant theme among participants. Many also highlighted the benefits of access to walking routes, footpaths, and cycle paths, supporting recreation and connectivity. Wildlife protection and biodiversity were frequently mentioned, alongside the contribution of Green Gaps to mental health and wellbeing by providing peace and quiet. Scenic views and open landscapes were also appreciated, while a smaller number of respondents noted environmental benefits such as climate action and improved air quality.

E2 - What would you like to see from a Green Gap Policy?

Responses indicate that the primary expectation for a Green Gap Policy is to preserve the village’s rural identity and prevent coalescence with neighbouring towns, with many calling for strong measures to protect parish boundaries and heritage. A significant proportion of comments expressed general support for maintaining open spaces, while others emphasised the need for wildlife corridors and biodiversity protection. Several respondents requested clear development controls, including designated no-build zones, alongside calls for improved access through footpaths and cycleways. A smaller number highlighted the importance of funding, enforcement, and planning mechanisms to ensure the policy is effective, with occasional mentions of climate resilience and safeguarding views and landscapes.

E3 - How do you think green gaps can help tackle climate change locally?



Community feedback shows a clear priority: residents overwhelmingly want robust protection against development in green gap areas, alongside preserving rural character and supporting biodiversity. Respondents also expect clear, enforceable policies to safeguard village identity and environmental integrity for the long term.

Key Themes from Comments (Ranked by Popularity)

1. Strong Protection Against Development

- Clear demand for absolute bans on building within green gap areas and strict planning controls.
- *Examples:* “Absolute ban on building in green gap areas”; “No development on farmland”; “Restrict mass developments and new towns.”

2. Preserve Village Character

- Emphasis on maintaining rural identity, heritage, and community feel.
- *Examples:* “Maintain the integrity and community of the village”; “Preserve Great Horwood’s character”; “Keep the village as a village.”

3. Wildlife & Environmental Safeguards

- Calls for wildlife corridors, habitat creation, and biodiversity protection.
- *Examples:* “Consideration for wildlife”; “Viable habitat for birds, insects, and small mammals”; “Legally enforceable buffer.”

4. Legally Binding Policy

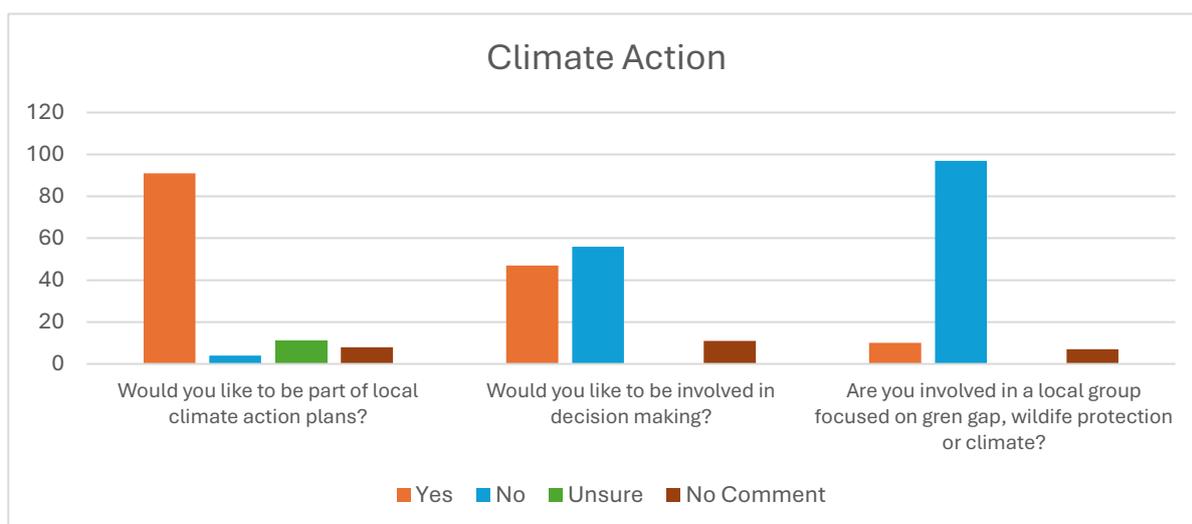
- Requests for formal, enforceable rules to prevent future encroachment.
- *Examples:* “Designated no-development zones”; “Legally binding protection within a set proximity.”

5. Link to Climate Action

- Some respondents connect green gaps to climate resilience and environmental benefits.
- *Examples:* “Create barrier to noise pollution”; “Include in local climate action plans.”

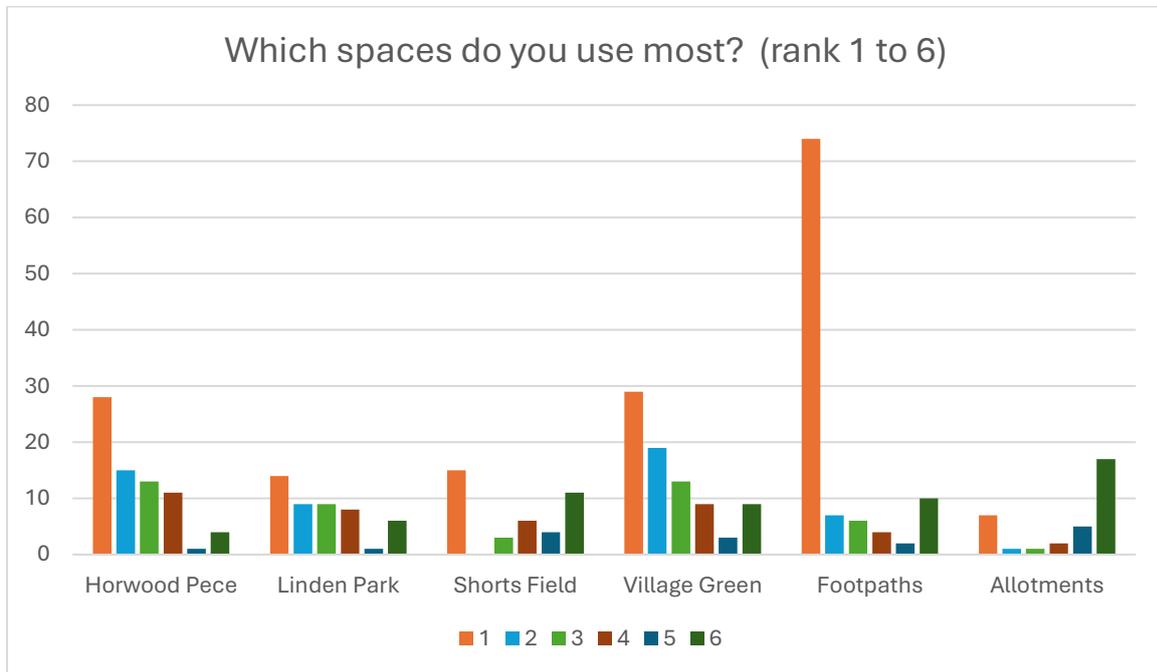
E7 - What support do you think Great Horwood Parish community needs to help preserve green gaps?

Residents believe the parish needs practical and coordinated support to preserve green gaps. Key priorities include funding and resources for legal and professional advice, active community engagement through volunteers, and strong backing from councils and government. Respondents also highlighted the importance of environmental expertise, improved infrastructure such as footpaths for access, and clear, enforceable policies to ensure long-term protection.

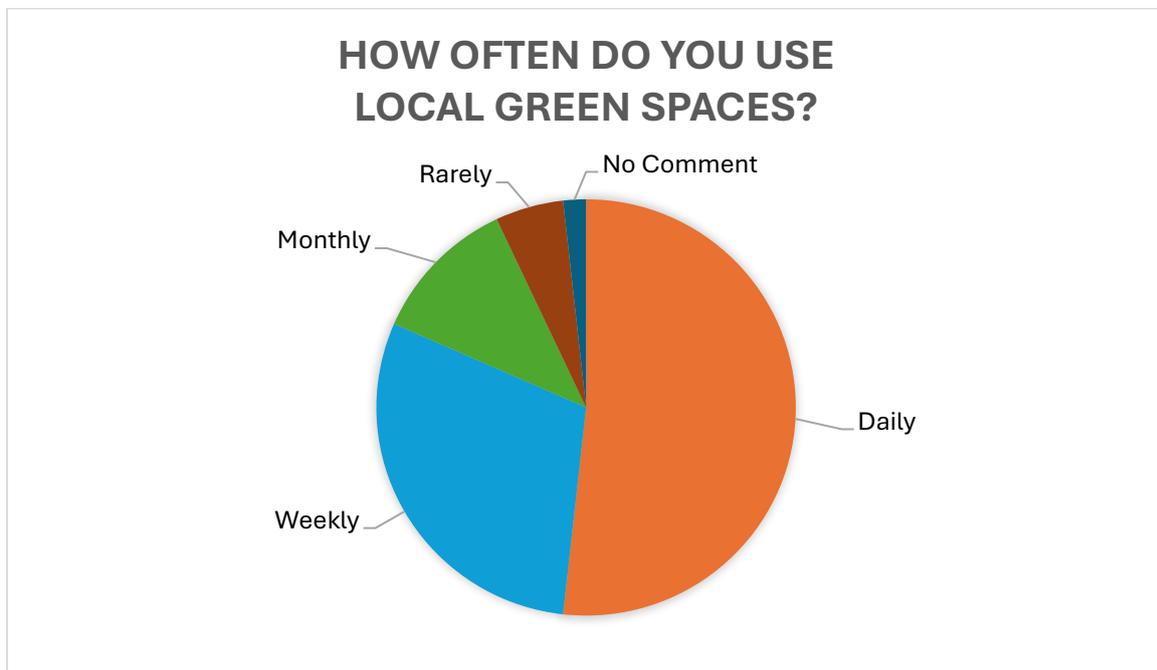


Section F – Green Spaces

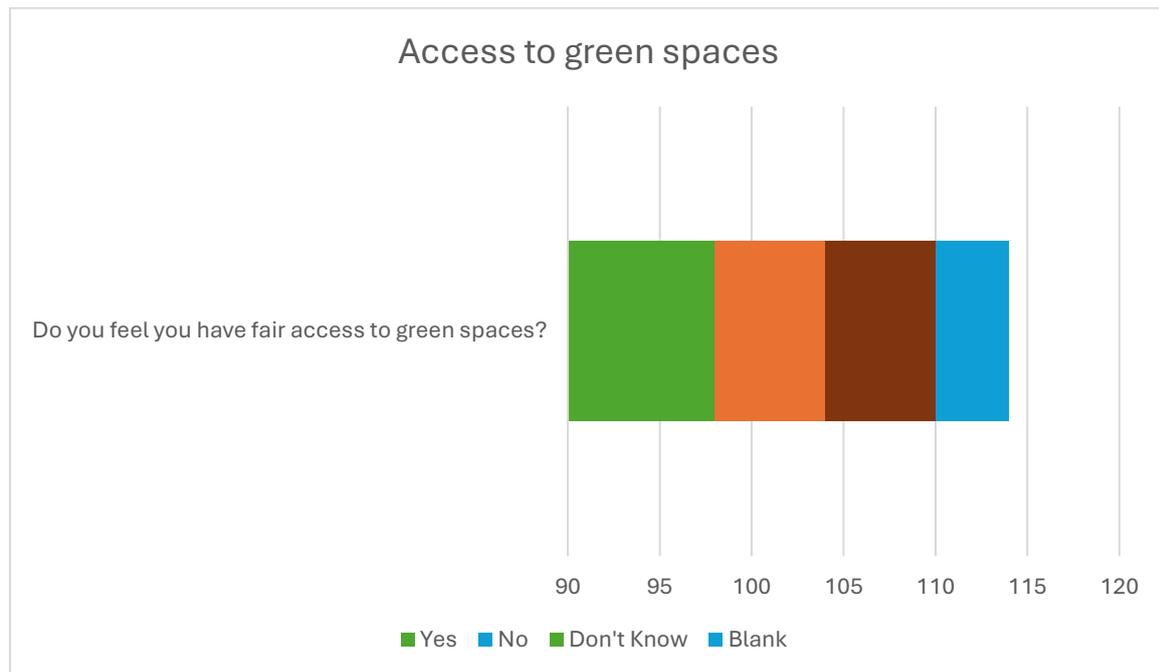
F1 - Which green spaces near you do you use most? Rank 1 to 6



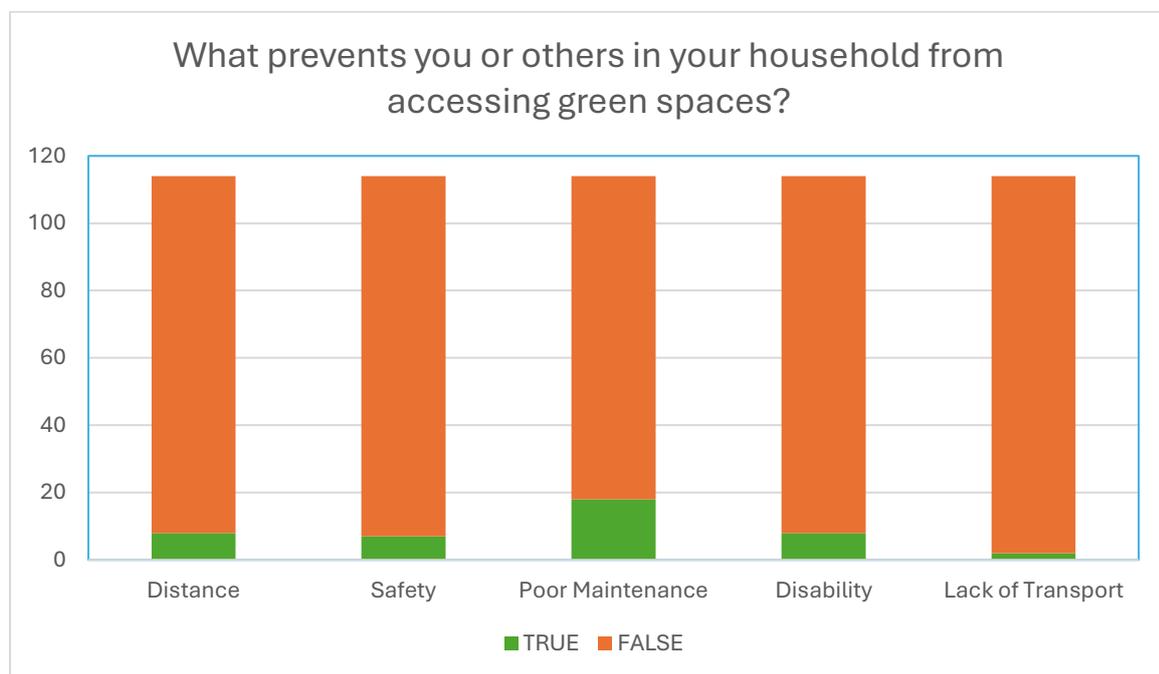
F2 - How often do you use local green spaces?



F3 - Do you feel you have fair access to green spaces?



F4 - What prevents you or others in your household from accessing green spaces?



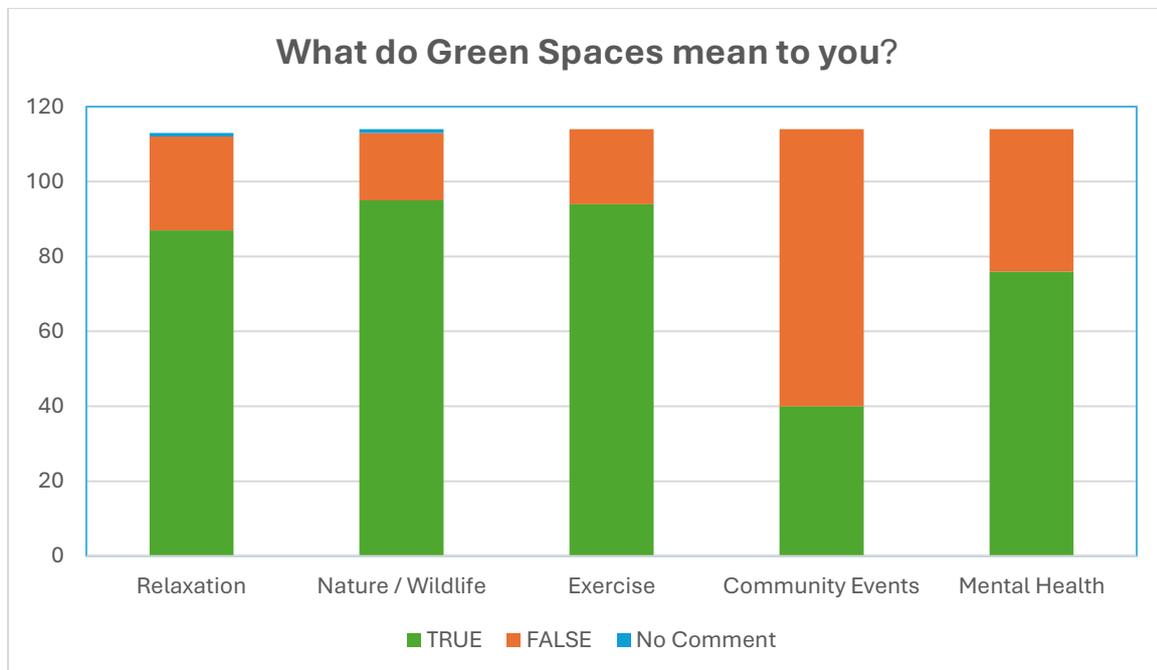
Feedback focused on practical enhancements and community-friendly features. The top priority was footpath maintenance and accessibility, including repairs, clearing overgrowth, and better drainage, alongside improved signposting and safer stiles. Respondents also highlighted the need for seating and social spaces such as benches and picnic areas and play facilities for children and adults. Other recurring suggestions

included safety measures and lighting, dog management (waste bins and fenced play zones), and aesthetic improvements like tree planting and flower beds. A smaller number called for better connectivity, including cycle paths linking to Winslow. Overall, the dominant sentiment is practical improvements that enhance safety, accessibility, and sociability while making green spaces more attractive.

F5 - What improvements would make your local green spaces more welcoming or useful?

Residents value green spaces primarily for relaxation and wellbeing, seeing them as places of peace that support mental health and quality of life. Many also emphasise the connection with nature and wildlife, appreciating biodiversity and scenic views. Exercise and physical health are another strong theme, with frequent mentions of walking, cycling, and running. Green spaces are also regarded as important for community interaction, family activities, and children’s play. Additional benefits noted include dog walking, environmental improvements, and aesthetic appeal. Overall, green spaces are seen as multi-functional assets that enhance wellbeing, social cohesion, and environmental quality.

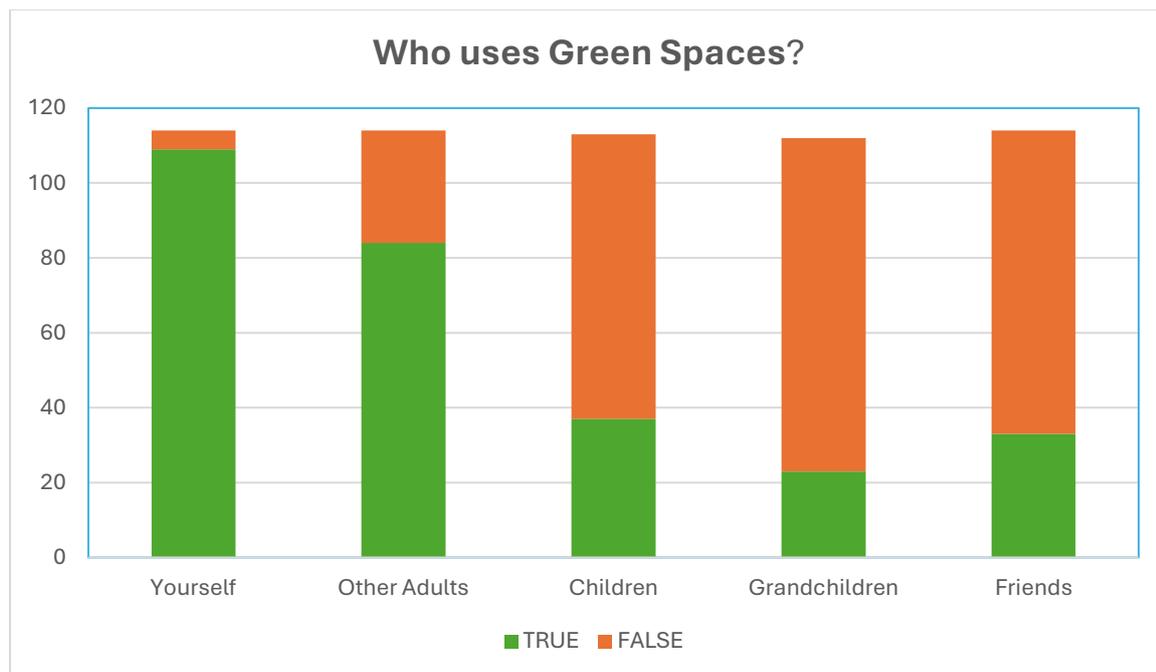
F6 - What do Green Spaces mean to you?



Green spaces evoke a strong sense of wellbeing and connection for respondents. They represent freedom, peace, and an escape from daily pressures. Places to relax, breathe, and feel close to nature. Many associate them with joy and companionship

through walking and dog walking, while others value the calm and mindfulness that comes from observing wildlife. They are seen as spaces for health and vitality, supporting exercise and outdoor activity, but also as hubs for community, family, and shared experiences. Overall, green spaces mean tranquillity, belonging, and a vital link to the natural world.

F7 - Who uses the green spaces?



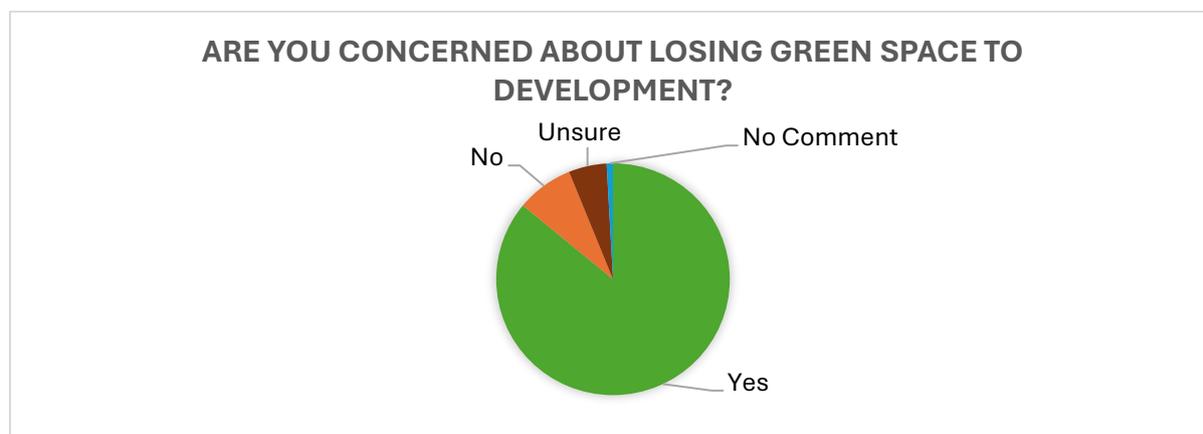
F8 - Which activities do you enjoy there?

Walking is the most frequent activity mentioned, often combined with dog walking and occasionally cycling or running. Nature and wildlife observation is the next most popular theme, with respondents enjoying birdwatching, foraging, and simply appreciating the countryside. Exercise and fitness activities such as running and cycling also feature prominently. Green spaces are valued for community and social uses, including village events, picnics, and informal gatherings, while family time and children’s play are recurring priorities. Occasional mentions include creative pursuits like arts, crafts, and dog training. Overall, walking dominates, followed by nature appreciation, fitness, and social interaction.

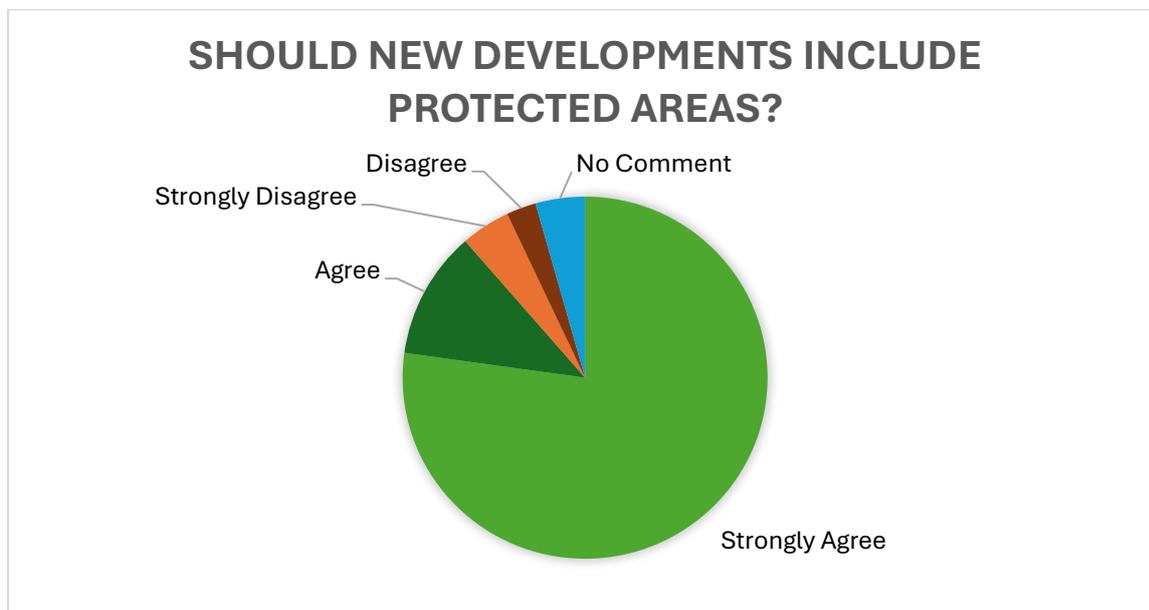
F9 - Which areas within the parish should be protected from development to preserve community identity or ecological value?

- Village Green & Central Areas (27%)
Strong emphasis on safeguarding the Village Green, conservation areas, allotments, and central spaces around the school, church, and historic buildings.
- Open Fields & Farmland (16%)
Calls to protect surrounding countryside, ridge-and-furrow fields, and farmland between Great Horwood and Winslow.
- Footpaths & Green Corridors (13%)
Retention and promotion of public footpaths, bridleways, and green corridors, including areas along Pilch Lane and the old airfield.
- Named Parks & Spaces (13%)
Specific mentions of Horwode Pece, Liden Park, Shorts Field, and other identified green areas.
- Pilch Lane & Surrounds (7%)
Protection of fields and lanes near Pilch Lane and Singleborough.
- Little Horwood Road & North Fields (5%)
Land north of Little Horwood Road and adjacent areas.
- Conservation Areas & Historic Views (4%)
Areas near listed buildings and heritage sites.
- Other Mentions (47%)
General calls to protect all existing green spaces, wooded areas, and land outside the settlement boundary.

F10 – Are you concerned about losing green space to development?

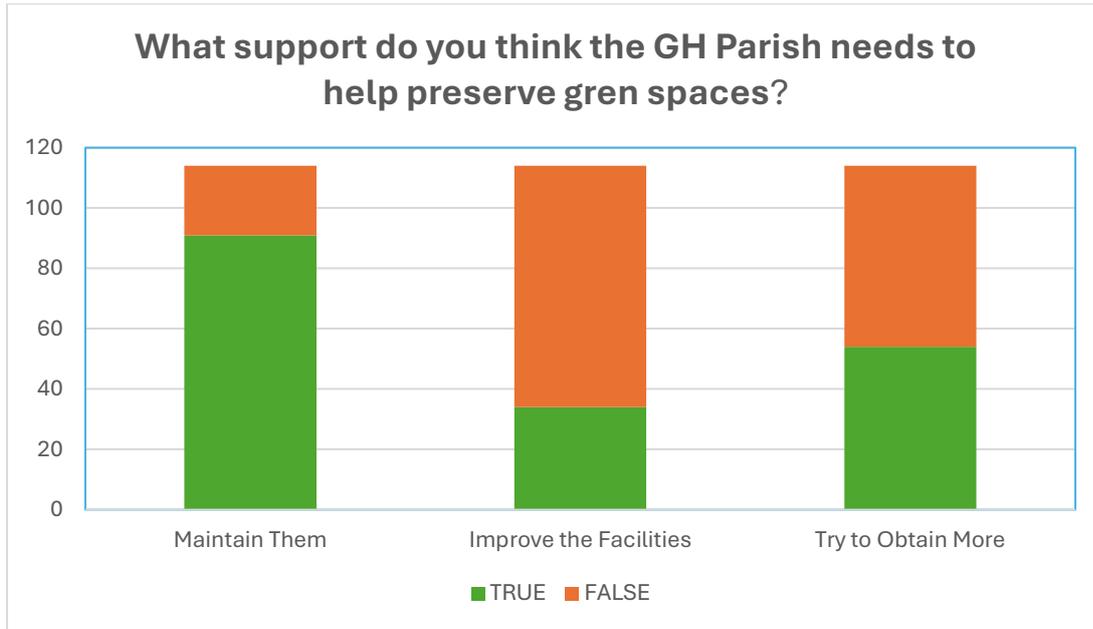


F11 - Should new developments include protected areas?



F14 - What support do you think GH parish community needs to help preserve green spaces?

Responses on support needs were limited and varied. The most common suggestions focused on funding and management, including financial support for maintenance and better green space oversight. Access improvements were also highlighted, such as enhancing pedestrian routes and connectivity. A few respondents called for stronger protection policies to prevent development, while one expressed a design preference against adding more children's parks. Some respondents felt no additional support was needed or were unsure, indicating mixed views on future requirements.



Section G – Design Policy

G1 - What makes the architecture of GH distinctive?

Great Horwood's architectural character is strongly rooted in its historic and traditional identity. Respondents consistently highlighted the importance of preserving listed buildings, conservation areas, and the distinctive features that define the village's heritage. Thatched roofs, timber frames, and other vernacular details were frequently mentioned as essential elements, alongside the use of traditional materials such as brick, stone, slate, and clay tiles. Many comments noted the unique blend of styles across eras—from Georgian and Victorian to more modern homes—creating a varied yet harmonious streetscape. The village layout, including the central green, linear high street, and open countryside views, was also seen as integral to its character. Overall, there is a strong preference for maintaining authenticity and continuity in future development, ensuring that any changes respect the historic fabric and rural setting of the village.

G2 - Any Buildings, features or views you think should be preserved?

Respondents strongly emphasized preserving Great Horwood's historic core and rural setting. The most common theme was the protection of historic and listed buildings, including landmarks such as St James Church, The Swan pub, and other heritage properties. The Village Green and surrounding central spaces were frequently mentioned as focal points of village identity. Many comments highlighted the importance of safeguarding views across open countryside and farmland, which contribute to the village's rural character. There were also calls to maintain the integrity of the conservation area and its distinctive features, along with protecting key approaches such as Little Horwood Road, High Street, and Pilch Lane. Overall, the dominant sentiment is to retain the historic architecture, central green spaces, and scenic rural views that define Great Horwood's character.

G3 - What materials or styles do you associate most with local buildings?

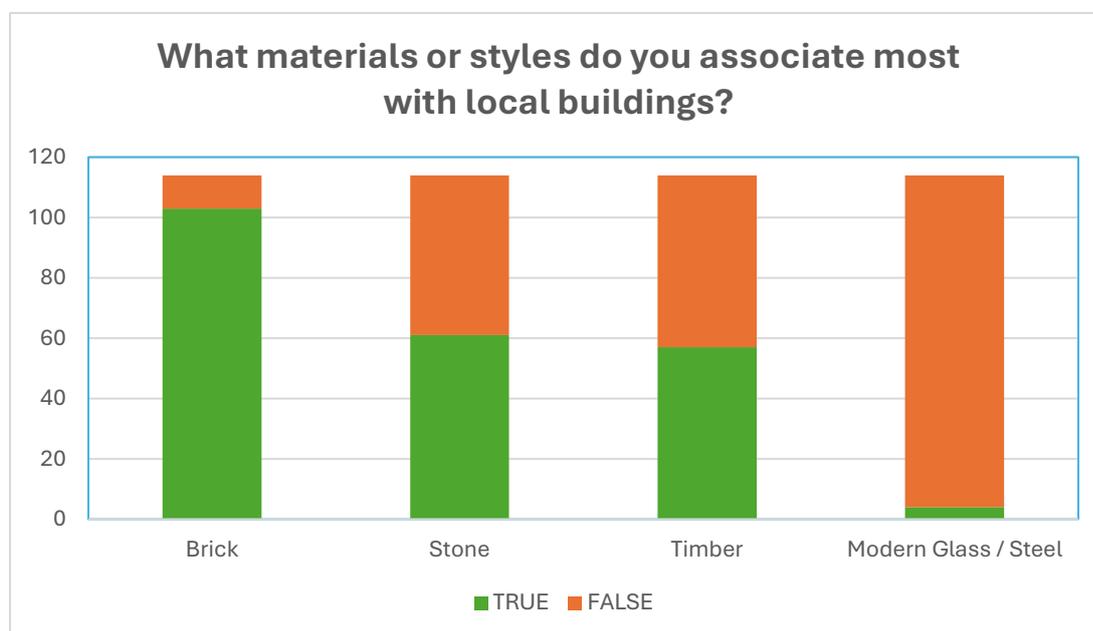
Community feedback strongly associates Great Horwood's built character with its historic and traditional roots. Respondents emphasized the importance of preserving heritage and listed buildings, including notable landmarks such as St James Church, The Swan pub, and other period properties that define the village's identity.

A recurring theme was the use of vernacular features, particularly thatched roofs, timber frames, and traditional detailing that reflect the village's architectural heritage. Many comments highlighted the preference for authentic materials, including brick,

stone, slate, and clay tiles, which contribute to the visual continuity and rural charm of the area.

Respondents also noted the variety of styles across eras, from Georgian and Victorian homes to more modern properties, creating a distinctive yet harmonious streetscape. This blend of styles was seen as part of the village’s character, provided that new development remains in keeping with traditional design principles.

Finally, the layout and setting, including the Village Green, linear High Street, and open countryside views, were considered integral to the architectural identity. Overall, there is a clear expectation that future development should respect and reinforce these qualities, maintaining authenticity, heritage, and rural character through careful design and material choices.



G8 - What one thing would you change about the style of the new buildings in the parish?

Community feedback reveals strong preferences for improving the design and character of new developments in Great Horwood. The dominant sentiment is to preserve village identity while enhancing quality and individuality, avoiding uniform, mass-produced designs. Key themes include:

1. Avoid Generic or “Cookie-Cutter” Designs

Many respondents expressed frustration with repetitive, off-the-shelf estate layouts that lack character. Comments called for an end to “copy-and-paste” designs and standard commercial housing styles that do not reflect the village’s heritage.

2. Increase Variety and Character

There is a clear desire for more individuality within developments. Respondents want designs that introduce variety and create a sense of place, rather than uniformity. Characterful architecture that reflects local traditions was seen as essential.

3. Use Traditional Materials and Styles

Strong emphasis was placed on using traditional materials such as brick, stone, slate, and thatch, along with vernacular features like timber frames. Many comments stressed that new buildings should be “in keeping” with Georgian and rural styles, avoiding harsh modern finishes.

4. Improve Quality and Detailing

Concerns were raised about poor build quality and lack of authentic detailing. Respondents highlighted issues such as fake chimneys and inadequate integration of practical features like parking. Better craftsmanship and attention to detail were seen as priorities.

5. Blend Modern Sustainability with Heritage

While traditional aesthetics are valued, respondents also want eco-friendly features incorporated sensitively. Suggestions included solar panels and heat pumps designed to complement, rather than detract from, the village’s character.

6. Spacing and Layout

Several comments focused on avoiding cramped plots and overcrowded layouts. Respondents requested more generous spacing between houses to maintain a sense of openness and rural character.

The overarching message is clear: future development should respect Great Horwood’s heritage while embracing quality, individuality, and sustainability. Residents strongly oppose uniform, mass-produced designs and expect new buildings to use traditional materials, integrate eco-friendly features, and maintain appropriate spacing to preserve the village’s rural feel.