

Appendix III.

Bridestowe and Sourton Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire Results

A total of 178 questionnaires were completed either on line or as paper questionnaires. All paper questionnaires were then entered on line into the SurveyMonkey form, and analysis has been carried out to date using SurveyMonkey and MS Excel.

This report on the questionnaire has focused on the quantitative and numerical data, but there is a great deal of additional information available from the very many free text entries, comments and suggestions made by those completing the forms. A brief selection of these are quoted at the end of this report.

Despite the length of the questionnaire – 42 questions in the main section and another 26 in the supplementary sections – most people completed the whole questionnaire, and few people omitted significant parts.

Approximately 475 questionnaires were distributed, giving approximately a 38% return overall, though this was clearly much higher in Bridestowe village than in Sourton village.

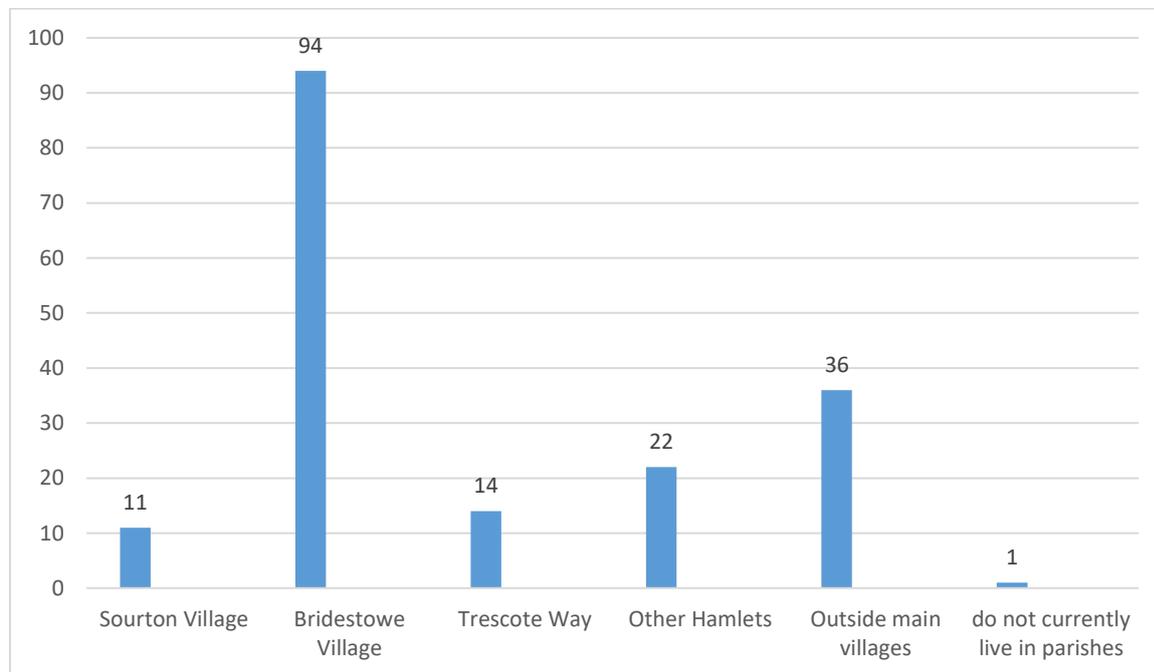
Even though 92% of those completing the questionnaires reported having a computer in their household, only 25% (45/178) of those completing the questionnaires did so on line. The on-line collector was open from March 28th to May 25th inclusive, when it was closed to allow analysis of results.

Most questionnaires included information about all members of the household, and the households from which we received completed questionnaires included a total of 397 people, which is 40% of the total population (996) of the parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton as reported in the 2011 census.

Section 1: You and your Parish or local community.

Those completing the questionnaires were distributed across the two parishes, but relatively few people from Sourton Village completed a questionnaire.

Figure 1. Number of Completed Questionnaires from parishes and parts of parishes.



Of the 172 people who gave this information, 130 lived in the parishes and 37 lived and worked here.

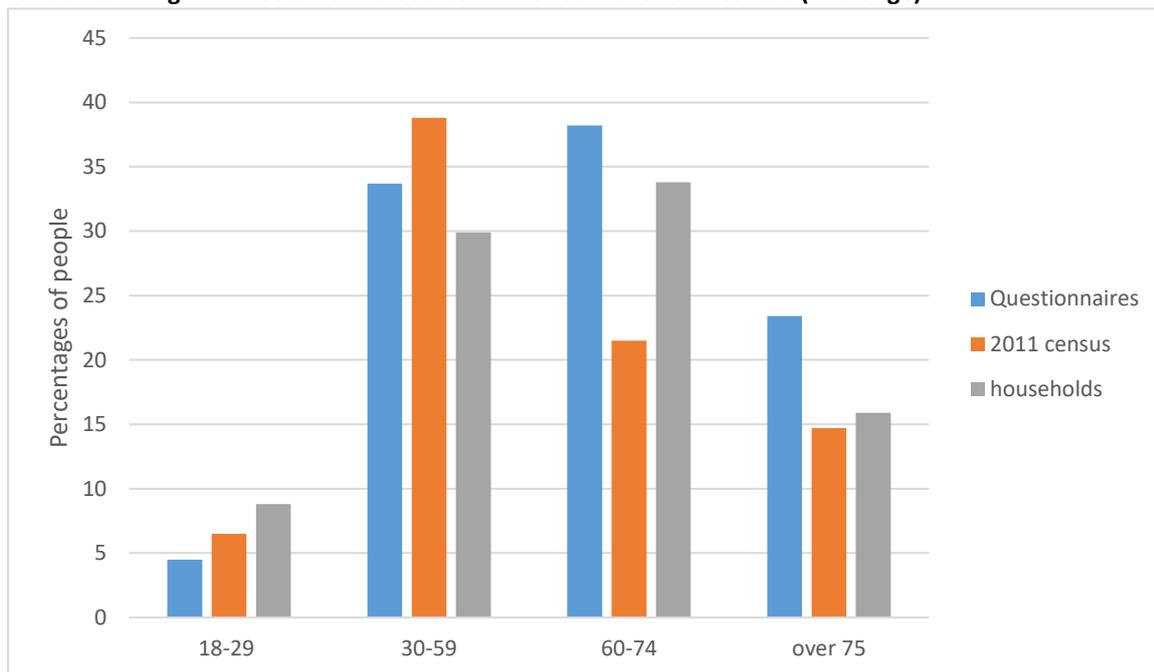
Similar numbers of men (49%) and women (51%) completed the survey.

Completed questionnaires were received from people of a wide range of ages, though slightly more were received from older residents than would have been predicted from the age distribution of Bridestowe and Sourton residents in the 2011 census (Figure 2). The largest concentration of older people completing questionnaires was in Bridestowe village.

Overall 39% of people living in the households that completed questionnaires were reported to be retired, compared to 18.8% in the two parishes overall in the 2011 census.

A total of 43 children and young people aged under 18 years lived in the households from which completed questionnaires were received, though disappointingly only 15 of these children or young people completed the section of the questionnaire aimed at them. The 2011 census identified a total of 92 children and young people under the age of 18 living in the two parishes; thus opinions directly obtained from this age group are significantly under-represented in this questionnaire.

Figure 2 shows the age distribution of adults over 18 who completed the questionnaire (in blue), total number of adults living in the households that submitted questionnaires (in grey) and the age distribution for adults living in Bridestowe and Sourton Parishes in the 2011 census (in orange).



Overall the age distribution of the people who completed the questionnaires and the adults living in those households is similar to the age distribution in the 2011 census, but included a slightly higher proportion of older people than the census

Section 2: Community Life and Facilities

Most people reported feeling relatively well informed about what is going on in their community, with 88% giving this a score of 3 or more out of 5, and 92% reporting that BaSE was an important source of information, compared to 46% saying local noticeboards, 80% saying neighbours or friends, and 46% mentioning the local paper. The most common suggestion as to how communications could be improved was an updated or more widely used village website.

The overwhelming majority of people reported that the natural beauty and related features of the parish were very important to them. Amongst the specific local facilities listed the ones rated as most important included the Village Halls, and Methodist Hall, the pubs, the sporting green and cricket field, the children's play area, but overwhelmingly the one rated the most important by the largest number of people was Bridestowe Shop and Post Office.

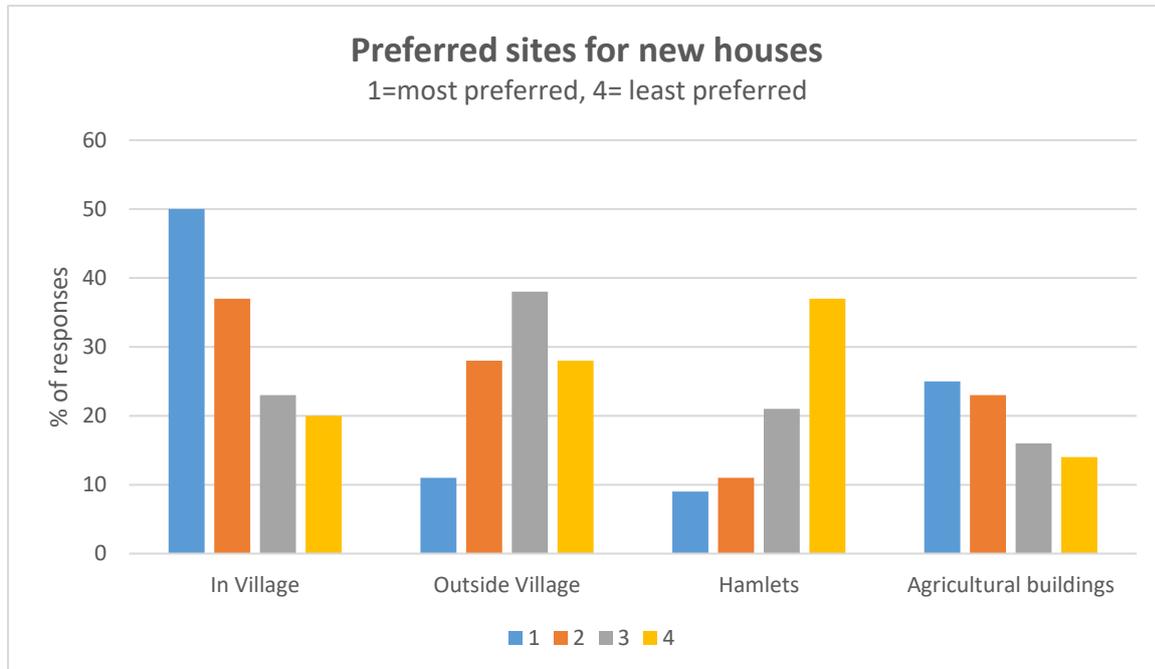
Section 3: Housing and Businesses

The West Devon Plan for 2015-2031 includes a proposal for a minimum of 30 additional houses in Bridestowe. In question 15 people were asked to rank their preferences as to where and what size of development they would prefer. Unfortunately because of a misprint in the paper questionnaire ("15" was printed rather than "1-5" in three of the questions) it was not possible to fully analyse the responses to this question. There was a wide range of opinions as to where new housing should be provided, but overall there was a clear preference for a number of smaller developments rather than a single large new housing development. There were four main options for the preferred sites of new development that were identified and about which people were asked to give their preferences:

1. New houses within or on the edge of the village
2. New houses outside the present village edges
3. New houses in outlying hamlets
4. New houses as conversions of agricultural buildings

Figure 3 shows the proportion of questionnaires in which each of these four options was ranked 1, 2, 3 or 4 in descending order of preference – i.e. “1” was the option most preferred and “4” the one least preferred.

Figure 3



From this it is clear that there was overall a strong preference for new houses to be mainly built in the village itself (with 50% of respondents giving this as their first choice) rather than outside the village or in the outlying hamlets, though a significant minority (25%) favoured conversion of existing agricultural buildings.

In question 16, residents were asked their opinions on five possible sites for developments in the village of Bridestowe and one in Sourton – all have been put forward by the landowners as possible sites for new housing.

In this question they were asked to score each site numerically and to explain their reasons for doing so. Most people gave quite clear reasons for their choices, but these have not yet been fully analysed.

The sites are:

1. Town Farm. Adjacent to Town Meadow
2. On the northeast side of Pool Hill
3. On the South side of Pig's leg lane/Rectory Rd
4. Between Bridestowe Cemetery and Hunter's Moon
5. North side of Pig's leg lane/Rectory Rd (Proposed housing for the elderly, adjacent to Springfield Residential Home)
6. In Sourton, northwest of the A386, at Windard

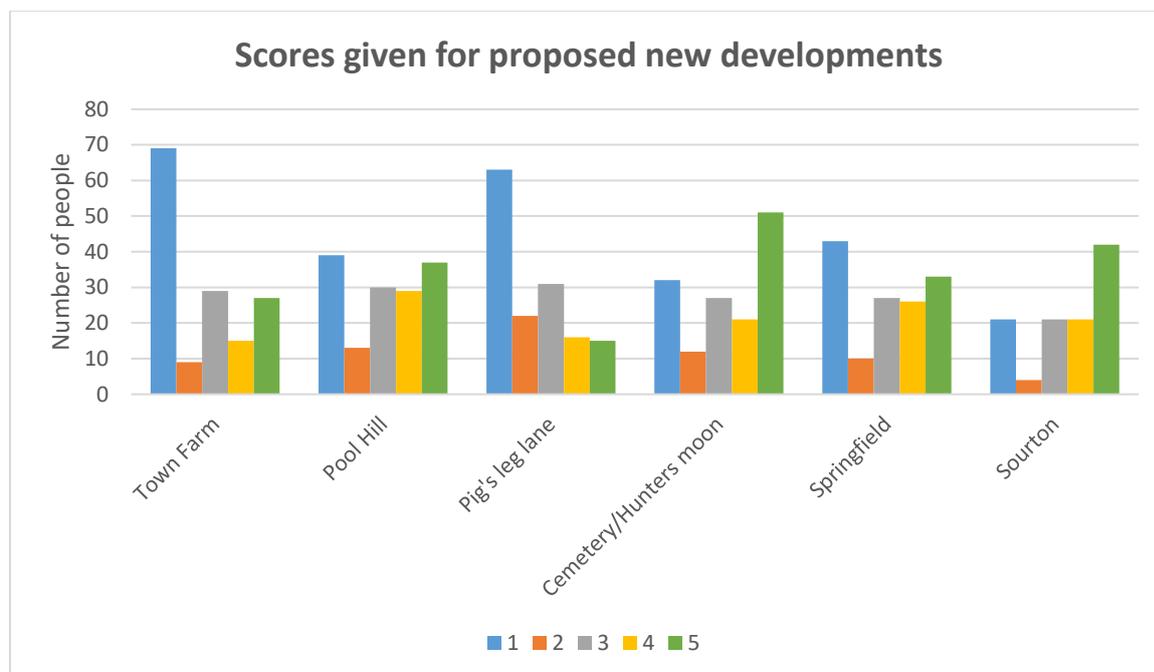
For each of the possible sites residents were asked to give a score of 1-5, where 1 is “I would strongly oppose this development”, and 5 is “I would be entirely happy for this site to be developed”.

In Figure 4 the responses have been plotted to show the number of completed questionnaires in which each of the proposed sites was given each score from 1 to 5. Several respondents did not give a numerical score but

noted that they opposed all of the proposed developments – these responses have been categorised as “1” in the figure. A number of Bridestowe residents did not give an opinion on the proposed Sourton development, but 109 completed forms did include opinions on this development. Most of these responses were thus not from residents of Sourton village.

Figure 4. Scores given for each of the six proposed sites for new housing.

Where 1 is “I would strongly oppose this development”, and 5 is “I would be entirely happy for this site to be developed”



From these data there is clearly considerable variation in opinions as to which site or sites would be appropriate options, though the proposed site between the cemetery and Hunters Moon had the greatest number of most positive responses (scores of 5) and the lowest proportion of objections (score 1). Many people gave considerable additional information as to why they favoured or did not wish to see each site developed.

When asked which features of new homes were particularly important, low energy design, traditional and local style, green space and off-road parking were rated as being particularly important, whilst almost half of the respondents gave contemporary (21st century) style the lowest possible score.

56% of respondents thought that it was important or very important that some new housing in the villages should be low cost/affordable housing to rent, and many people emphasised how important it was that local residents – particularly young people should be given preference in allocating such housing.

Almost 60% of respondents thought that encouraging new businesses in the parishes was quite or very important, and the great majority (78%) favoured siting new businesses on brownfield sites with 15% preferring farmsteads.

Section 4: Environment and Local Services

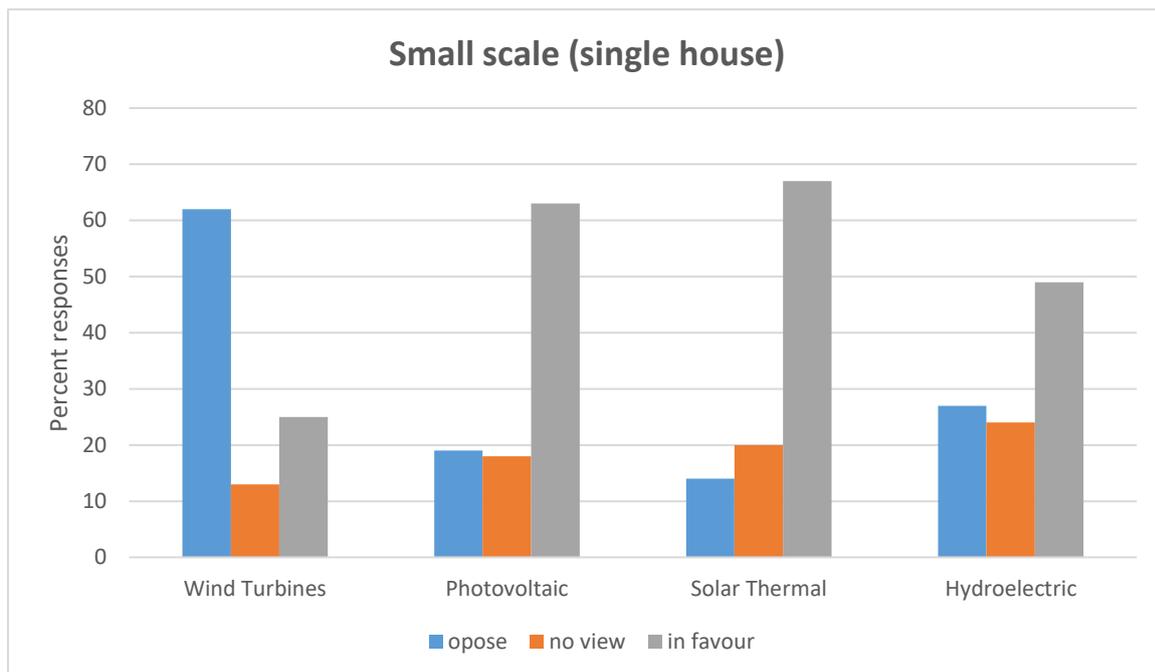
In question 22 respondents were asked to give their view on a 5 point scale (where 1 is strongly oppose and 5 is strongly support, with 3 being no view either way) for each of several forms of renewable energy. These

included wind turbines, photovoltaic panels (solar electricity) solar thermal panels (solar hot water) and hydroelectric projects. Views were sought for small scale developments (i.e. single house) medium size (local community size) and larger scale developments of each type of renewable energy.

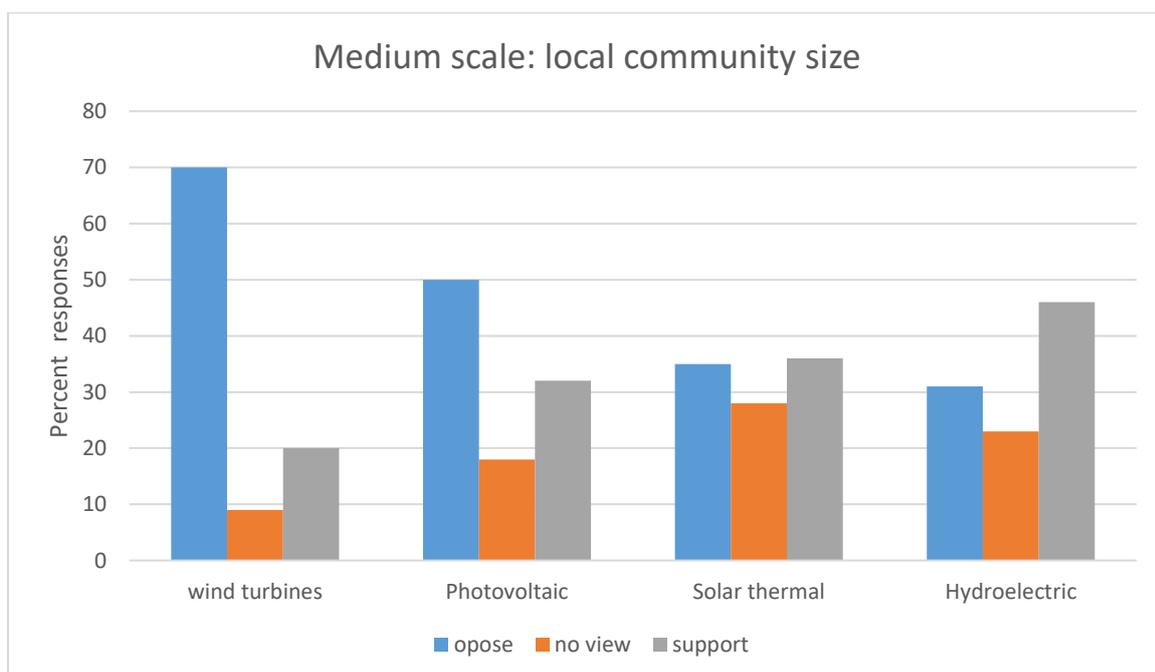
Figure 5 shows the distribution of opinions for a) small scale, b) medium scale, and c) larger scale developments of renewable energy projects. In these figures scores of 1 and 2 (strongly oppose or oppose) have been grouped together, as have 4 and 5 (support or strongly support).

Figure 5: Views on renewable energy projects.

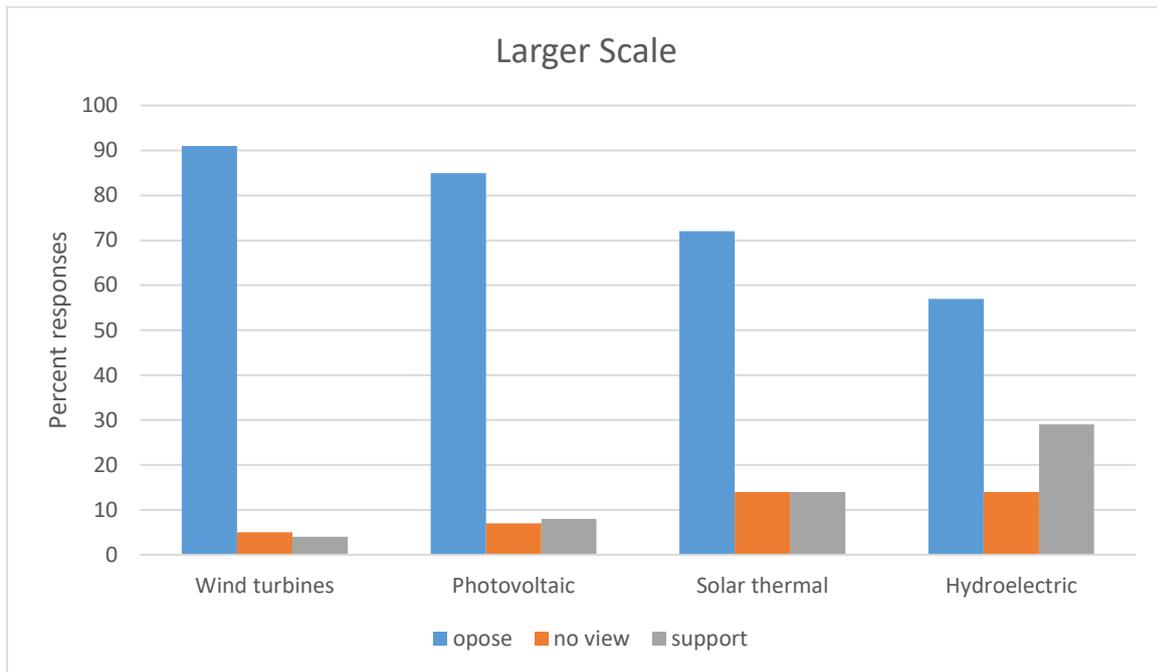
a) Small scale



b) Medium scale (local community size).



c) Larger scale.



The results show a very clear preference for small scale developments of each type of renewable energy, and a strong opposition to larger scale developments.

A majority of respondents was in favour of small scale photovoltaic (63%) or solar thermal (56%) installations, but wind turbines were not viewed positively at any size, with more than 60% of respondents opposing them regardless of size.

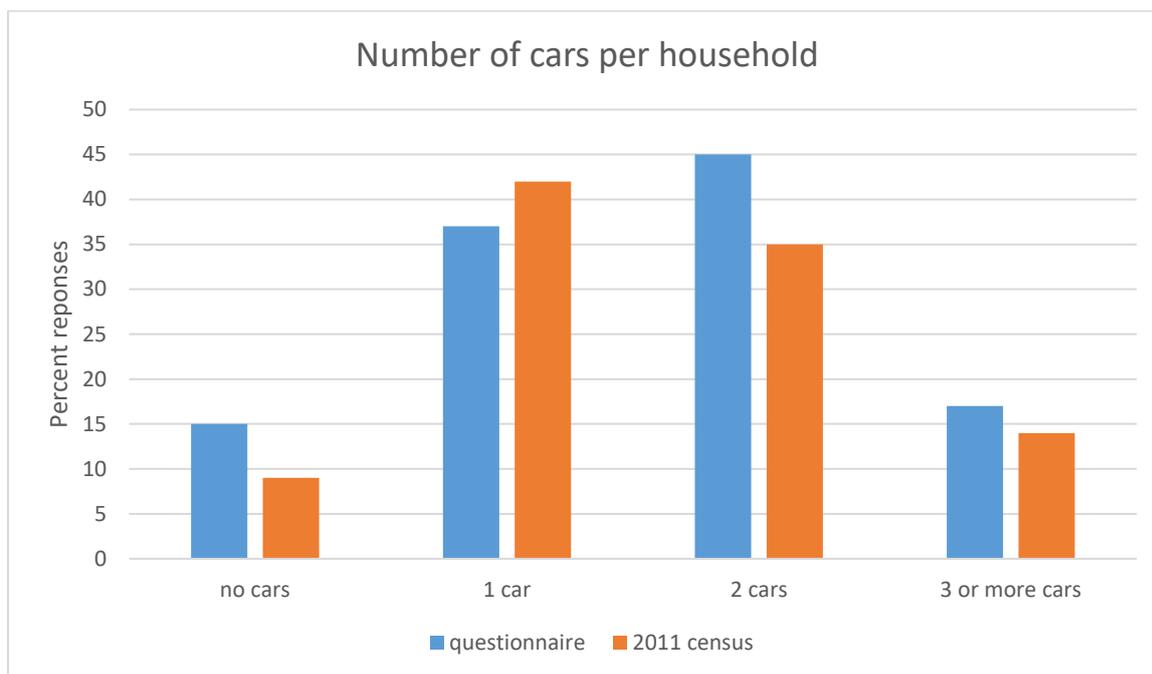
A number of alternative suggestions were made by respondents, including several suggestions of installation of community sized ground source heat pump systems as possible sources of low cost renewable heating within villages or settlements.

In response to question 26 about whether people were potentially interested in a community energy scheme as a way to buy electricity, gas, oil or other fuels at lower cost, or to manage and generate energy, 83% of respondents expressed a definite or possible interest. This option should therefore be further explored.

Section 5: Highways and transport.

Many respondents expressed concern about the speed and volume of traffic on the old A30 (especially through the hamlets), through the village of Bridestowe, and through the village of Sourton. Other concerns included the severe congestion in Bridestowe at drop-off and pick-up time from the school, and inappropriate parking particularly at these times. Dumping of rubbish – especially by the old A30 was another concern raised by a number of people.

By oversight there was no option on the form to report that the household had no access to a car, but of the 178 questionnaires returned 152 reported having 1 or more cars, and 8 respondents wrote on the questionnaire that they had no car. If we assume that all those who did not answer this question had no car or van then the proportion of people with 0, 1, 2, and 3 or more cars/vans is shown in figure 6, compared to the figures obtained in the 2011 census for Bridestowe parish.

Figure 6: number of cars or vans in each household

In 86% of households one or more people regularly travelled to Okehampton, in 72% to Tavistock, 67% to Exeter, and 33% to Plymouth. Other common destinations included Launceston, Hatherleigh and Holsworthy.

Buses

Of the people reporting travel to local towns only 23% reported that journeys to Okehampton were made by bus, 9% to Tavistock, 26% to Exeter and 7% to Plymouth.

A recurring theme in many responses was the inadequacy of the bus services – and in particular the lack of a usable bus service to Tavistock. A further concern raised by many people was the distance of the bus stops on the old A30 from the village in Bridestowe and the great difficulty faced by the elderly, those with limited mobility, or those with young children of getting up Pool Hill to the bus stops.

Only 8% of respondents reported that they used the ring and ride service – mainly for travel to Tavistock or Okehampton, and 15% reported that a locally organised community car service would be of interest to someone in the household.

Railways.

West Devon Council has announced its intention to re-open the railway between Plymouth and Tavistock, and “Our Plan” – the strategic Plan for West Devon from 2015 to 2031, has confirmed the intention to open a commuter line with daily services between Okehampton and Exeter. This leaves a relatively small gap in the rail line, between Meldon and Tavistock.

Question 35 asked for opinions on whether respondents supported or opposed the possibility of the railway being re-opened between Meldon and Tavistock. The question asked respondents to note their view on a 5 point scale (where 1 is strongly oppose this proposal and 5 is strongly support it, with 3 being no opinion either way).

Of the 162 respondents who answered this question, 104 (64%) were in favour or strongly in favour (score 4 or 5), and 32 (20%) were opposed or strongly opposed (score 1 or 2).

Whilst the potential advantages of better travel links to the rest of the country, and the possibility of not needing to take the car for long journeys were recognised and emphasised by many respondents, the possible disadvantages of disruption during construction, increased noise and adverse effects on the cycle track were also identified. The potential benefits of being able to travel easily to work in Exeter or Plymouth for local residents were to some extent balanced by the likelihood of increased numbers of people moving to the area, with increasing pressure on housing and house prices.

Overall however the overwhelming view was to support this proposed development, with many people making this conditional on retaining the cycle track in its present or a slightly revised position.

Section 6: Telecommunications.

92% of respondents reported having a computer in their household, though as noted above, most chose to complete the questionnaire in a paper version.

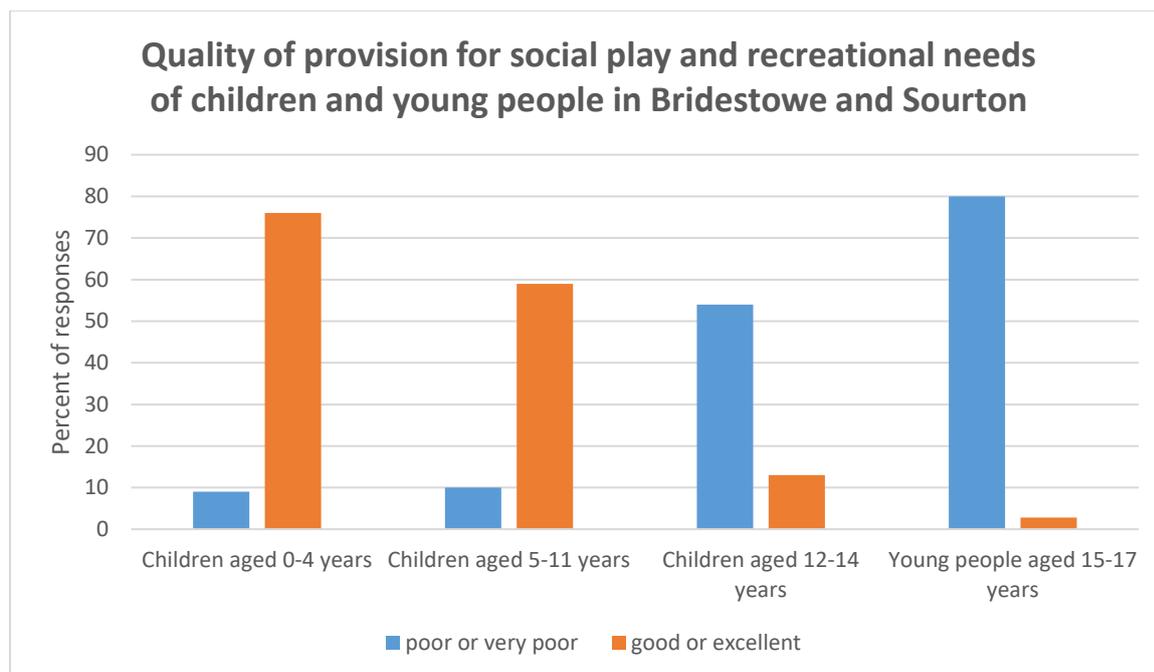
Mobile phone service was reported as good or fair by 45% and poor or variable by 55% of those 159 respondents who reported using mobile phones.

Of the 149 respondents who reported using broadband internet 57% found it to be good or fair, and 42% to be poor or variable. Many respondents reported extreme slowing of their internet connections during the early evenings and at weekends, whilst many drew attention to the wide discrepancy in service depending on how far they were from the main villages. For 77% of those using the internet a fast connection was reported as being important or very important. Over 97% of those with a broadband connection reported using it for email, 83% for shopping or banking, and 55% for working from home (either paid or voluntary).

Section 7: the needs of young people.

Question 41 asked about the social play and recreational needs of children and young people in Bridestowe and Sourton, with respondents asked to rank the quality on a 1-5 scale (where 1 = poor and 5 = excellent) for each age group. The results are given in figure 7. The number of people answering the sections of this question varied between 65 (for those aged 15-17) and 71 (for those aged between 5 and 11). The lower response rate presumably reflects the lack of knowledge of this subject by many people without children of these ages.

Figure 7. How well are the social play and recreational needs of children and young people met?



It is clear that, whilst the great majority of respondents felt the services for younger children were good or excellent there was considerable unhappiness about the services for older children.

Many respondents made suggestions about how to better serve the young people of the parishes, including establishing a skate park in the sporting green/ playground area, more activities focused on their needs and better public transport to allow teenagers to access Okehampton or Tavistock.

Many respondents drew attention to the hazards faced by teenagers playing or skateboarding in the villages because of the speed and high volumes of traffic, as well as the hazards to children from large traffic volumes at the beginning and end of the school day.

Questions 41 -54 were specifically aimed at children and young people, but disappointingly only 15 (6 boys and 9 girls) completed this section, and not all answered all questions. Reassuringly 76% said that they thought Bridestowe and Sourton were good places to grow up – and cited safety, peace, good links to the countryside, the parks and sporting facilities as things they particularly liked.

Poor internet connection, poor public transport (to meet with friends from other villages or Okehampton) and a lack of activities focussed on teenagers in the parishes, plus lack of access to a skate park were all given as things they did not like about living here.

Only 25% thought that they would stay in the parishes when they grew up, and 50% thought they would not, whilst 25% were not sure. The things they said they did not like about Bridestowe and Sourton as listed above were all cited as reasons they might not stay (presumably with their own future children in mind).

The very wide range of activities in which the children reported taking part included Guides, Scouts, Football, Rugby, Martial Arts, Tennis, Drama, Dance, Art, Cricket, Swimming and Church.

Interestingly none of the young people who completed the questionnaire reported using the local youth club.

Whilst some of the activities (e.g. Scouts, Guides, Cricket) were reported as being held in Bridestowe and Sourton, the children reported that they would prefer if more could be held or organised here, including Martial Arts, Tennis and swimming.

The list of possible additional activities listed in the questionnaire and the proportion of children/young people who said they would like to see them are given below:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage who wanted this</u>
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Film shows in the village hall	80%
Summer holiday activities	40%
Organised sports facilities	50%
Better facilities for performing arts	60%

A number of suggestions were made for other possible activities, and ways we might improve the parishes for our younger residents - clearly these were not all written by young people but illustrate some very important insights into how we might improve life for our young people:

“A place that feels like the centre of the community running film nights of UP TO DATE or POPULAR films - kids won't go otherwise! A place for young people to get together and 'hang out' - the old pub in South Zeal is a good example, as they used to have a room upstairs full of sofas, pool table, DVD player etc., where the youngsters could go and meet each other. If possible, events that encourage young people from the surrounding villages, like Lydford and Lewtrenchard, to come to too as this will keep the social circle wider, and make the local kids feel less cut off from their friends and peers”.

“cafe for older teenager eg part of the pub or part of the Methodist buildings”

“The majority of residents, especially in Sourton, seem to be older people, which then means that young people don't want to stick around when they have the choice - so an unrelated social group, combined with transport links, few community activities to entice them, and brighter prospects and opportunities further afield draw young people away, leaving an ageing population which then makes the problem worse! Bridestowe and Sourton could be great commuter villages for working families, but currently I think families would choose a village like North Tawton instead which has more amenities for everyone. As a parish, we need to draw on and make the most of our assets, but also look at getting more events happening in the area to bring locals together, and also encourage more people to set up businesses to benefit the community in the villages (e.g. the accountants in Bridestowe don't really contribute to the feel and ease of access to shops, a cafe or similar might help that community feeling more!) If young people and families can see that they are not missing out on opportunities they see their peers having elsewhere by either bringing them to the villages, or making access and transport to the opportunities further afield easier, then they are more likely to stay. At the moment, young people (particularly teenagers) feel that their urban peers are better off than they are, so in order for this to change, actions have to happen - building houses alone won't fix that!”

Section 8: for older residents (over 60 years)

A total of 101 people completed this section, of whom 45 were aged over 70 years, and 9 aged over 80 years. As noted earlier the proportion of completed questionnaires received from older people was higher than would be anticipated from the 2011 census.

Of the 101 people aged over 60 years 84 were retired, 37 having moved here after they retired, and 47 having lived here before they retired.

Whilst 94% reported using their own or spouse's car to get around many raised the issue of the very poor public transport links and the adverse effect this has on older residents.

Various comments and suggestions from older residents are quoted below:

"Easier access to high speed broadband for all as more and more it will be essential if one is to remain connected to the outside world and to use Internet shopping, Banking, Entertainment etc. A closer rail link would help those who can't drive to travel, shop, visit families etc."

"interesting evening classes"

"more local bus service"

"Train services, reliable and fast broadband"

"better public transport"

"more clubs and activities in the village hall"

"I enjoy walking on the moor and do it most days. As I get older I would like to be able to get to as many places on the moor as possible and one way would be to have access for mobility scooters to more places. Not necessarily paved areas but smooth tracks and easily operated gates, e.g. high moor past Okehampton Camp and around Meldon and similar places. For residents that can no longer drive, facilities that enable them to stay here, e.g. affordable transport to shops, cafes, cinema, doctors/dentists/pharmacy in Okehampton and Tavistock, etc. Doctors that do house calls (remember them?) A book exchange to provide reading material System to make crossing A386 near Highwayman Inn safer - quite hazardous if hard of hearing or slow - e.g. a button to operate a warning light for oncoming traffic esp round the bend on north side".

"My concern about housing development is that Bridestowe becomes a commuter village for the large towns and is devoid of people during the working week. It is not a prosperous village and businesses should be encouraged to operate within and around it to help create local wealth and allow other, supporting businesses like the shop, and pub etc to expand and flourish."

[a small selection of the very many constructive and thoughtful comments made by older residents]

Section 9: For those running or considering starting a business.

A total of 36 respondents completed this section, including 31 who currently run a business here and 5 who are thinking of expanding relocating or starting a business here. These included 9 farm based businesses, 2 based in business premises and 28 who conduct at least part of their business from home. Most are quite small, with 12 employing 1-3 people, 3 employing 4-10 people, and 2 employing more than 10 people.

Factors adversely affecting local businesses include business rates (noted by 19%), lack of suitable premises (25%), lack of skilled labour (25%) and poor broadband connection (50%).

Factor that might support or facilitate local businesses included faster broadband (mentioned by 82%) better public transport (mentioned by 41%), and business accommodation units to lease (mentioned by 22%).

On a positive note, almost half of those completing this section (47%) stated that they would or might be able to offer work experience or apprenticeships to local young people in the future.

Section 10: Other comments questions or concerns about Bridestowe and Sourton that you wish to tell us about.

A large number of suggestions were received – a few are quoted below:

“Create jobs before new houses - this will make a living village rather than a dormitory. As businesses expand there is currently no option other than to relocate out of the area”

“The area will suffer as kids leave as lack of employment in the future. Need better transport and support of local business growth which supplies local needs”

“It is becoming a divided community with the extremes of very poor people with little chance of living their lives out in the Parish through a lack of good but affordable housing and an influx of people with considerable means who improve properties but put them beyond the reach of local people employed on local wages. The great mistake was to sell off the council houses that provided affordable accommodation for young people and a supply of children for the local schools”

“Parish councillors should have limited terms. They should be more transparent with ALL the meetings and schedule them when the public can attend after work hours. An example is planning subcommittee meetings should be scheduled when the public can attend for comments of opposition, support and discussion”

“Bridestowe is an ideal size at present - the infrastructure is not suitable for significant enlargement”

“more emphasis on the identity of the hamlets, and reduction of speed limits on old A30 through the hamlets”

“as a dog lover I would favour on the spot fines for the selfish minority who allow dogs to run loose on roads and foul streets cricket pitch etc. in the village centre”

“I feel both communities have a lot of good about them with a good community spirit and I am proud to be part of it. Long may it continue to be a special place to live”

“Don't want the village to become too big or to lose its character”

“do not want the wrong type of development that does not integrate or compliment the area”

“in a small village like Bridestowe it is important that we are all informed of any proposed developments - please keep us informed”

“New developments must be in keeping with the village - keep Bridestowe Beautiful !”

“I would hate to see this area turned into a big town”

“Bridestowe is the friendliest village I have ever lived in. Everyone is so helpful and anxious to involve newcomers in the various societies/games etc”

“the old post office in Sourton should be renovated”