

## Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation

This is an interim report with well over 200 responses received so far. The pop-up stand has been used to gather comments on different occasions at various locations in the village:

|         |                                    |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| 21 May  | Institute (Garden Club Plant Sale) |
| 18 June | Institute (Festival Day)           |
| 3 July  | Borley Green                       |
| 9 July  | Village centre                     |
| 16 July | Wrights Way                        |
| 23 July | The Heath                          |

We also plan to go to the Health Centre (late August/early September) and Woolpit School (late September).

### Main findings

Three issues have emerged as major areas of concern for residents: **Traffic, Housing, and Footpaths and cycleways**. 40% of comments received are concerned with Traffic; 18% with Housing, and 15% with Footpaths and cycleways.

#### Traffic

Within the Traffic category, **road safety, parking, and congestion in the village centre** are the main concerns. Almost half of the comments mention some aspect of road safety, although these can be further broken down: 32% of these comments show concern about vehicle speeds, and almost a quarter about the traffic on Heath Road. Heavy lorries, and the traffic on Green Road are concerns that attracted 14% of comments each.

Although only 21% of Traffic comments were about parking, and 18% about congestion in the village centre, in absolute terms these concerns garnered, respectively, 10% and 8% of *all* comments. There is a clearly perceived lack of parking in Woolpit, particularly in the village centre, but also at the school and health centre. At the same time, people feel that the centre is badly congested (no doubt in part due to all the parked cars), especially at certain times of day.

These issues should certainly form part of the focus of any eventual questionnaire.

#### Housing

Overall, Housing was an issue barely half as significant for residents as Traffic. Within this category there were again three main concerns: **affordable housing, retirement housing** and the perceived **threat or scale of housing development**. Unsurprisingly, given the result of last year's Housing Needs survey, affordable housing was by far the most pressing of these concerns (37% of Housing comments, nearly 7% of *all* comments received). Resistance to further housing developments in Woolpit was no surprise, but the pressure for housing suitable for older residents to downsize into was less expected (22% of Housing comments, 4% of *all* comments received).

Developers should be held to their commitments to build affordable housing – which now means homes rented from MSDC. The demand for retirement homes should be explored in any eventual questionnaire.

## Footpaths and cycleways

The demand for better **footpath** provision (including pavements) emerged quite strongly from this issue. If concerns about the lack of a footpath to Elmswell, the perceived poor state of maintenance of many footpaths and pavements, and the need for better – often wider – footpaths are taken together, it becomes an issue as significant as the concerns about parking.

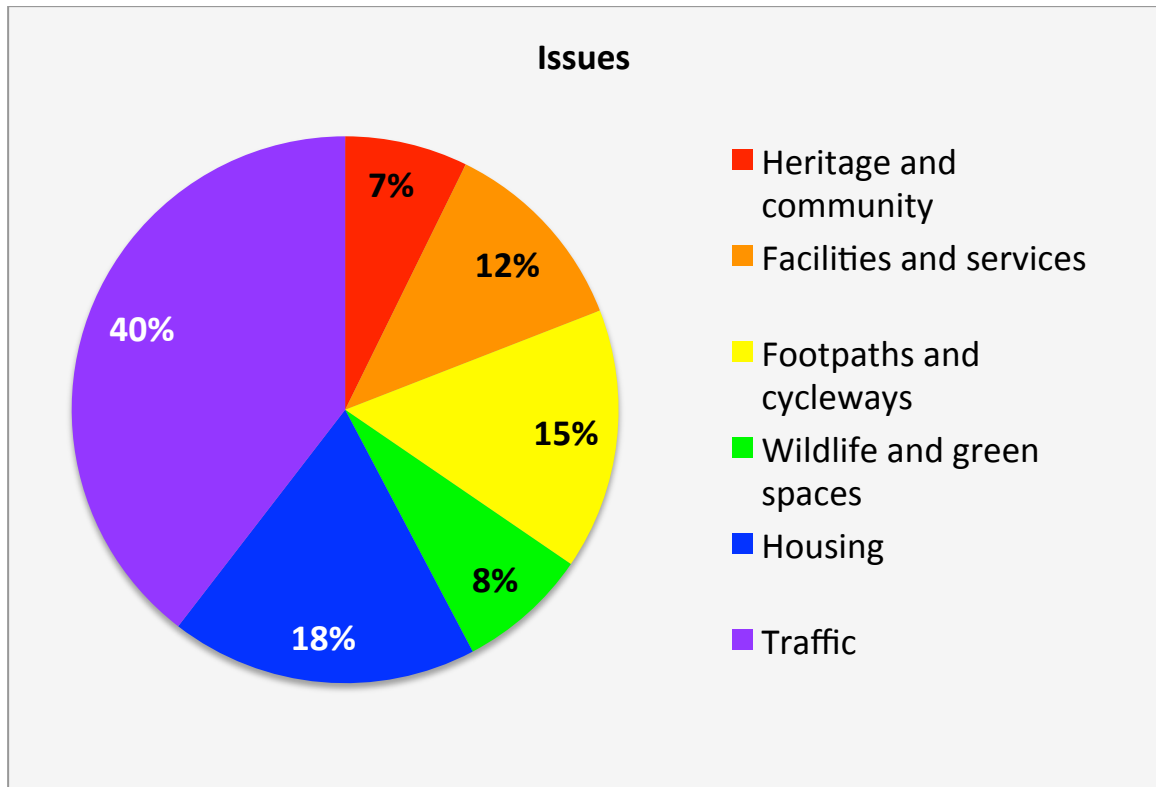
Concerns to do with **cycling** received just over a quarter of the comments in this category (5% of *all* comments). Given that National Cycle Route 51 passes right through the village and parish, and that sustainable transport/access is an important consideration in planning decisions about housing developments, we should be looking to achieve more to make Woolpit a cycle-friendly village.

Encouraging walking and cycling could make it easier to resolve some of the problems connected with motor traffic already mentioned above. Again options to reduce car dependency should be submitted as part of any eventual questionnaire.

## Other issues: Facilities and services, Wildlife and green spaces, Heritage and community

Taken together, these issues received just over a quarter of all comments. However, as these are spread over ten different concerns, not to mention uncategorised comments, it is hard to say that any one concern is of major significance. There are perhaps two exceptions: 5% of *all* comments received (two-thirds of those under the **Heritage and Community** heading) emphasize the importance of retaining the village character of Woolpit, particularly the historical centre. And under **Wildlife and green spaces**, many people thought there should be new or improved play spaces for children (two-fifths of all comments in this category). The 12% of *all* comments falling under the **Facilities and services** heading overall show that there is a general concern regarding the ability of Woolpit's social and economic infrastructure to sustain a large increase in the population of the village.

Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation

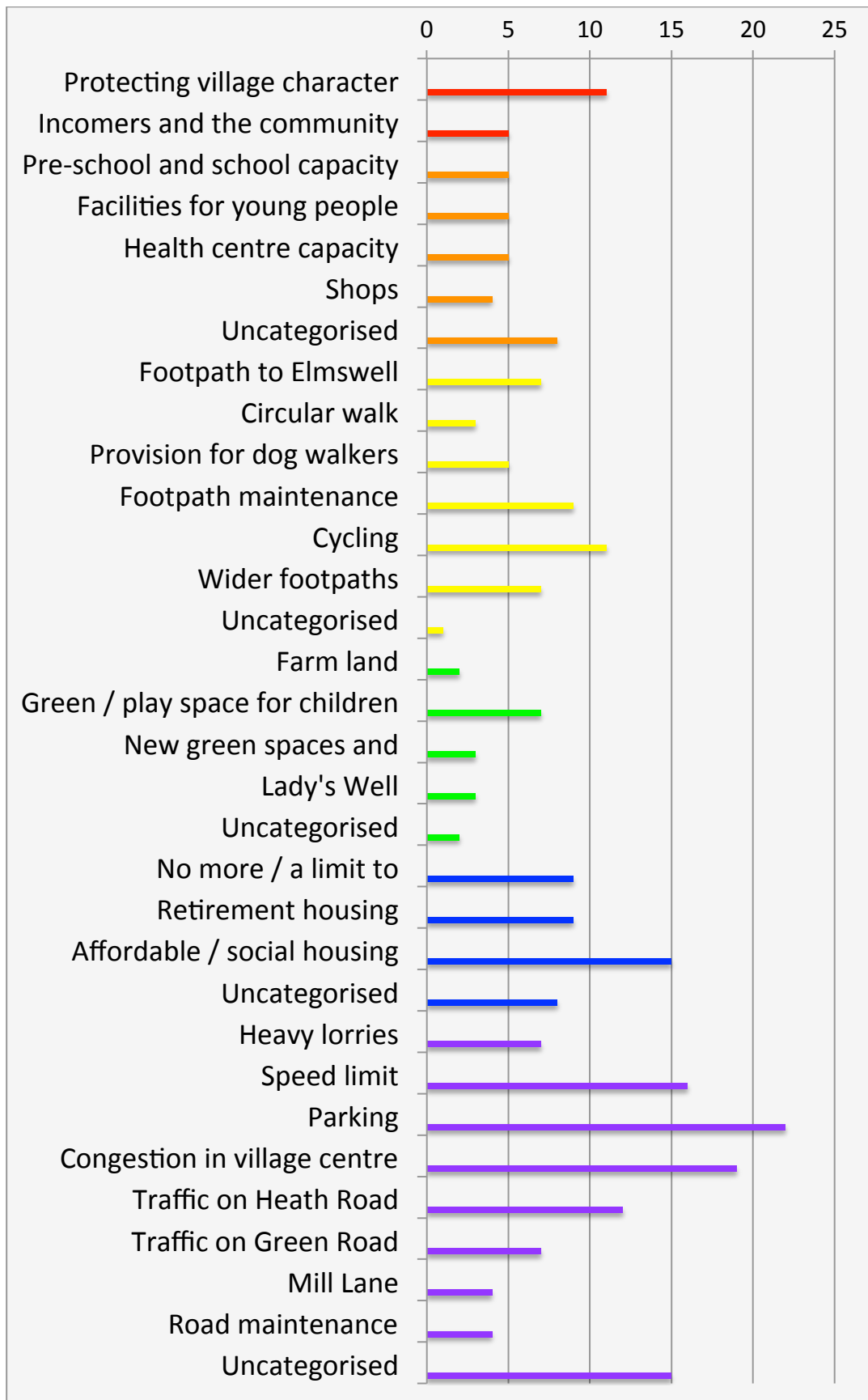


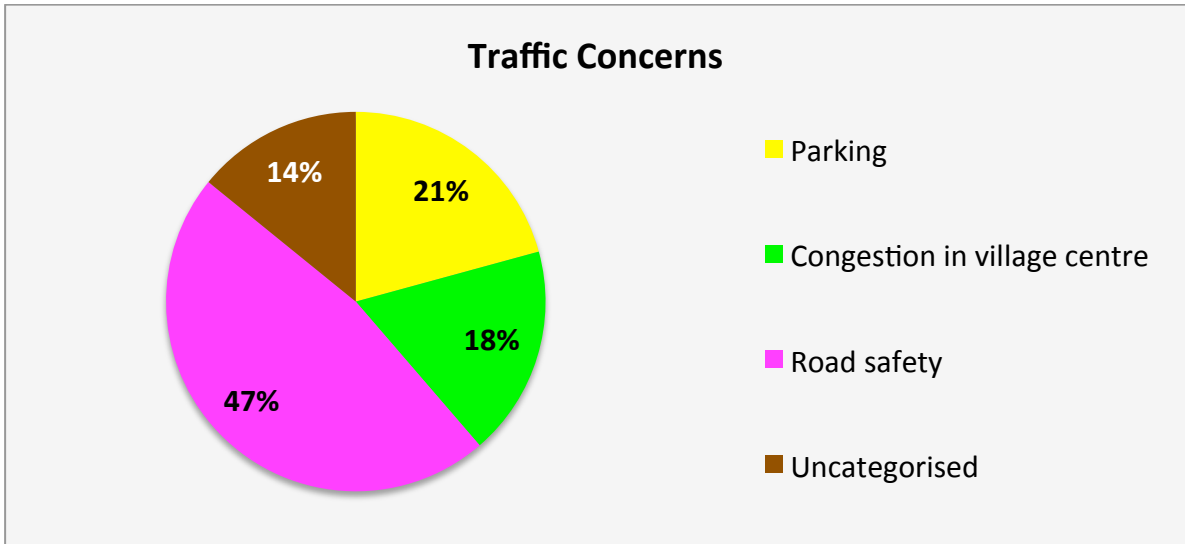
**Issues**

Total comments      220

| Heritage and Community | Facilities and Services | Footpaths and Cycleways | Wildlife and Green Spaces | Housing | Traffic |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| 16                     | 26                      | 34                      | 17                        | 40      | 87      |

Concerns



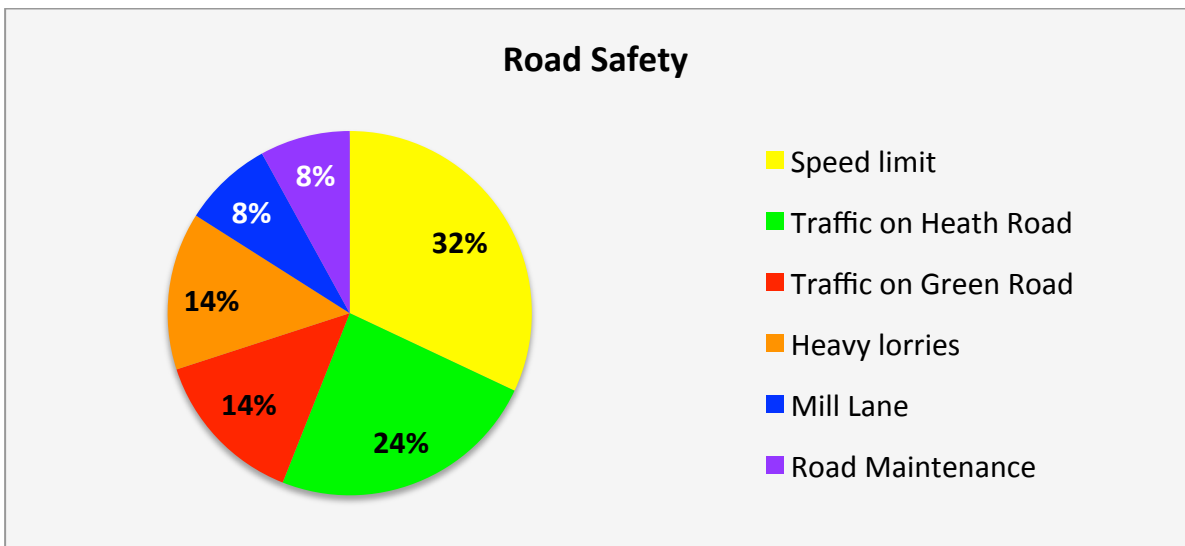


### Traffic

Total responses      87  
Total comments      106

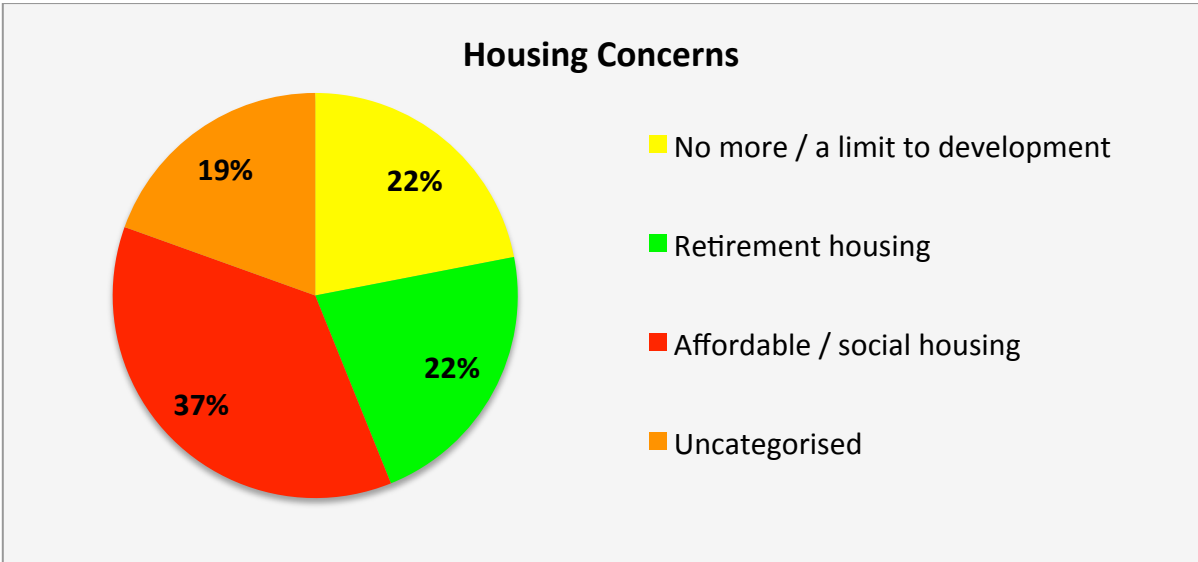
| Traffic Concerns |                              |             |               |
|------------------|------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Parking          | Congestion in village centre | Road safety | Uncategorised |
| 22               | 19                           | 50          | 15            |

*Road safety is further broken down as follows:*



| Road Safety |                       |                       |               |           |                  |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------|------------------|
| Speed limit | Traffic on Heath Road | Traffic on Green Road | Heavy lorries | Mill Lane | Road maintenance |
| 16          | 12                    | 7                     | 7             | 4         | 4                |

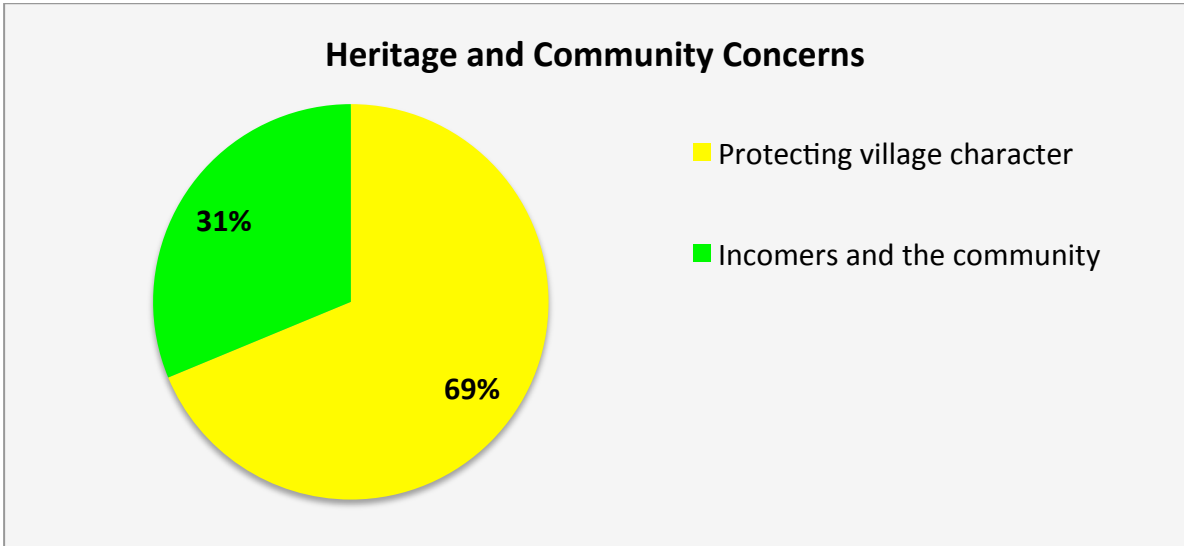
Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation



**Housing**

Total responses 40  
Total comments 41

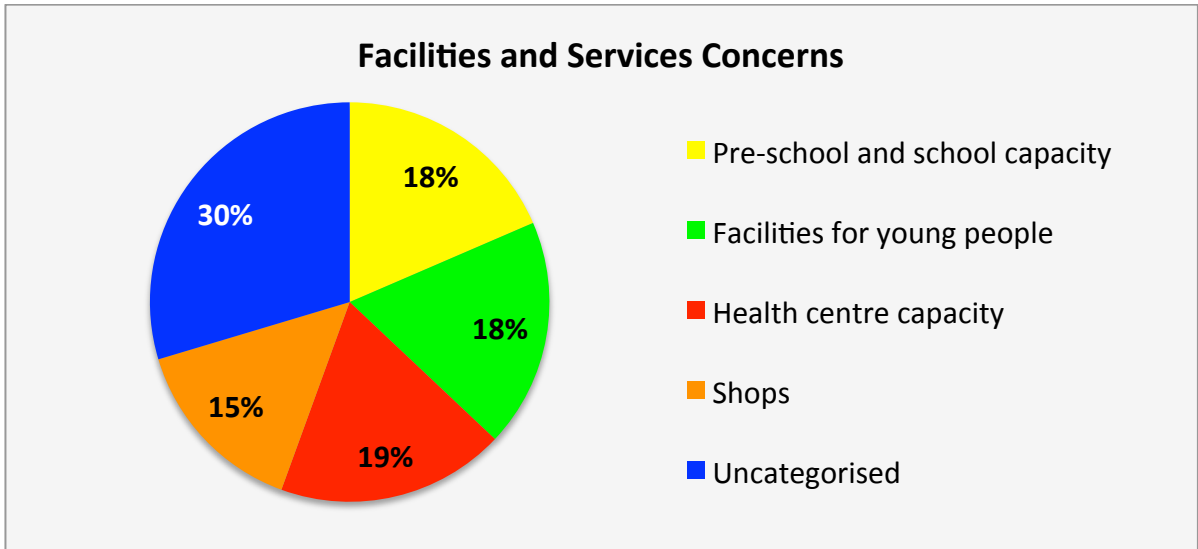
| Housing Concerns                 |                    |                             |               |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| No more / a limit to development | Retirement housing | Affordable / social housing | Uncategorised |
| 9                                | 9                  | 15                          | 8             |



**Heritage and Community**

Total responses 16  
Total comments 16

| Heritage and Community Concerns  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Protecting the village character | Incomers and the community |
| 11                               | 5                          |

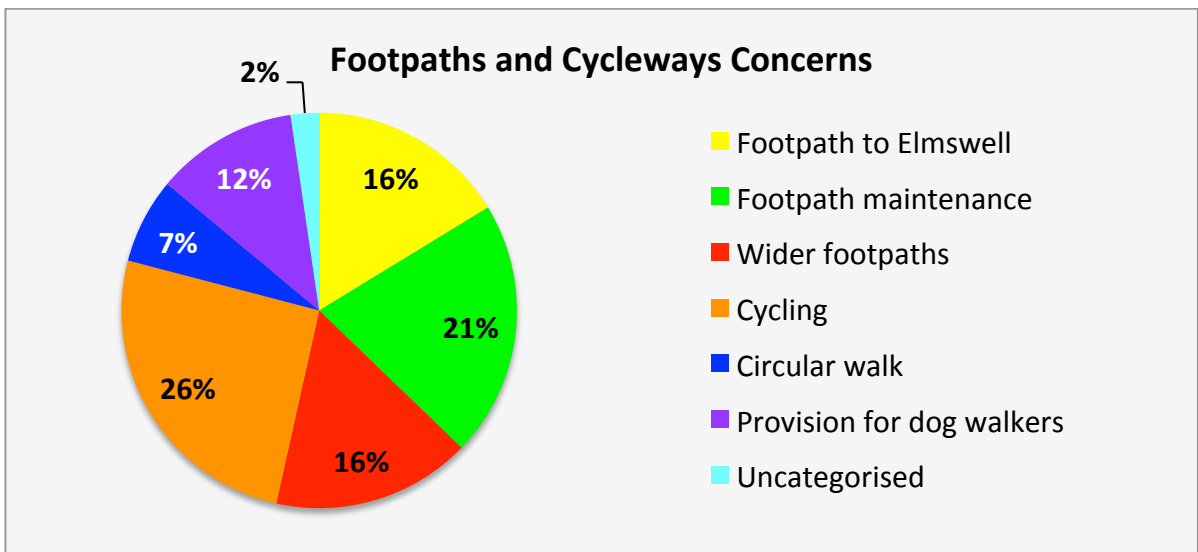


#### Facilities and Services

Total responses      26

Total comments      27

| Facilities and Services Concerns |                             |                        |       |               |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------|---------------|
| Pre-school and school capacity   | Facilities for young people | Health centre capacity | Shops | Uncategorised |
| 5                                | 5                           | 5                      | 4     | 8             |

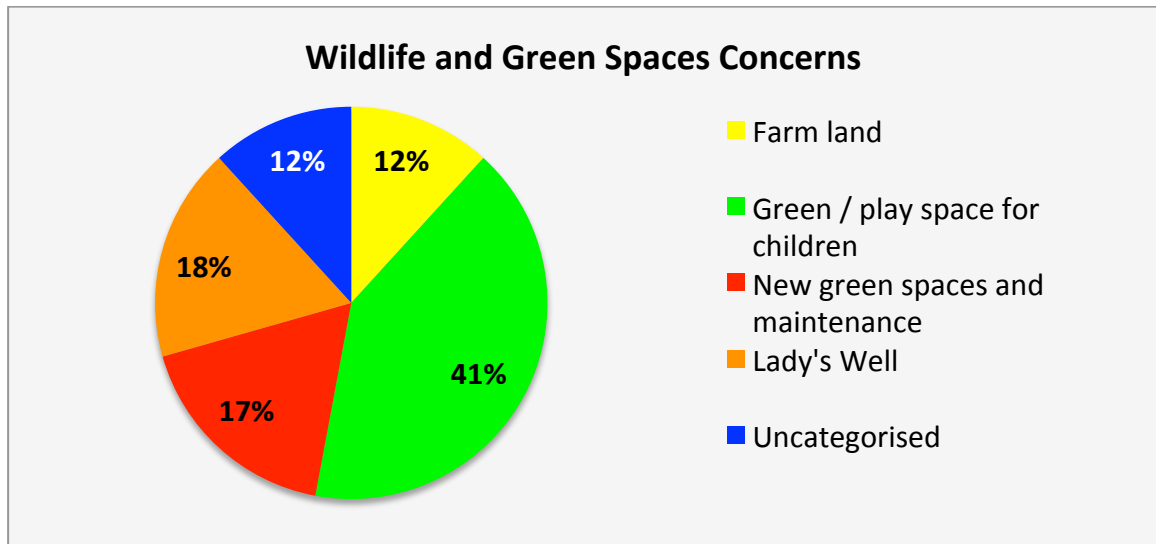


#### Footpaths and Cycleways

Total responses      34

Total comments      43

| Footpaths and Cycleways Concerns |                      |                 |         |               |                           |               |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Footpath to Elmswell             | Footpath maintenance | Wider footpaths | Cycling | Circular walk | Provision for dog walkers | Uncategorised |
| 7                                | 9                    | 7               | 11      | 3             | 5                         | 1             |



### Wildlife and Green Spaces

Total responses 17  
Total comments 17

| Wildlife and Green Spaces Concerns |                                 |                                  |             |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Farm land                          | Green / play space for children | New green spaces and maintenance | Lady's Well | Uncategorised |
| 2                                  | 7                               | 3                                | 3           | 2             |