

Coleford Parish Plan Questionnaire Results, Full Report

Introduction

1. The Parish Council agreed to go ahead with a questionnaire to all parish addresses at our September 2019 meeting. Questionnaires were delivered by early November and the reply boxes were collected by Mid-December. Responses to questions have been entered into a spreadsheet. The findings are reported below.

The Responses

2. 62 responses were received. Table 1 shows that the most popular collection point for responses was the Co-op, with a good yield from the Vicarage and Hub as well.

Box location	No. of responses	Box location	No. of responses
The Hub / Vicarage	17	The Co-op	36
King's Head	4	Doctors' Surgery	0
The Eagle	2	E Mail to Clerk	1
Royal British Legion	2	TOTAL	62

3. The response represents about 2.6% of the parish population, or 6% of households ¹. Whilst more responses would be welcome, this is probably not a particularly low percentage for a questionnaire survey to households.
4. Information on post codes (**Question 4**) given by nearly all the respondents indicates that replies were received from most parts of the parish, although the extremities of Anchor Road / Highbury Street and the outlying areas appear to be under-represented. The information is summarised in Table 2.

¹ Coleford Parish resident population recorded as 2313 in the 2011 Census (Source: ONS / NOMIS). Assumed some increase since due to construction of about 70 dwellings, offset by trend towards smaller households, Current population of 2400 therefore assumed. Household spaces recorded as 961 in 2011 (Source as above). Current total assumed to be 1000.

Postcode (5 digits)	Streets	Number of Responses
BA3 5B	Anchor Close	0
BA3 5F	Lipyeate	1
BA3 5G	Mill Lane / High St	1
BA3 5H	Rope Walk	1
BA3 5L	The Green / Underhill /High St / Mill lane / The Grove / Springers Hill	11
BA3 5N	Church Street / The Barton / Hillside / Rock Terrace /	8
	Highbury Street / Harris Vale / Carey's Mead / The Castle / Church St	10
BA3 5P	Highbury Street / Anchor Road / Douglas Yates Court / Beacon View / Coal Barton / Anchor Road / Fairfield / Farley Dell / Mendip Vale / Highfield / Orchard Close / Preachers Vale / Lawrence Road / Lipyeate / Roman Way /	23
BA3 5Q	Common Lane	1
BA3 5R	Stockhill Court / Goodeaves Close / Stockhill / The Crescent / Highbury St	1
BA3 5T	Mendip View / Highbury Street	0
BA3 5Y	Alfords Ridge	3
	None given	2
TOTAL		62

Age Group of respondents (Question 8)

5. Table 3 compares the age group information given by respondents² with the nearest equivalent for the census population in 2011. The comparison shows that the response from school age residents is particularly low and that from retired adults is particularly high.

	School Age	Adult	Retired Adult
Questionnaire Response	5%	50%	45%
Census 2011 results	18%	63%	19%

Should there be a New Parish Plan? (Question 1)

6. Table 4 shows that 51 responses out of 62 were in favour of a new plan. The Table also gives a summary of reasons. Many of these relate to accommodating change and making improvements, with some seeing the plan as a protection against unwanted pressures.

² Nearly 40% of respondents did not give this information. The comparison with Census age groups is not exact.

20	To meet changes				1	To protect the environment / and improve Infrastructure			
4	To meet changes / protect the village				2	To help guide the Parish Council			
7	To focus on priorities				2	To identify a shared vision			
5	To achieve improvements				2	To make improvements / protect village			
2	To strengthen community Influence				1	To review the current plan			
1	To promote sustainability				1	To deal with traffic			
1	To tidy up the village				1	To control housebuilding			
1	To protect the environment				11	Against new plan / no response / uncertain			
					62	TOTAL			

Willingness to Help Produce a New Plan (Question 2 and Question 3)

7. 17 respondents were interested in helping to produce a new plan. Various types of help were offered, including a number willing to do research, or surveys and write material. Other offers included photography and drawings / paintings. 9 respondents were willing to help analyse the questionnaire responses.

What Do People Like and Dislike Most About Living in Coleford (Questions 5 and 6)

8. People identified 167 “likes” spread across some 31 topics. The “likes” which were mentioned most are shown in Table 5. The main “likes” can be summarised as the range of facilities available in Coleford, the lively village community and the value placed upon local countryside.

Likes	Responses
Doctors	10
The Co-op	7
Other Local Facilities and Services	24
People and Community (including village atmosphere and local activities)	54
Countryside (including wildlife, footpaths, landscape, history, quietness and clean air)	61

9. People identified 157 “dislikes” spread across some 55 topics. The “dislikes” which were mentioned most are shown in Table 6. The main “dislikes” can be summarised as traffic, traffic speed, parking and roads, dog fouling and litter, the lack of a daily Post Office and the lack of a wide range of other facilities.

Table 6: What People Like Least about Living in Coleford

Dislikes	Responses
Parking problems, mainly at the Anchor Road, Highbury St, Church St Junnction	18
Poor Bus Service	23
Poor Roads, especially Charmborough Lane and lack of pavements	13
Traffic, Lorries and Traffic Speed	13
Dog Fouling, litter, flytipping, dirty pavments and roads	22
Appearance of parts of the village, including unsightly buildings	6
Lack of a daily Post Office	15
Other facilities and services (including police, shops café / takeaway)	28

Most Important Topics for A New Parish Plan (Question 7)

10. Residents were asked to name their 5 most important topics for a new plan. Between them they identified some 217 suggestions, falling into an estimated 80 categories, so there is a lot of detail available. Table 5 summarises the responses. Detail is lost by summarising in this way, but we do see a picture of the main groupings, covering 193 out of the 217 suggestions. The Table shows a concentration of interest in parking, highways and traffic, and public / more sustainable transport. Other major groupings are housing / sustainable development, the rural environment and a wide range of comments on village services.

Table 7 : Most Important Topics for a New Parish Plan

Responses (grouped)	Topics (Grouped)	Number Willing to Help (by Group)
16	parking	2
50	highways, traffic, road safety, speed	9
23	public / more sustainable transport	4
8	crime and disorder	3
17	housing, sustainable development and social housing	4
19	rural environment	13
8	village built quality	4
11	village environment	2
29	village facilities and services	8
12	communications	2
193	Total in above groups	

11. The Table also shows the number of offers of help to work on these grouped topics

Can We Summarise and Identify Main Concerns?

12. The results shown in Tables 5, 6 and 7 show some overlaps. Table 8 combines the “scores” for various topics.

Table 8: Possible Priorities for A New Plan	Sum of scores in Tables 5, 6 and 7
Village facilities and services	113
Countryside and rural environment	80
Highways, traffic, road safety, speed	76
People and Community	54
village environment and built quality, including dog fouling, litter and fly tipping	47
Bus Service	46
Parking	34
housing, sustainable development and social housing	17
communications	12
Crime and disorder	8

13. Whilst each of these topics contains more than one issue, the response on village facilities and services is the most wide-ranging, both in the sense of a large number of facilities mentioned and the division of responses between positive and negative.

Suggested Next Steps

14. At this stage, there is some consensus on important topics for a new Parish Plan, as shown in Table 8. But it is not clear how representative the responses are (given the limited numbers) or whether the apparent support for a new plan will lead to real contributions. Also, whilst the Parish Council can use the results to guide its own work, it is very important that it does not attempt to produce a new plan without significant support from the community.
15. Therefore, the following next steps are proposed for discussion and a decision.
- i. Publicise the results of the survey, through the notice boards and links such as the Coleford Echo and The Colefordian.
 - ii. Contact those people who offered to help produce a new plan, and ask them to comment on this report. We could also send the spreadsheets to those who offered to help analyse the returns, so that they can do their own analysis.
 - iii. Invite residents to an evening meeting, including individual invitations to those who have offered to help. The meeting could be timetabled for the Spring, when better weather may encourage more people to attend.
 - iv. Use the meeting to inform people about the results of the survey and ask directly about willingness to work on various topics.
 - v. Following the meeting, consider whether the Parish council wishes to further promote a New Parish Plan.
16. If support is limited, it might still be possible for keen people to work together, with a view to producing a “Coleford Statement” on their favoured topic. This more flexible approach might work better, with groups able to work at their own speed. The results could be collated and published as they are produced.

AC 3rd February 2020