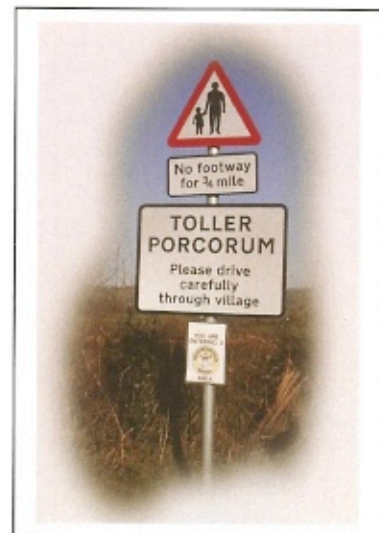


Toller Porcorum Parish Plan



2012

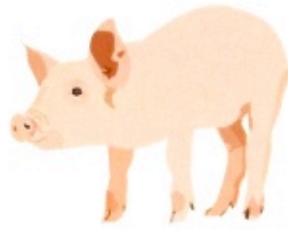




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TOLLER PORCORUM



An Introduction

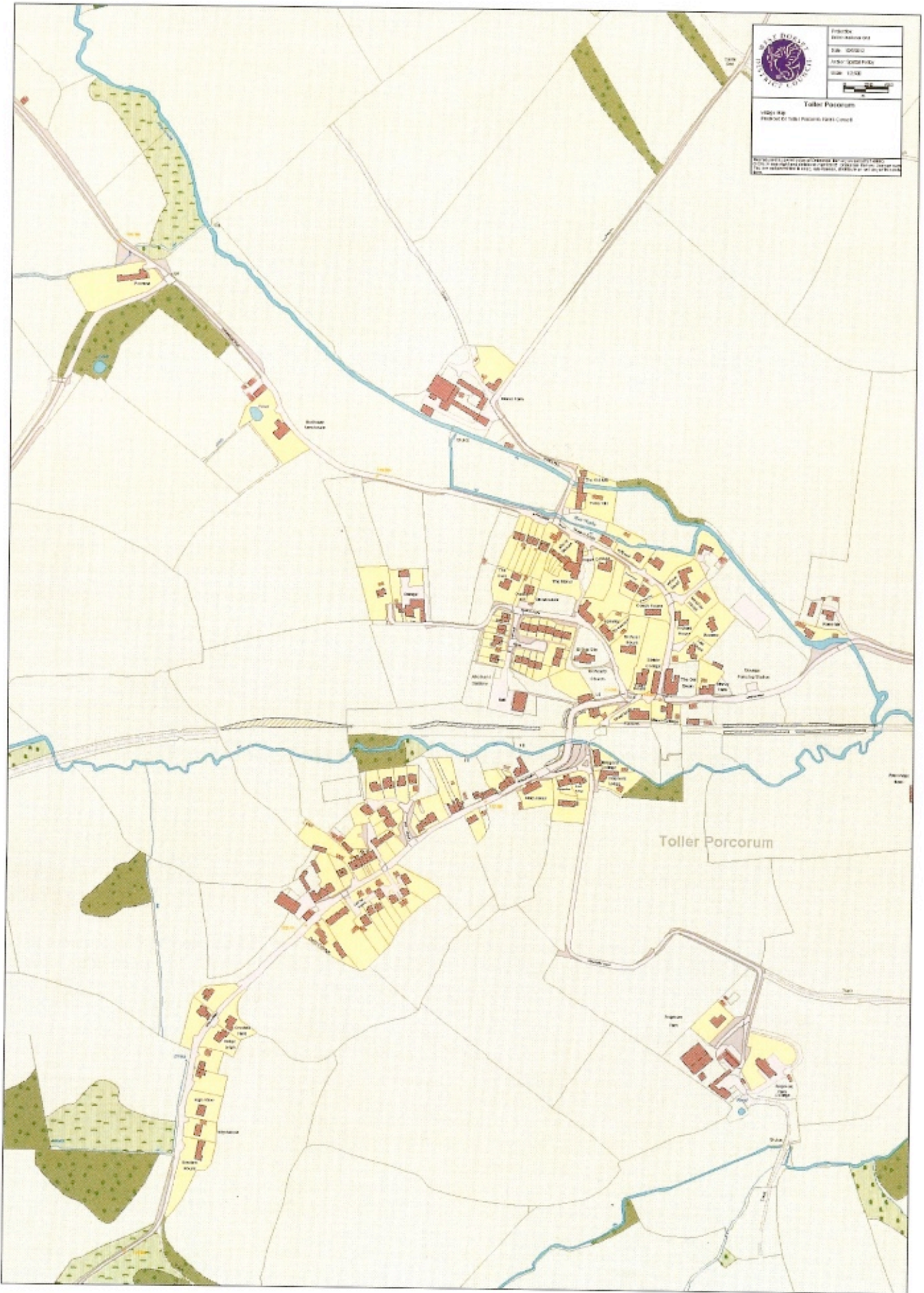
Toller Porcorum is a village of approximately 160 households, in the heart of West Dorset, just over 10 miles North-West of Dorchester, and 8 miles North-East of Bridport. It is roughly 120 metres above sea level, nestling in the valley of the River Hooke. Toller Porcorum is also situated within the West Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the South Wessex Downs Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and the South Wessex Downs Natural Area. Land use is almost entirely agricultural, including a few organic farms.

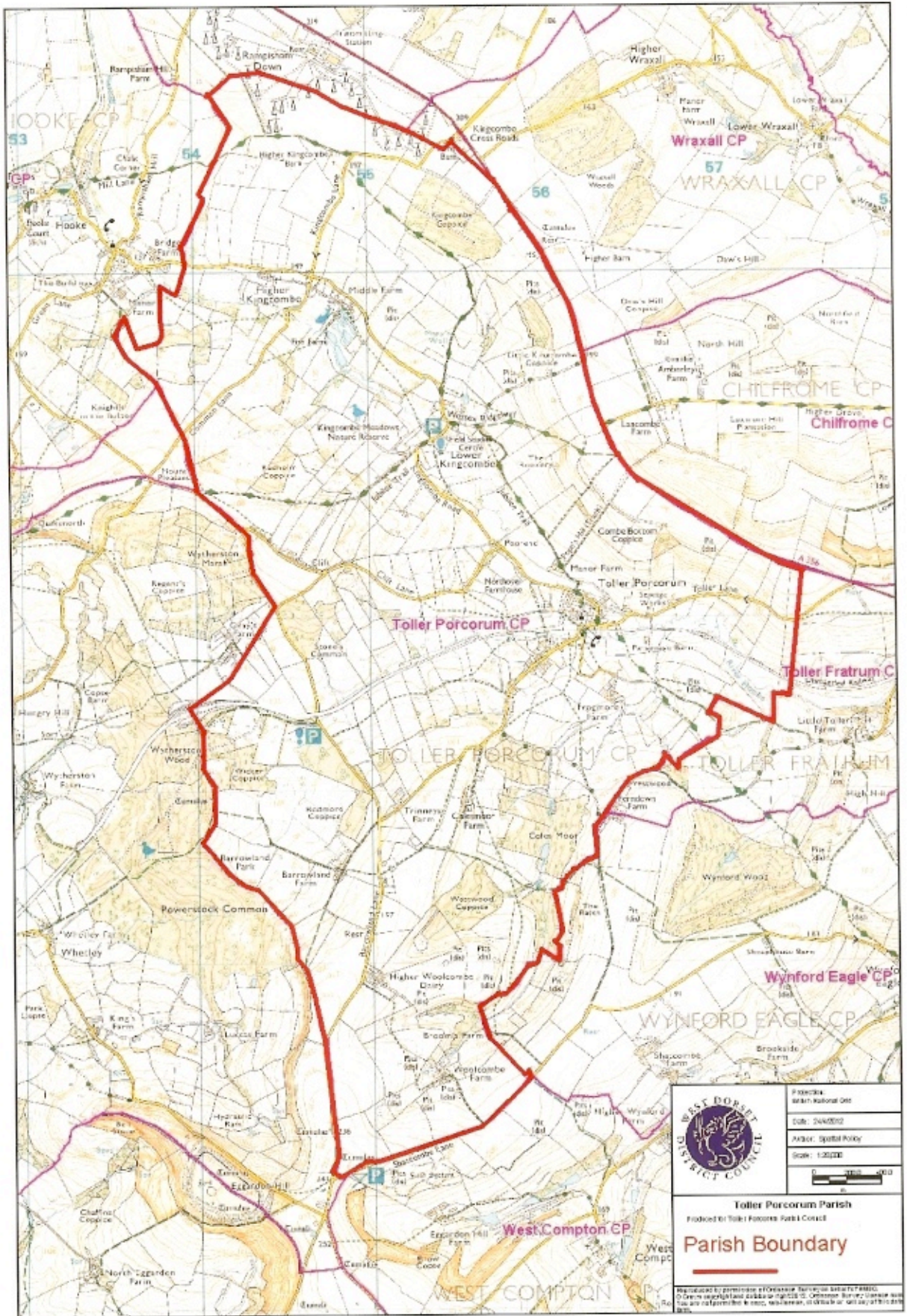
There are two important nature reserves within the Parish boundaries (both belonging to the Dorset Wildlife Trust) Powerstock Common and Kingcombe Meadows. The Parish also has an archaeological heritage dating from the Prehistoric period. There are 29 sites and finds recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record. The Church is situated on high ground between the River Hooke to the North and Toller Brook to the South. In the vicinity of the new Parish Hall there was archaeological evidence of a medieval settlement and earthworks, suggesting that an older village surrounded the Church.

Toller has suffered a steady reduction of amenities since the end of the Second World War. The school closed in 1980. The Bridport branch railway line survived the cuts of the 1960s, but was closed down in 1975. The Parish today has limited facilities. There is a part time community Post Office, selling stationery and confectionary. The Village Hall acts as a focal point in the community and is used by a number of groups and clubs. The Church is the only other meeting place in the village, with services most Sundays. The Playing Field's Association maintain the playing field with a well equipped play area, this is situated at the rear of Church Mead

Employment in the area consists mainly of the following, agriculture, Dorset Wildlife Trust (Kingcombe Centre & Nature Reserves), small businesses, Toller Trailers, tourism and a few people who are self-employed. The Old Swan Public House closed down in 1999 and has remained empty. There was a renewed community led campaign to persuade the brewery to help get the pub reopened, however, in 2012 Palmers Brewery applied for planning permission to change the use of the building into a single dwelling. This is the current position at the time of going to print. The nearest pub is 3 miles distant at Maiden Newton, where other essential services such as Primary Education, Primary Health Care, basic groceries, a full time Post Office, petrol and garage facilities and limited train services to other parts of the country can be found. The nearest secondary school is 6 miles away in Beaminster.

There is a bus service three times daily (not Sundays) through Toller Porcorum, to Maiden Newton/Bridport, and on Wednesdays a service to Dorchester & Beaminster. There is mainly family housing with a few rented "affordable" properties through Magna Housing Association. Employment opportunities are very limited with a few working farms, holiday lets and Bed & Breakfast accommodation. Most people travel outside the Parish to their place of work. There is much social activity in the village allowing residents of Toller Porcorum and nearby hamlets, such as Hooke, to feel and contribute to a strong sense of community spirit.





Chapter 2 Process and Purpose of Parish Plan

Purpose

A Parish Plan is a statement of how the community sees itself developing over the next few years. It gives everyone a chance to say what they think about the social, economic and environmental issues affecting their community, and how they would like to see it improved in the future.



The Parish Plan:

- reflects the views of all sections of the community;
- identifies which features and local characteristics people value;
- identifies local problems and opportunities;
- spells out how residents want the community to develop in the future;
- prepares a plan of action to achieve this vision.

Background and Process

A volunteer committee was formed under the guidance of Simon Thompson and Rachelle Smith (from Dorset Community Action) to consider what topics/issues/questions would be of use and worth including. This was in order that any future developments or initiatives would benefit and reflect the wishes of Toller Porcorum Parish.

The small size of the Parish and the low precept in operation meant that the Parish Council would not be able to pay for this process. An application for a grant from Dorset County Council was made and subsequently approved.

The questionnaires were then designed after consulting other Parish Plans in order to formulate the best style of questions relevant to Toller Porcorum. The finalised questionnaire was then distributed and collected mainly by the committee and the findings subsequently analysed by Rachelle Smith.

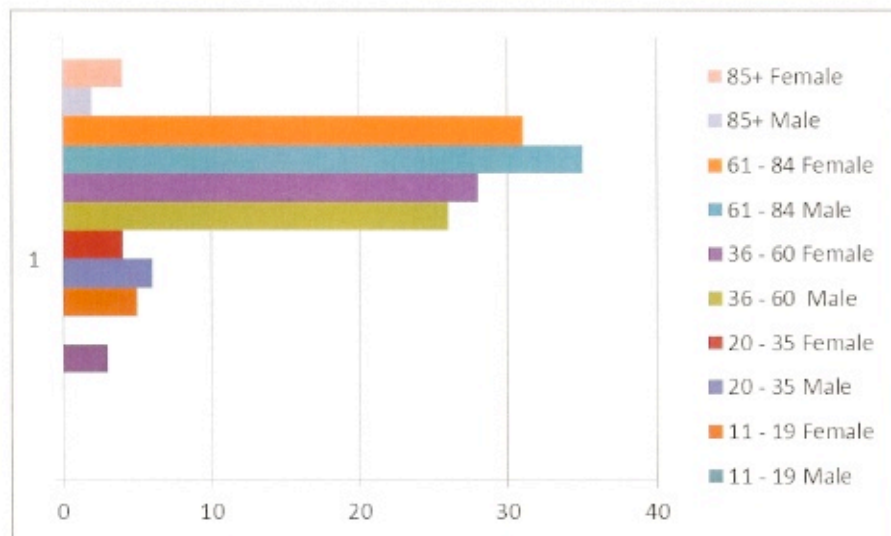
Chapter 3 Analysis of Results

According to the 2001 Census the Parish has 155 dwellings with a total population of 292. Returns were received from 79 households with a total of 156 respondents i.e. 51% of households and 53% of the total population, a very respectable total!

The figures which are given throughout the analysis are those given by the respondents to the survey only and therefore may not always reflect the opinions and details of all residents of this Parish.

1. Age Range

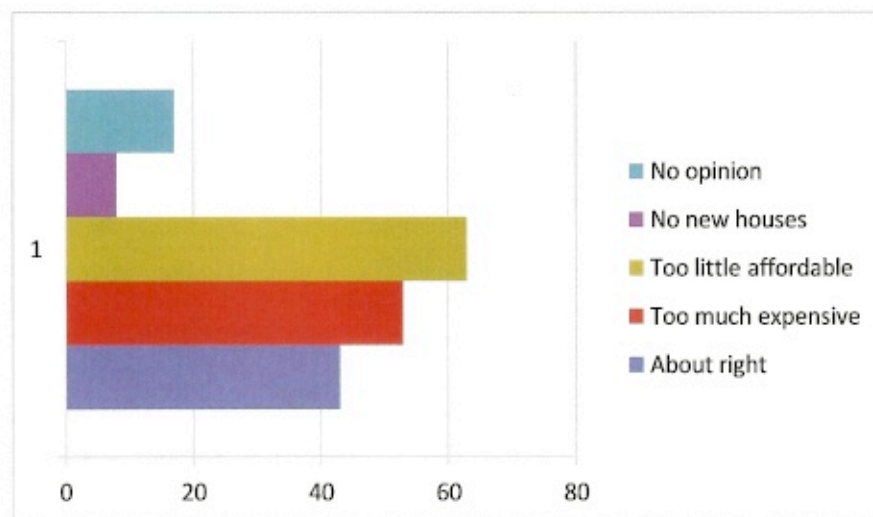
As the chart below shows, the number of households with young families is very small, and as 16% of the population of the Parish were under 15 at the time of the last census it suggests that young families may be under represented. Those who gave their age, 69 were over 60 i.e. at least 44% of respondents.



2. Housing

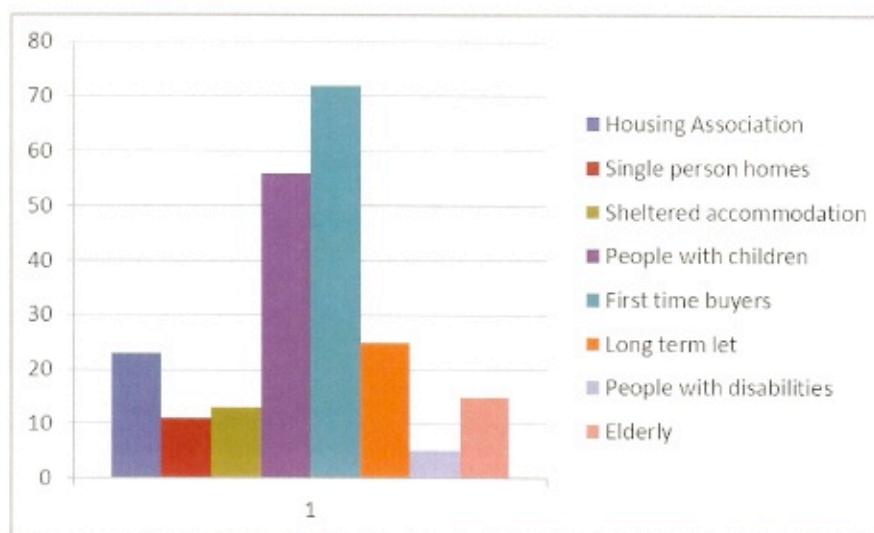
Of the 79 households who answered this survey, for 71 out of 79 this was their main residence. West Dorset District Council records 154 dwellings in Toller Parish of which 16 are classified as second homes for tax purposes. Some comments (within the questionnaires) were made reflecting a concern about too many second homes.

There was a view that during the past 10 years there had been too few houses built for affordable housing(62) and too many expensive properties built (52) although 41 thought there was a good balance.



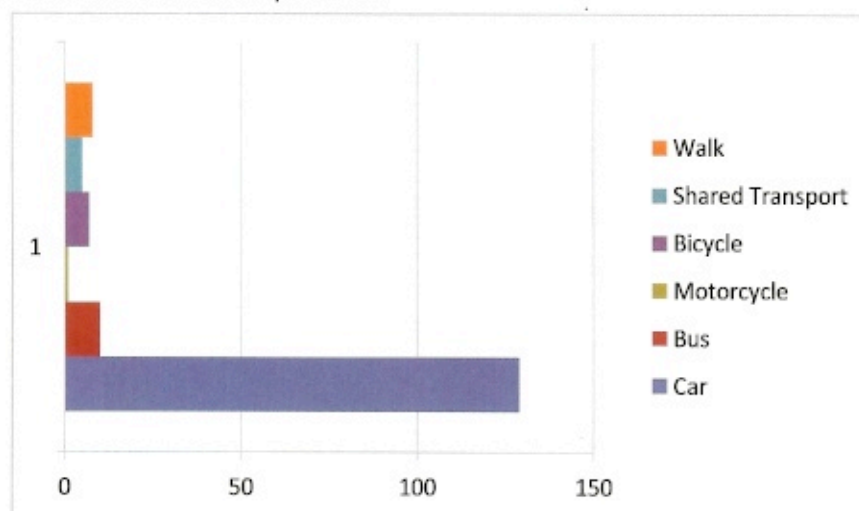
A substantial majority of respondents considered the area could accommodate more new housing (77 as against 32 saying no and 20 don't knows).

The following chart shows the kind of housing development respondents would find acceptable.



3. Public Transport, Roads and Footpaths

Unsurprisingly, the majority of people used their cars for transportation to work or to the shops and parking for these vehicles was not considered a problem



34 people were interested in a car sharing scheme as either a passenger or driver - even on a weekly rota. 39 people would like a more frequent bus service although only 12 people claim to use the Maiden Newton/Bridport service and 7 the additional services to Dorchester and Yeovil. More frequent connections to trains at Maiden Newton were suggested.

The conditions of the local roads were of great concern to a majority of respondents, 95% requested more gritting in icy conditions. 26 people were prepared to help out with transportation in an emergency or bad weather as they owned a 4 x4 vehicle.

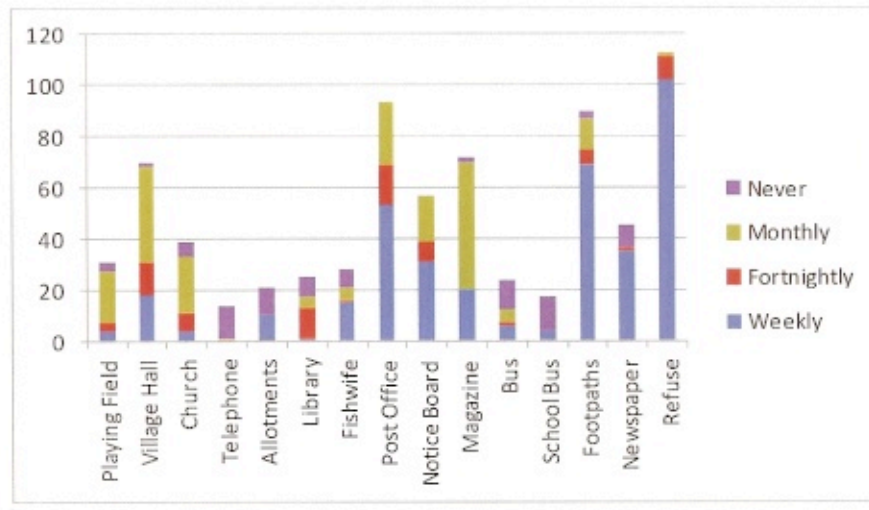
There were mixed opinions about a different speed limit locally with 51 respondents saying they did want different speed restrictions with 72 against. Suggestions on ways to slow traffic speeds included: 20 or 30 mph restrictions, cattle grids or signs designed by children.

With regard to flooding most respondents (64 or 52%) thought there was no change with 45 (37%) thinking the situation had got better leaving only 13 people (11%) considering the situation had got worse.

Concerns about footpaths were raised as several were considered to have bad stiles, lacking in signs and overgrown in places.

An amazing 102 people out of 129 replies claim they would use the cycle path to Maiden Newton if it was established. There certainly seems to be strong support for this project in the Parish.

4. Parish Facilities and Amenities



The five most used facilities and amenities are refuse collection, footpaths, Post Office, Village Hall and the newspaper/magazine box.

Out of 135 replies 119 respondents consider the Post Office to be of great importance to the community. Requests for longer opening hours to include Saturdays were also suggested and more space would be favoured.

The Village Hall is widely used for a variety of events with one off activities being the most popular. There were a few suggestions for such things as films, keepfit/pilates type activities to be put on in the evenings(although the age groups of the Parish might restrict this), a weekly tea/coffee drop in session, lunch club, art lessons and clubs for children were also suggested.



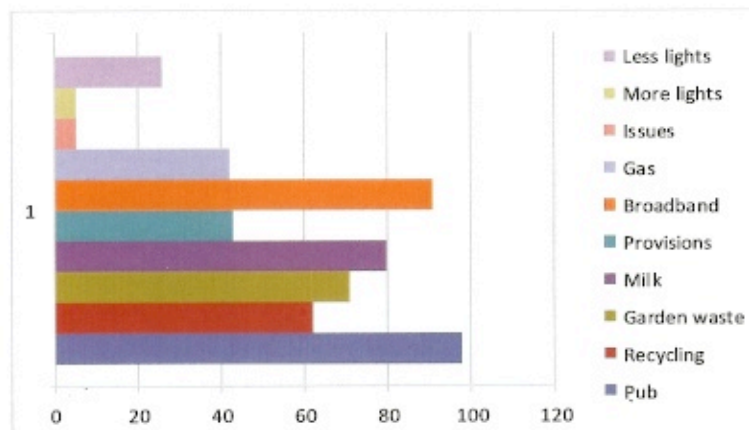
Village Hall

Playing Field



Post Office

The Playing Field is considered to be another asset and most respondents would like to see improved play equipment although 8 people suggested a tennis court. There was another suggestion for the grass to be cut more regularly; 1 respondent wrote that it was important to keep a balance between more equipment and an open recreational area.



When asked if there were any other facilities in the village they would like most, The majority opted for the pub; Closely followed by a shop - this included a mobile or general store. A few respondents were against the re-opening of the pub as they considered it a waste of time or foresaw social problems. A local milk selling point and a garden waste collection point were also favoured.

As far as communication is concerned 25 households have problems with TV reception, 36 with Radio reception and 49 with Broadband.

Opinion is divided as to whether the Kingcombe Centre is adequately integrated with the local community with 59 saying yes but 54 replying no.



Kingcombe Centre



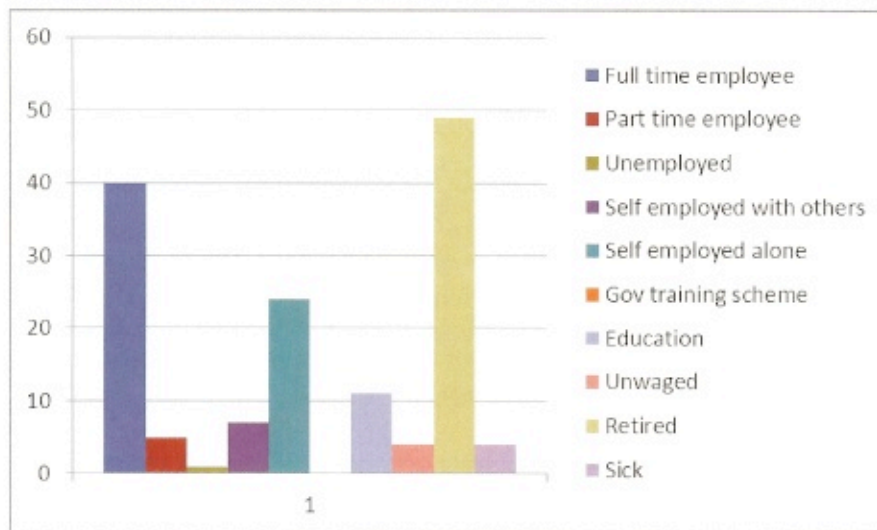
Old Swan

5. Health Care

The vast majority of respondents use the Doctors' Surgery at Maiden Newton – 115 in total, against 11 who use Beaminster and 8 who go elsewhere; of the services provided by the surgeries, the most well used is the nurse, with 78 of all respondents, (58%).

It was asked if the Ambulance/First Responder was adequate? Of those who replied the majority thought it was (56 said yes as against 9 saying no); 17 people were prepared to use their medical skills in an emergency.

6. Employment



The chart above shows the employment status of the households filling in the questionnaire. It is clear the biggest category is the retired followed by full time employees.

In terms of economic regeneration 78 people are in favour of converting redundant farm buildings for employment, 75 are in favour of encouraging small business development and 67 are in favour of encouraging tourism. Other ideas for economic regeneration include having younger people in the village, re-opening the pub and an innovative suggestion: "Would it be possible to start a small woollen mill in a farm building?- A clean industry for West Dorset sheep farmers". Someone else suggests a re-opened pub and the cycle path to Maiden Newton would encourage tourists, whilst another suggestion is "A mini farmers' market / shop for traders in the village hall fortnightly or monthly."

7 Other Comments

On a final note and probably more importantly, respondents were asked what were the dislikes and likes of the community.

In no particular order:

Dislikes

- *Lack of basic amenities e.g. shop and pub*
- *Poor public transport*
- *State of the roads*
- *Remoteness especially in bad weather*
- *Lack of affordable housing*
- *Poor internet access*
- *Too few young people*
- *Dog poo.*

Likes

- *Beauty of the countryside*
- *Friendliness*
- *Community spirit*
- *Safe environment (129 out of 134 felt safe)*
- *Peace and quiet*

Chapter 4 Conclusion

From the information gathered there have been several topics which respondents want addressed and some clear indications of what they would (and just as importantly) would not want to see in the future.

The Parish Plan Committee have carefully evaluated these views and opinions and thought about:

What actions are possible?

What the priorities are?

What are any feasible time expectations? (These can only be estimates due to the various 'stakeholders' involved).

This has then been developed into an Action Plan. The Action Plan will be presented to the Parish Council for possible development in collaboration with the various stakeholders such as West Dorset District Council. Some of the findings would seem quite straightforward to action whilst others need considerable work to reach an outcome. Key factors in this process will include the difficulty of each step, resources and costs required and timescales. It might also be considered that suggested items on the Action Plan to be unworkable by the stakeholders.

The Action Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and updates will be put onto the Parish Website <http://tollerporcorum.org.uk> Please complete the on line survey for better Broadband Service go to dorsetforyou.com



Old Station

Notice Board Area



Action Plan

Page No	Evidence	Action Plan	Public Partners	Timescale
8	65 use footpaths Weekly(graph)	Footpaths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council designated person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
7	102 supported Footpath/Cycle Path to Maiden Newton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route to Maiden Newton opened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Landowners Sustrans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 years
8	119 support PO & Shop all said new site was needed	Develop Post Office/Village shop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Landowners Post Mistress Community Land Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
7	77 said poor conditions 55 replied reason	Roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditions Gritting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council designated person Local Authority Parish Council Farmers/Landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Some work already done Seasonal
6	64 felt the need for low cost housing	Affordable /Low cost Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Landowners Community Land Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-4 years
9	Majority wanted A Pub in the Village	The Old Swan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Palmers Brewery S.O.S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
9	90 wanted improved reception	Reception of TV, Radio, Broadband (In Hand) See Page 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Public Utility Companies WDDC/DDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 years
7	39 wanted better service 12 used buses	Bus Service & Destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Company Parish Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 years
7	16 Volunteers 18 possible passengers 26 offered to help with transport	Car Sharing/Bad Weather Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Coordinators Individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 years
9	3 Doctors 8 Nurses 12 First Aiders responded	1 st Aider/Responder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 years
10	37 requests to reduce dog excrement	Dog Fouling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
9	75 in favour & 78 for converted Redundant buildings	Small Business Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Land Owners Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
8	Approx 70 requested this Facility	Garden Waste Collection Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Land Owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
8	80 in favour	Local Milk Selling Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Post Office/Shop Farm outlet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing

Useful Information

Telephone Code 01300 unless otherwise stated

Doctors 320206

Greenford School 320644.

Beaminster School 01308 862633

Post Office High St (Mon - Fri 9 - 1pm) 321546

Papers delivered to the box outside the Village Hall by Newsagent at Maiden Newton 320260.

Booking the Village Hall contact Jill Bacchus 321429

Refuse Collection/Recycling Mondays- Recycling fortnightly

Mobile Library visit every other Friday, dates on village notice board.

Artsreach events contact Debbie Billen 320737

Toller Porcorum Parish Council

Chairman Mr David Ennals 01300 321411

Clerk to Toller Porcorum Council contact Michele Harding on 01305 871268

Kingcombe Centre 320684

Playing Field contact Debbie Billen 320737

Fish Lady (mobile) each Thursday morning 07967122260

Bus & Train Time tables are available from the Post Office
and No 64 (Newsagents) Maiden Newton

Church Services

1st & 2nd Sundays of the month 6-30pm Evensong (3-30pm
in the Winter months after the clocks change.)

3rd & 4th Sundays of the month 9-30am & 11.am Holy Communion.

Contact Judy Miller or Keith Miller for events and details on 320174 or 321007

Team News available each month contact Janet Knowles on 320617

Activities to which you would be most welcome.

Mothers' Union meet each 4th Monday, contact Thelma Billen on 320037

Table Tennis each Monday 7pm, contact David Ennals on 321411.

The Toller & Hooke W.I .meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month, contact Judith Hansen 01308 861686.

Gardening Club meet 3rd Tuesday every other month Contact Dorothy Boardman on 320234

The Toller & Hooke Short Mat Bowls Club meet each Thursday at 7-30pm. All will be welcome .

Contact Pat Rutherford for details on 321267.

If you are interested in taking part or helping Toller & Hooke Amateur Dramatics Society, please contact Rachel Miller on 321007

Home Watch contact Barry Rutherford on 321267

Most of these events take place in the Village Hall off Church Mead.

Further details of these clubs and events will be posted on the Church & Village Notice Boards