

CORSHAM AREA COMMUNITY PLAN

2005-2015
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This Community Plan reflects the current concerns, priorities and issues identified by those who live in, work in and visit the Corsham area.

People just like you.



Corsham Area
Community Partnership

**IT'S OUR COMMUNITY
AND OUR FUTURE**

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It's Our Community and Our Future

The Corsham Area Community Plan: 2005-2015

Welcome to the first-ever Corsham Area Community Plan. It is a 'plan' in the sense that it provides the outline details (only) of what the residents of the Area, and those who work or attend places of education in the Area, want to see happen so that the quality of their lives goes on improving. The 'how' part comes later will be described in a subsequent document (the Strategic Action Plan).

The Community Plan is a statement of what the people say they want. It is not necessarily what the local authorities and other service-providers say they will do, or are already doing, for the Area. There will always be gaps. The purpose of the Community Plan is to identify these gaps and find ways of filling them. The secret of our success will lie in our ingenuity, persistence, tenacity – and sheer dogged determination.

The Team that has created this Plan comprises local people who have a driving desire to secure a good future for their families and the Area in general. They are volunteers. They have not given their time because it is 'part of their job'. Councillors and officers employed by service-providers have been integrated into the Team. Local businesses have been strongly represented and have given their support throughout. The resulting group has worked extremely well together.



The Team has drawn on the work that was undertaken by its predecessors when they began this whole process in the Corsham Area over five years ago. We have had the benefit of financial support to fuel our enthusiasm. They were driven simply by the desire to improve the lot of everyone. We are hugely indebted to those we regard as our Founding Fathers, and wish to place this firmly on the record.

In writing this document we have been at pains to ensure that we did not declare something to be an 'issue' when we lacked the supporting evidence to place it on that pedestal. This is critically important as far as the future effectiveness of the project is concerned. It is also important that we focus our efforts on what the community regards as the 'issues'. We have sought to avoid using this document simply as a platform by which the providers of existing services tell us all what they are doing on the community's behalf. There is ample opportunity for them to do this elsewhere. It would be wrong for this project to be used for that purpose. Wrong for us to allocate our time to it, and wrong for us to expect you to spend your time reading about it when what we actually want you to do is to come forward to help us achieve what you have told us really matters to you. After all, that is why we went to the trouble of conducting the recent Survey. It has given us an extremely valuable asset - a 'mandate' – and we intend to use it.



There is one aspect of the Survey which remains to be properly analysed, and it is an important one. We asked you what you most liked about the Corsham Area. A lot of people had some very positive points that they wished to make – in some cases, quite strongly. It is clear that we must pay full attention to these. We must take care not to “throw the baby out with the bathwater”. We live in a wonderful part of England.

We hope you find our Corsham Area Community Plan an interesting read. Such documents are not intended to remain unchanged forever. There will be opportunities over the coming years to develop it further, as times and circumstances change. However, it represents the “community ambition” as it exists in early 2005. We look forward to working with you all as we now enter the implementation phase.



Peter Tapscott
Corsham Area Community Partnership

Background Information

Community Planning is not new to the Corsham Area. Community Planning activities have been ongoing in the Corsham Area since at least 1999. It was at this time that the agencies and local organisations covering the Corsham community area first came together to work with local people and groups to carry out consultation on local issues and to produce a local action plan. During 2001 a Local Strategic Partnership was established. An initial public consultation phase had already been undertaken at that time. The Team that now brings you this present “Community Plan” owes a great deal to the efforts of those energetic and farsighted people who set out to engage with – and empower – “Joe Public” back in the late 1990s. All their work has been retained. The Consultation Summary that resulted forms an early entry in our filing system.

By mid-2001 an excellent start had been made. A Steering Group had been established. Terms of Reference had been agreed. Service providers, voluntary organisations, representatives from local industry and individual residents had banded together to advance a common cause. Meetings were taking place. A new community magazine (Hearsay) had been launched. Issue 2 followed a year later.



However, problems were beginning to emerge. The Corsham Community Planning project lacked funding. Progress was slow. Issue 3 of Hearsay had to be “pulled” – there was no money to pay for its design and printing. Interest, and commitment, began to wane.

Enter the Lifesaver – the “Market & Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi)”, a funding initiative undertaken by a regional partnership led by the South West of England Regional Development Agency. Grants of £25k were available to communities like ours to plan their futures, build their skills and implement their plans. We submitted our “Expression of Interest”. It ran to 20 pages and was dated February 2002. We held our breath. (We couldn’t afford to do anything else.) Things went quiet.

2002 and 2003 came and went. Demand for MCTi funding had evidently been immense. SWERDA was re-organising its method of administering the scheme. County Councils were given a major role. We were asked to produce a "Proposed Work Programme" to show how we would spend the £25k. Our draft was reviewed with Wiltshire County Council officers in February 2004. It was knocked into shape. We learned that we had been accepted into the scheme the following month. The Corsham Area Community Partnership – now MCTi funded - was officially launched on 28 April 2004.

To date we have drawn down half of the MCTi funding (£12.5k). North Wilts District Council and Wiltshire County Council have each added £1k to this "pot", under the umbrella of "match funding". We are currently applying for the second tranche of MCTi funding. Hopefully North Wilts District Council and Wiltshire County Council will be able to contribute further financial support from their 2005/2006 budgets.



The money has been spent to date on partnership building, team member training, renewed consultation (things change in five years), a major survey, public meetings, learning from other partnerships and general data gathering - all leading to the preparation and publication of a Community Plan for the Corsham Area. A Community Agent was employed to help with the administration and co-ordination of the Partnership and its Work Programme.

The Corsham Partnership has been supported by the Wiltshire Market Towns Partnership in data gathering, in preparing a socio-economic profile of the Corsham Community Area and in providing networking opportunities with other partnerships.

We have come a long way since 1999. Things have accelerated over the last year – entirely due to the MCTi scheme. The Corsham Area Community Partnership Steering Group is extremely grateful for the financial support it is receiving from all three sources. We have along way to go, but a momentum is now there.

Key Issues for the Corsham Area

A key element of the Corsham Area strategy for the assembly of this report has been the widest possible level of consultation throughout the area. In its final stage, during the first months of 2005, contributions were invited from more than 70% of the households in the area, either through direct mailing of a questionnaire, or access to this through the North Wilts District Council website and local libraries. In all, more than 1600 responses were received. Despite some skewing of the responses towards female respondents and the more elderly, we can consider that the results of the survey are largely representative of the views of people in the area. A copy of this survey questionnaire is included in the Appendices to this Plan.



The responses and comments returned from the consultation process will require long and careful analysis however a number of key issues have become apparent from the initial sorting of the returns. More than 50% of respondents rated four of the issues as “strongly agree”. These same four issues were highlighted by a more mathematical analysis albeit in slightly different order. Using the ‘priority points score’ method detailed in the initial survey report, the four issues, in order of importance were identified as follows.

- **Maintain shops/local post offices in rural areas.** This issue was clearly the most important issue identified across the whole Corsham Area. On the priority point basis it scored more than 80% of the possible priority points and more than 70% of respondents rated this as a “strongly agree” issue. Over 30% of respondents included this in their list of the top three priorities.
- **Maintain the high quality of local schools.** This issue scored about 70% of the available ‘priority points’ and was considered a “strongly agree” issue by 55% of the respondents, the third highest in this scale. Nearly 26% of respondents included this in their list of the top three priorities.
- **Increase Police presence on the streets.** The overall priority points score for this issue was about 68%. It was considered as a “strongly agree” issue by over 54% of the respondents, the fourth highest in the scale. More than 34% of respondents included this in their list of the top three priorities.
- **Re-open Corsham Railway Station.** This issue attracted the second highest proportion of “strongly agree” responses, at nearly 56%, but on the ‘priority point’ scoring it scored less highly, at 62%. More than 35% of respondents included this in their list of the top three priorities, the highest number of any issue.

A whole range of other issues also scored more than 50% of the total available priority points, including the increased provision of local waste re-cycling, speeding traffic, the need to increase facilities for short term parking in Corsham town and the provision of affordable housing. However, opinions are more divided over these as shown by the smaller numbers of people including these in their lists of the top three priorities, ranging from 15% to 18% of the total number of respondents.

The ‘snapshot’ picture of the Corsham Area included elsewhere in this report makes mention of the variations across the community area and it was considered that these may result in differing priorities. Respondents were invited to indicate which of the main population centres they lived closest to and from this the Top Three Identified Priorities for each of these centres was made. The identified priorities are shown in the grid below.

Top Three Identified Priorities By Locality

Priorities	Box	Colerne	Corsham	Lacock	Neston	Gastard	Rudloe
High Quality Local Schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase Police Presence	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Maintain Local Shops/Post Offices	✓	✓		✓			
Re-open Corsham Railway Station			✓		✓	✓	✓
Affordable Housing		✓					
Short Term Parking in Corsham					✓		

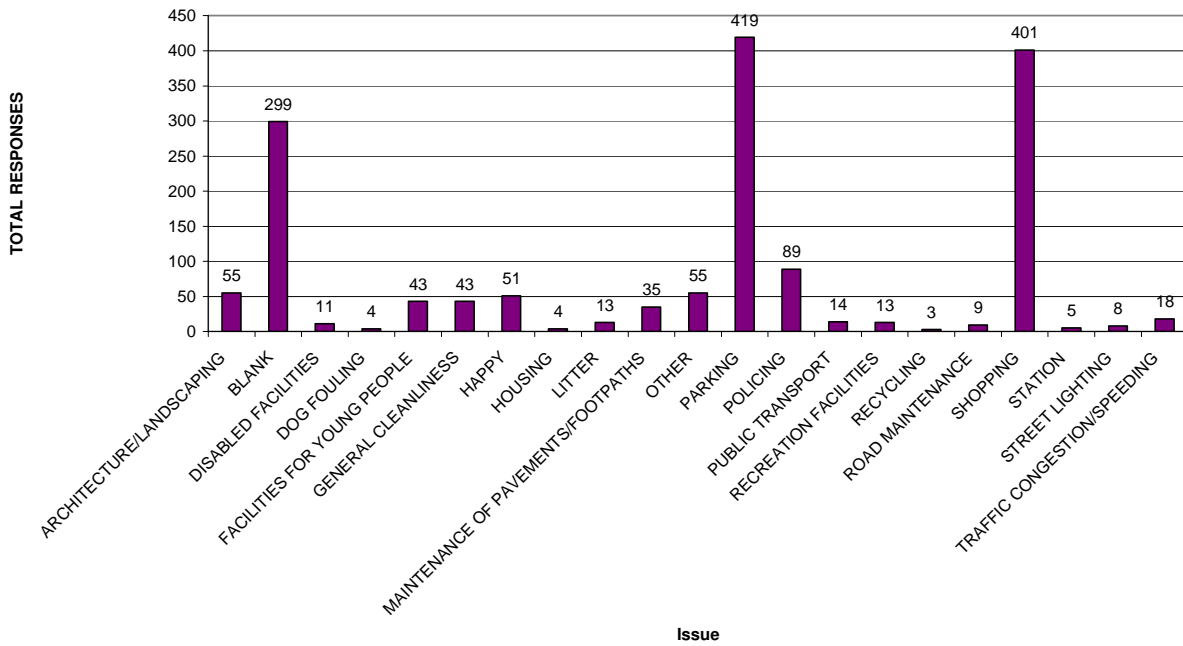
This analysis clearly shows some differences in priorities across the community area. Schools were noted in all seven of the identified areas, with the increase Police presence being prioritised in five of the areas. The issue of the re-opening of the railway station produced a split of opinion with clear geographical borders. Only Corsham Town and the most closely associated communities considered this of importance, although for Corsham and Neston this was clearly identified as the number one priority. For the more remote communities away from the town, local shops and post offices were the third area of priority.

Despite the variations noted directly above, the initial analysis of the responses to the Corsham Survey shows a strong consensus of opinion regarding the four key issues outlined.

Respondents were also invited to write ‘free text’ answers to three further questions. Overall, almost 90% of questionnaires were returned with free text responses. For initial analysis these have been sorted into 20 broad categories, ranging from comments about architecture and the landscape, through to views on traffic congestion and speeding. The full initial analysis of the survey results has been included in the Appendices of this Plan and this also gives details of the categories used in this analysis.

Under Question 3, “Thinking of Corsham town centre, what is the main thing that you would like to see improved?”, the comments received from across the area most commonly related to parking (26.3%) and shopping (25.1%). The third most commonly received comment was about policing (5.6%). The relative predominance of these comments is shown in the following chart. These three themes were consistently the most common from all areas covered by the survey.

TOTAL QUESTION 3



For Question 4, “Thinking of the area where you live, what is the main thing that you would like to see improved?”, responses showed a wider range of concerns although the most popular related to roads and transport. In order of category these were traffic congestion/speeding (15.8%), road maintenance (10.1%), parking (7.5%), maintenance of pavements and footpaths (7.0%) and public transport (6.4%). The main non-transport themes were recycling (6.2%), policing and litter (both 4.8%). In view of the importance attached to the re-opening of Corsham railway station in the formal survey, it was surprising that only 20 comments were received on this issue.

Breaking down the responses to this question according to where people lived, showed some variation of priority as shown in the following table, listing the topics on which a significant number of comments were made with reference to their ranking in each area.

Location	Traffic congestion/speeding	Road maintenance	Recycling	Footpath/pavement maintenance	Litter	Public transport	Parking
Box	1 st	2 nd	3 rd				
Colerne		2 nd	3 rd			1 st	
Corsham	1 st			3 rd			2 nd
Gastard	1 st		3 rd		2 nd		
Lacock	1 st	2 nd			3 rd		
Neston	2 nd		3 rd	1 st			
Rudloe	1 st	3 rd		2 nd			

In all but Colerne, traffic congestion and speeding issues were consistently commented on. Road and footpath maintenance were also popular themes. Corsham residents again highlighted issues about parking while public transport appears to be an issue in Colerne. Litter was commented on in some of the more tourist centred parts of the area. Recycling was also commented on widely across the area.

Comments received to Question 5, noting what residents thought was good about the area have proven to be more difficult to categorise for this summary ahead of the publication of the Plan. They, along with the detail in absorbing the contents of the comments received will take further effort in the coming months.

It's Our Community and Our Future

What is The Corsham Area Community Partnership?



The Corsham Area Community Partnership is a voluntary, independent organisation comprising a partnership of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors including representatives from the three levels of local government in the Corsham Area of North Wiltshire.

The Corsham Area Community Partnership is not just about the town of Corsham. The Corsham Area Community Partnership encompasses all 30 settlements in the Corsham Community Area and works in, with and for every one of them.

What is the Corsham Area Community Plan?

Community Planning is about finding out the concerns of our local community and publishing the results of what local people would like to see addressed in their communities.

The Community Plan publishes the results of what local people want to see and it sets out priorities for action to improve the quality of life in our community area.

The Community Plan will:

- Help to identify and bring together our priorities, needs, concerns and aspirations.
- Influence partner organisations and service providers to address local priorities and to promote projects.
- Provide valuable data which could attract external funding.
- Help community groups by showing what is being achieved and how partner organisations can support their work

Importantly, a Community Area Plan will be used to help to influence the responsible organisations to address the priorities in your area.

The Plan will directly impact policy making and strategic planning. It will also help community groups by showing what is being achieved and how partner organisations can support this.

We recognise that across the Corsham Community Area there are volunteers working on projects, giving up their time to make a difference in their community. Some of the projects highlighted in this plan will need to be taken forward by you, the members of the community.

Publication of the plan is not completion of the process. Work will need to continue around those specific topics that you judged to be of most importance, especially those that have not yet been highlighted for action by the responsible organisations.

This Area Plan therefore is specific to the Corsham Community Area and local needs.



How Was This Plan Prepared?

Through extensive consultation with as many organisations, businesses and individuals who wish to express a view, as well as a postal survey of local residents throughout the Community Area. The process by which these views are brought together is called the "community planning process".

In our case, it involved:

- A review of the results of previous community planning work
- Corsham Community Survey
- Community Consultation Days
- Local residents groups
- Wider partnership meetings
- Submissions from local service-providers and other organisations

The Corsham Area Community Partnership has undertaken to gain as wide a possible view of issues throughout the whole community area.

During the Autumn of 2004 the Corsham Area Community Partnership held a series of Community Days in Corsham, Box, Colerne, Rudloe, Neston and Lacock. This gave local people an opportunity to come along and identify the issues that were important to them by using post-it notes. There were over 600 comments made by this method about local issues, as well as valuable time spent in discussion at the various venues.

The results of the post-it notes were analysed and used to design the Questionnaire (see Appendix II), to which reference was made earlier.



Many people took the opportunity to write some 4,000 comments about specific issues. Only those which identify sources of discontent have yet been analysed. Those dealing with the aspects of our Area which the respondents positively appreciate remain to be analysed. Over 400 residents provided contact details so that they may be involved with future developments. We are greatly encouraged by this.



Our Aim

To help make the Corsham Community Area a vibrant, successful and pleasant place to live, work and visit, both now and in the future.

The Corsham Area – A Snapshot and Overall History

The Corsham area is situated at the western edge of the County of Wiltshire. It consists formally of four parishes containing the main settlements of Corsham Town and the villages of Box, Colerne, Gastard, Lacock and Neston in addition to more than twenty other identified small communities.

Many of the names of these communities bear testimony to the rural history of the area during the Saxon period, although there is ample evidence of earlier settlement from the late Iron Age period and throughout the Roman occupation. The name Corsham is most probably a corruption from the Saxon Cossa, probably a local tribal leader, and 'ham' a village (the 'r' being a corruption to the local speech). The area is identified in some detail within the Domesday Book records.



Recorded evidence through the medieval period shows that Lacock became a significant trading town sitting on the main trade route between Bath and London. By the 18th Century though, it had been overshadowed by the development of the nearby towns of Chippenham and Melksham. It became largely frozen in time, leading to its current status as a major tourist attraction and a valuable location for period film and television programmes.

Corsham likewise grew in importance, with trade routes both North-South and East-West, although there is much debate about the date at which it grew to the status of a market town. Historians and writers have placed this widely between the 13th and 18th Century.

Despite evidence of medieval stone masonry, the settlements of Neston and Gastard, including the area known as Corshamside were of little prominence prior to the early 19th century. Likewise, little is known of the development of Box and Colerne during this period, no doubt in part due to their remoteness from these trading routes. It is known, however, that the high ground of Colerne would have been good for rearing sheep and that there were a number of mills along the route of the By-Brook. Chapel Plaister established itself as a well known Pilgrim's rest, while the estates of Hazelbury, Ditteridge and Euridge became prominent.

This all changed in the 18th century due to the large and fast expansion of nearby Bath. The area's oolite limestone became its major asset and led to the opening of many quarries, a process that was further accelerated by the opening of the Great Western Railway and continued into the 20th century. Whilst no longer in operation, the labyrinth of tunnels linked to the Box mines was the largest stone mine in Europe and today is registered as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its importance for hibernating and mating bats. Together with the wool industry, this laid the foundations for much of the present development and prosperity of the area.

The call for 'Bath Stone' peaked during the mid 19th century, leaving a legacy of exhausted or uneconomic mines. A number of these were converted during the 20th century for military use, with offices, stores, workshops and communications all set up. Areas of the mines were also set

aside for the housing and continuation of the government and the Royal Family, continuing through the darkest days of the Cold War. This brought much needed skills and employment to the area and, despite continuing uncertainties about their future use, the military presence continues to give employment directly, or indirectly, to many people in the area.



The outstanding natural beauty of the area also adds to the overall popularity of the area. The Cotswolds Area of Natural Beauty spreads into much of the north and west of the area, while all of the main population centres are subject to planning restrictions as recognised conservation areas. The Box mines are now listed as one of four Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the area, seasonally supporting up to 10% of the total British population of the greater horseshoe bat. Other notable features of the landscape are over 150 hectares of ancient woodlands and semi-natural hay meadows, along with 19 ancient monuments or listed buildings. As part of this heritage, the area supports a large number of ancient footpaths and bridleways allowing a high degree of public access to these areas.

The area attracts a number of day visitors, partly due to the individual sites and partly to explore the wider area. Principal attractions are Corsham Court and the Village of Lacock, together with the Abbey and Fox Talbot Museum. Events such as Shakespeare Live at Hazelbury Manor also attract a wide audience. The portal of Box tunnel is also a visitor attraction particularly when steam hauled special trains are run. Tourist information is available from the Tourist Information Centre and through a number of other outlets. A good selection of pubs, cafes and restaurants, together with take-away food outlets are available for the visitor. 267 bed spaces ranging from hotels to guest houses and serviced farm accommodation are identified within the area, one of the lowest numbers in Wiltshire.

Economy, Tourism and Employment

A recent snapshot of the Corsham area, undertaken in 2004, identified only three major employers in the area. There are a number of local businesses, but the total numbers employed are relatively low. The area has only one major industrial area, together with a number of converted premises. The general reduction in commercial rents is testament to the ageing and condition of these premises. No specific information is available at the community area level regarding the building of new industrial units but local knowledge shows that there have been few new developments in recent years.

Agricultural workers represent 2.6% of the area workforce, somewhat higher than the England average and similar to that identified in other 'rural' areas. The numbers of people identified in the defence industries and public administration, at 15.5%, is almost three times the national average because of the concentration of Ministry of Defence sites, whilst the proportion of people employed in retail or wholesale jobs, motor repair, transport and storage is somewhat below the national average. The numbers of people classified as 'professional' is above both the Wiltshire and the national average. A study in 1998 also pointed out the high proportion of working, professional women in the area. With these statistics in mind, it is not surprising that many of the area's residents work outside of the local area.

Overall, employment in the Corsham Area is amongst the highest in Wiltshire with unemployment in August 2004 at around 2.7%, slightly below the county average and less than half the national average, whilst the growth in jobs between 1998 and 2002 has been more than 11%, more than double the country average and well above the Wiltshire average where growth has been slower than the country average. Long term unemployment is around 25% less than the national average but higher than the average for Wiltshire.

Of concern is the high level of unemployment amongst 16-24 year olds which is around 20% greater than the county and national averages.

Despite the relative ease of accessing the larger adjacent towns, the area retains a number of well used and appreciated retail outlets. In addition to the recently improved and enlarged Somerfield supermarket in Corsham and a Co-Op in Box, a wide range of general food and drinks can also be bought through village stores in Box, Colerne, Lacock and Neston as well as a number of more specialist retailers. The area is served by three Post Offices and three sub-Post Offices. Three of the major banks, together with one building society retain branches in the area and there are nine identified points for withdrawal of cash.

Under the theme of Economy, Tourism and Employment the following were the most important:

- The maintenance of shops and post offices in the rural areas was the highest priority raised by the Community, with over 94% of the survey respondents agreeing that this was important.
- The range of local shops (i.e. the type of goods/services offered) was the second highest priority, with over 75% agreeing that this was important.
- The range of local jobs was the third highest priority with 74% agreeing this was important.
- The promotion of the local market in Corsham was the fourth highest priority with over 69% agreeing this was important.

North Wiltshire District Council has allocated an area of land for employment use adjacent to the Leafield industrial area.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Economy, Tourism and Employment
Maintain shops/post offices in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Renaissance funding from the South West Regional Development Agency, with the support of North Wiltshire District Council, can be targeted at the development/retention of local shops and Post Office services in rural areas, as has been achieved recently in Urchfont. • A key action would be to establish if any of the existing Post Office facilities in the Corsham Community Area are under threat of closure.
Increase the range of local shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless the usage of local shops can be increased, perhaps by a combination of more local shopping and increased visitor spend, then it will be difficult to maintain the current range of shops. • Support for improved marketing of local shopping services is available under the Village Shops scheme, Rural Renaissance, Business Link and the Market & Coastal Towns Initiative. • A key action would be to establish the eligibility criteria for each of the major settlements in the Corsham Community Area.
Increase the range of local jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Wiltshire District Council currently sponsors an annual business start-up competition, supported by the Corsham Chamber of Commerce and Business Link. • North Wiltshire District Council also supports Business Start-ups through a grant for occupying vacant premises. • There are proposed commercial and MOD developments at Rudloe and Spring Quarry which have the potential to generate at least 400 jobs. • Rural Renaissance funding from the South West Regional Development Agency could be targeted at businesses with high growth potential in order to maximise local job creation opportunities, and the Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce is in the process of submitting a funding bid to run such a programme. • Increased visitor numbers could support an increased range of local jobs and this might be achieved by improved promotion of Tourism and also the 'Buy Local' food marketing campaign. North Wiltshire District Council is looking at ways of promoting tourism more effectively. • A key action would be to work in partnership with North Wilts District Council, Job Centre Plus and other interested parties to enhance the range and quality of local employment opportunities within the area.
Promote the market in Corsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the ending of Local Food Links support there is a gap in supporting Farmers' Markets (Lacock) and local markets (Corsham). • North Wiltshire District Council has indicated that it will continue to provide support to the farmers' markets after the end of Food Links. • A key action could be to investigate ways of promoting local food and food related business in partnership with interested parties such as the District Council.

Housing and the Built Environment

The provision of affordable housing was another priority raised by the Community, with 75% agreeing that this was important.

North Wiltshire District Council currently seeks to negotiate an element of affordable housing appropriate to local needs on all housing developments.

The popularity of the area for living is demonstrated by statistics on housing. Data gathered from the Census report 2001 shows that more than 72% of the households are owner occupied or being bought with a loan or mortgage facility, compared with the national average of around 66%. Indeed, this figure may well be depressed due to the relatively high numbers of military families renting from the MOD housing in the area. House prices in the Corsham Area are amongst the highest in Wiltshire and on average are more than 50% higher than the national average. The increase in house prices between the third quarters of 2002 and 2003 was recorded as 36.6%, more than half as much again as the national average and almost three times the overall average rise in Wiltshire.

Unsurprisingly with such data, the area overall scores low on the index of multiple deprivation (IMD) being in the least deprived 30% of the country and ranking sixth least deprived area in Wiltshire. However, such generalisations mask considerable variances. Amongst the 137 identified wards in Wiltshire, the IMD for Box is 131, showing it to have a very low incidence of social deprivation, Colerne also scores highly along with Neston and Gastard. The IMD for Pickwick is only 27, placing it in the top 20% most deprived wards in Wiltshire (although it is only slightly below half way on the index for the whole country).

The population of the area was estimated by the 2001 census to be around 18,500. Combined with the geographical size of the Community Area which is relatively small, this gives it one of the higher population densities in the County. The Census report also notes the number of households as 7,610, an increase of more than 500 in the 12 year period from 1991-2003. In approximately the same period, the population growth was recorded as just 39, the lowest growth of any of the community areas. It is noted that the proportion of older people is only slightly lower than the average for Wiltshire but, in line with statistics noted by the RDA for the whole of the South West region, significantly higher than the national level. The population of under 16's is near to Wiltshire and National averages.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Housing and the Built Environment
Increase the provision of affordable housing for local people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2000 there have been 29 new affordable homes completed within the Corsham area. There are also 106 affordable homes in the pipeline to be completed by 2008. • A new District Wide Housing Needs Survey is currently underway. This should be completed by July 2005 and should identify where there is affordable housing need, so that resources can be appropriately targeted. In addition, the Housing Team aims to complete a new local housing needs survey in each rural parish every five years and is currently discussing the possibility of carrying out such a survey in the parish of Lacock. • A key action would be to encourage North Wilts District Council to carry out local housing needs surveys in Lacock, Box and Colerne by 2010.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Housing and the Built Environment
Provision of sheltered housing in the centre of Lacock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Housing Needs Register currently indicates that there are no applicants waiting for sheltered housing in Lacock. However, this may be due to lack of provision. The completion of a local housing needs survey in the parish will help to identify the need for housing for older people in the area. • With the co-operation of the Parish Council, the Housing Team would like to complete a survey in Lacock by March 2006. Westlea Housing Association is reviewing the provision of affordable and sheltered housing.
Improve the condition and maintenance of alleyways and pavements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key action would be to encourage the town and parish councils to improve management of pavements and alleyways, beginning with the identification of who is responsible for each one. • All problems of this nature should be reported to Wiltshire County Council. Contact CLARENCE (Customer Lighting And Roads Enquiry Centre) on 0800 23 23 23 or e-mail clarence@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Culture, Recreation, Heritage and the Arts

The community area has a rich cultural heritage and there are a number of annual events which are popular with residents and visitors. There are numerous clubs and organisations across the area. The Pound Arts Centre in Corsham is a base for professional and community arts and offers workshops for all ages. The Springfield Leisure Centre serves the area.

The survey showed that respondents valued the history and architecture in the area but showed that facilities for young people were a priority.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Culture, Recreation, Heritage and the Arts
Lack of places for young people to meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corsham Area Community Partnership has a Youth Issues Group which brings together all the agencies including the police, youth service, parishes, local Councillors and residents. This group has also been instrumental in setting up the Corsham Skate Project who expect to provide a skate facility at Corsham Springfield in 2005. The group have also undertaken to carry out an audit of the provision for children and young people in the area. • The North Wiltshire District Council, in partnership with other agencies, are organising a Corsham Youth Festival in May 2005. It is anticipated that this will be a positive step and will reduce incidences of anti –social behaviour and heighten awareness for young people as to what can be achieved for their recreation and leisure. • A key action would be to support and encourage the Pound Arts Centre to extend their provision for young people. • A key action would be engaging with the young people to establish their needs and aspirations and find a way for their voice to be heard. • A key action would be to involve the local people and promote training for leadership.
Lack of facilities for young people, particularly in the villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tardis at Pockeridge and Potley Community Centre has developed an exciting programme of activities and are to pilot the Dreamscheme Project in partnership with Westlea Housing Association, as well as at Rudloe. • There are plans to improve the service provided by the Mansion House Youth Centre in Corsham, especially for outreach provision in the villages. • A key action would be to encourage the Youth Services to extend and accelerate this provision to the villages in the Corsham Area.

Environment, the Countryside and Land Based issues

The community area of Corsham offers a wealth of unspoilt countryside and outstanding natural beauty. Notable features of the landscape are ancient woodlands and semi-natural hay-meadows and the area supports a large number of footpaths and bridleways allowing a high degree of public access to these areas. The Cotswold Area of natural beauty spreads into much of the north and west of the area.

Respondents to the postal survey were asked in their own words to say what was the main thing that they valued most when thinking of the whole area. Altogether some 1,363 written comments were received.

A sample analysis showed that 86% of respondents said the thing they valued most was the countryside, its beauty, unspoilt nature and eases of access. A further 19% valued peace and quiet most.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Environment, the Countyside and Land Based Issues
Improve local recycling and composting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The North Wilts District Council is planning to extend the kerbside recycling service across the whole district. Composting schemes are being pursued by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust in partnership with Westlea Housing Association. The Composting Ambassadors scheme is actively working in the Corsham area. • A wood recycling scheme is being investigated. • A key action would be to monitor the success of kerbside recycling schemes and encourage their continued use. (There is anecdotal evidence that usage diminishes from initial peak).
Improve pavements and alleyways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key action would be to encourage the town and parish councils to improve management of pavements and alleyways, beginning with the identification of who is responsible for each one. • All problems of this nature should be reported to Wiltshire County Council. Contact CLARENCE (Customer Lighting And Roads Enquiry Centre) on 0800 23 23 23 or e-mail clarence@wiltshire.gov.uk.
Increase litter collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corsham Town Council employs a litter-buster who will now be working full time in Corsham and the surrounding areas. • Local young people have already taken part in "litter- picks" and this kind of activity can be promoted across the area to help raise awareness of the problem. • A key action would be to promote volunteer litter picking across the area.

Transport, Access and Traffic

Communication to and from the area is relatively good, with easy access to local towns - Bath, Chippenham, Melksham and Trowbridge, along the A4, A350, A365 and B3109, and further out to Bristol and Swindon via the motorway junctions at Bath and Chippenham. Regular rail services to London, Bristol and South Wales are served through the stations at Chippenham and Bath but no stations have existed in Corsham or Box for many years. Significant numbers of local residents drive to Chippenham and catch trains to London on a daily basis. The Community clearly demonstrated the railway station is a priority for the area with 56% strongly agreeing and 22% agreeing, that the railway station should be reopened.

The level of households with no cars is slightly under 16%, only a fraction less than the national average, with the average household having 1.4 vehicles. There are regular bus services along the A4 between Bath, Box, Corsham and Chippenham and less frequent services from Corsham and Gastard towards Melksham and other, more southerly towns. Lacock is served by a regular bus service between Melksham and Chippenham and links to Corsham, while Neston is served by smaller buses linking it to Corsham. National coach routes can be accessed along the A4 from Box to Pickwick for direct transfer to Swindon, Reading, Heathrow Airport and London. No direct service through to Bristol exists. Colerne, separated by the steep sided By-Brook valley is less easily accessed from the rest of the area. Main routes and the bus service go directly to Bath.

The relatively high population density causes traffic problems around the area, particularly on the issue of parking. This is exacerbated by older properties not having parking spaces and by businesses not being able to provide for staff or visitor parking. Problems are particularly severe around Corsham Town Centre, in Box and in various other localised sites such as around schools. Town, Parish and District Councils are already looking at this issue.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Transport, Access and Traffic
Re-open Corsham Railway Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiltshire County Council has actively pursued this but the proposals did not succeed because of the withdrawal by the SRA (at a late stage in the process) of Rail Partnership Funding, and of the Oxford – Bristol train service that would have called at the station. Given the current funding situation and national priorities of the rail industry the re-opening of the station will prove to be a considerable challenge. • A key action would be to work in partnership with Corsham Town Council and others to pursue the possibility of re-opening the station.
Reduce speeding traffic and traffic management in Corsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor traffic scheme for Station Road to protect property – Wiltshire County Council to review when Traffic Regulation Orders are considered. • Wiltshire County Council to consider request for a speed limit reduction on the B3109 Rudloe.
Increase short-term parking in Corsham and car parking space in Box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Wiltshire District Council and Wiltshire County Council are currently reviewing car parking strategy for the whole area. This includes decriminalisation of parking, and consideration of current off-street charges.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Transport, Access and Traffic
Cheaper bus fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main bus services in Corsham are provided on a commercial basis by the bus operators. Wiltshire County Council has no influence over the fares they charge. • In a recent meeting with the Wiltshire bus operators Wiltshire County Council raised the issue of high fares, and are aware from consultations that it is a major source of concern across the county as a whole. However, although recognising that high fares can be a deterrent to travel, the operators do not believe that with current increases in their operating costs there is any scope for them to offer lower fares on a general basis. • A key action would be to continue to urge bus operators to moderate future increases, and to look for opportunities to offer targeted discounts where this might provide a marketing opportunity to increase their revenue.
<p>Increase the number and frequency of bus services</p> <p>Provide a school bus service for North Colerne</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless the operators can be persuaded that there is a commercial case for increasing service levels, this would require financial support from Wiltshire County Council. The public transport support budget has been increased by 90% since 2000, but all of this has been required to meet rapidly rising operating costs (these reflect national trends and are not specific to Wiltshire). As costs appear likely to continue to increase, the priority will be to retain existing service levels rather than to increase them. • A key action would be to seek to identify specific access needs that are not met by the existing services. • A key action would be to urge Wiltshire County Council to see whether there are ways in which these can be catered for, either by bus or other (e.g. community) transport. There was until recently a bus to Colerne Primary School that was able to be provided by linking it to a run required for another school. Unfortunately when the Primary School changed their hours this was no longer possible, and no other operator has yet come forward to provide a bus at the new time. Corsham Area Community Partnership will work with Wiltshire County Council to ensure that all options are explored.
Provide safer parking near schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage more schools to get involved in developing travel plans, and "Walk Safe" schemes. To increase the amount of cycle proficiency training for children aged 10 and over.

Education and Lifelong Learning

Children's education is catered for locally for ages up to 11, with eight state primary schools covering all of the major population centres. Some of these are aided by the Church of England or by the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to this, there is one independent school within the area. Nursery education is also offered locally through a range of private or sponsored suppliers. The natural catchment area school for education 11-16 is The Corsham School which has developed a good national standing for results and has recently been enlarged to accept a larger school intake as a result of demographic growth, the problems of school provision in the growing area of Chippenham and by its increased popularity among local residents.

Two other special schools are identified within the area but many of the pupils are referred from outside of the Corsham Area. In addition to the school, post-16 education is offered by Wiltshire College, both from its office in Corsham and at Lackham College which caters mainly for agricultural training, countryside management and animal welfare. Wiltshire College also offers professional training and has an international reputation in air traffic control attracting students from around the world.



This graph shows weighted age distribution since the categories of ages are not even. The most interesting point to note from this analysis is the relatively low numbers of 16 – 30 year olds in the community area compared with the national average and, even against the Wiltshire figures, the lower proportion of 25-29 year olds. The higher than average unemployment rate amongst 16-24 years olds has already been commented upon.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Education and Lifelong Learning
Maintain the high quality of local schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community has demonstrated, in the survey results, that local schools are of importance and a key action would be to encourage each community to actively supports its local school. • Wiltshire County Council is currently improving school buildings by replacing mobiles with permanent buildings. Most schools in the area will be, or have been, improved. • The process of improving the quality of life in the Corsham area will help to attract and retain staff in our schools.
Provide sufficient child and after-school care for working parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local schools can be encouraged to participate in the Extended Schools Project which aims to maximise services on offer, which is being developed by Wiltshire County Council, in partnership with other agencies. The project is encouraging proposals from schools in rural areas and those working with child care providers. • Local partnership schemes are expanding access to IT and IT training. • A key action would be to encourage the expansion of access to IT and IT training through the Smartplace funding.

Health and Social Care

In common with the rest of Wiltshire the population of the Corsham Community Area enjoys very good health with a life expectancy above the national average. In the 2001 Census 72.9% of the respondents reported their health as good compared to 68.8% average for England.

The main causes of ill health are the same in North Wiltshire as they are in the rest of the country in that heart disease is the biggest killer. There is a slightly lower than expected incidence of lung cancer, a slightly higher than expected incidence of colorectal cancer and a much higher incidence of deaths from road traffic accidents

The popularity of the area for living is demonstrated by statistics on housing. Data gathered from the Census report 2001 shows that more than 72% of the households are owner occupied or being bought with a loan or mortgage facility, compared with the national average of around 66%. Indeed, this figure may well be depressed due to the relatively high numbers of military families renting from the MOD housing in the area. House prices in the Corsham Area are amongst the highest in Wiltshire and on average are more than 50% higher than the national average. The increase in house prices between the third quarters of 2002 and 2003 was recorded as 36.6%, more than half as much again as the national average and almost three times the overall average rise in Wiltshire.

Box Surgery has a branch in Colerne, but Lacock's branch surgery (WWPCT) closed in 2004. Modern legislation means that it is unlikely that any new satellite surgeries will be opening in any villages in the community area. Access to Chippenham Community Hospital and its range of clinics is fairly straightforward. District General Hospital Care services are provided at Royal United Hospital in Bath which, whilst it is close geographically, is difficult to access and has well publicised parking problems and is also constantly under pressure from increasing population. Population data and GP practice list sizes are regularly monitored. Both practices in the community area have plans for expansion in the short to medium term.

Kennet and North Wiltshire Primary Care Trust is the key agency charged with ensuring good health and social care services for the community area and meeting a range of national targets. However, the PCT knows that the determinants of good health lie outside of the NHS and is committed to working with all partners to deliver better health.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Health and Social Care
Housing developments and their effect on health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responsible authorities regularly review the resources invested (including staffing) in the community area. • A key action would be to make an assessment of the adequacy of health and social care provision to meet the needs of the rising population.
Improved provision of doctors, dentists and other Health Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New contracts for doctors, dentists and Community Pharmacists will be coming in during the next few years. These, along with national and local initiatives, should provide increased access to a wider range of services locally including NHS dentistry.
The community wants modern, effective health and social care available as locally as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennet and North Wilts PCT are engaging in a wide-ranging Service Review during 2005. The findings should be consulted upon during 2006. • It is highly likely that the policy of moving towards practice based commissioning will lead to some innovative services in areas with no community hospital, such as Corsham.

Crime and Community Safety

Crime statistics for Wiltshire have consistently shown that the County is a relatively safe place to live. The snapshot of data available for 2002-2003 shows that the Corsham Area is also amongst the safest areas within Wiltshire, expressed in number of reported incidents per 1000 head of population, domestic burglaries are only 20% of the national average, vehicle crime is only 25% and violent crime is well below half of the national average. The Police retain an active presence in the area through patrols and the local police station in Corsham is open Monday to Saturday during the day. Outside these hours, telephone calls to Corsham Police Station are automatically routed to Wiltshire Police Headquarters at Devizes.

Wiltshire Constabulary supports any initiative that helps to reduce and prevent crime.

Corsham Police are working in Partnership with the Town Council who has provided funding for two new Police Community Support Officers. The number of police officers patrolling outside of police stations is annually monitored by the Wiltshire Police Authority, and officers based at Corsham are exceeding the 60% target that has been set. The budget for 2005/6 does not allow for any increase in current police officer numbers at Corsham.

Police do not provide funding for CCTV schemes. Any bid for funding would need to be fully supported by local Councils if it is to be successful.

Community Priorities	What's In Store? Crime and Community Safety
Insufficient Police presence on the streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two new Police Community Support Officer posts funded in partnership with Corsham Town Council. • One of the main aims of this government led initiative is to address the visible presence issue. It is particularly aimed to target problems of anti-social behaviour and to reassure the public with a uniformed presence. • Active recruitment of Special Constables to enhance visible patrols and Police Station Volunteers to release police officers from ongoing administrative tasks. • The Wiltshire Police Authority have acquired the former Barclay's Bank building in Corsham High Street and hope to relocate officers there in 2005/6 from the current police station in Priory Street to provide a more visible police presence and better accessibility. The project is currently at an early feasibility stage and planning consent has not yet been applied for. The Planning Authority (North Wilts District Council) will be urged to grant the application. It would be a key Partnership action to use its influence to persuade the Planning Authority (North Wilts District Council) to grant the application. Any Conservation Area/Listed Building aspects should be addressed with minimum delay.
Lack of CCTV cameras in problem areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A monitored well-managed CCTV system is a tool that has been used in some towns across Wiltshire. There is evidence to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support that crime is both reduced and prevented in areas covered by such schemes • Suggest that public reassurance levels are increased • Suggest that crime is displaced to areas not covered by the schemes. • A key Partnership action would be to seek funding for such CCTV systems to be established at whichever locations are deemed appropriate in the Corsham Area.

Summary of Key Actions

We reproduce here the “Key Actions” which appear in the “What’s in Store” column for each of the eight Community Themes reviewed immediately preceding this present section. There are 20 of them. They are abbreviated here – for reasons of space conservation, only. Please refer to the individual Themes for more details. We have also indicated – where we know/presume them – the parties involved as far as these “Key Actions” are concerned. Further project details and measureable targets will be developed within the Strategic Action Plan to guide implementation.

Twenty is a lot of “Key Actions” for any Partnership to pursue. We will need to evaluate where the Partnership’s efforts can best be applied so as to achieve maximum benefit for the Corsham Area Community. The following list is intended to focus our thinking. We will need to prioritise in order to address each issue effectively. This will be one of our first tasks.

No.	Theme	Key Action	Parties Involved (where known/supposed)
1	Economy, Tourism and Employment	Review threats to Post Offices	Royal Mail, existing operators
2	Economy, Tourism and Employment	Improve marketing of local shops	Funding from Rural Renaissance, Business Link, MCTi, Chambers of Commerce, Shop Owners/Managers
3	Economy, Tourism and Employment	Enhance range and quality of local employment opportunities	North Wilts District Council, Job Centre Plus
4	Economy, Tourism and Employment	Promote local food and food-related businesses	North Wilts District Council, food businesses
5	Housing and the Built Environment	Carry out local housing needs surveys in Lacock, Box and Colerne by 2010	North Wilts District Council
6	Culture, Recreation, Heritage and The Arts	Support/encourage Pound Arts Centre to extend provision of services for young people	North Wilts District Council, Pound Arts Centre
7	Culture, Recreation, Heritage and The Arts	Establish needs/aspirations of young people and give them voice	Wiltshire County Council Youth Service, parents, young people
8	Culture, Recreation, Heritage and The Arts	Train young people in leadership skills	Wiltshire County Council Youth Service, parents, young people
9	Culture, Recreation, Heritage and The Arts	Extend youth centre services to villages (not just present locations)	Wiltshire County Council Youth Service
10	Environment, the Countryside and Land-based issues	Increase effectiveness of present kerbside recycling schemes	North Wilts District Council, Westlea Housing Association, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Composting Ambassadors
11	Environment, the Countryside and Land-based issues	Improve pavements and alleyways	Wiltshire County Council, North Wilts District Council, Corsham Town Council, Parish Councils, Westlea Housing Association
12	Environment, the Countryside and Land-based issues	Promote volunteer litter-picking	Local voluntary organisations

No.	Theme	Key Action	Parties Involved (where known/supposed)
13	Transport, Access and Traffic	Re-open Corsham railway station	Corsham Station Campaign, Corsham Town Council, North Wilts District Council, Wiltshire County Council, Ministry of Defence, Strategic Rail Authority, Department of Transport, First Great Western, National Government, Political Parties, etc., etc.
14	Transport, Access and Traffic	Stabilise bus fares and carry more	Wiltshire County Council, North Wilts District Council, bus operators
15	Transport, Access and Traffic	Improve access by extending bus routes and times	Wiltshire County Council, North Wilts District Council, bus operators
16	Transport, Access and Traffic	Improve school bus facilities, e.g. Colerne	Wiltshire County Council, bus operators
17	Education and Lifelong Learning	Expand access to IT and IT training	Wiltshire County Council
18	Health and Social Care	Assess the adequacy of health and social care provision to meet the needs of the rising population.	Kennet and North Wiltshire Primary Care Trust, North Wilts District Council, Corsham Town Council, Parish Councils, Westlea Housing Association, Ministry of Defence, etc.
19	Crime and Community Safety	Secure Planning Consent for the old Barclays building to be used as the Corsham Police Station	North Wilts District Council, Wiltshire Constabulary, Developer
20	Crime and Community Safety	Seek funding for CCTV systems	Corsham Town Council, Parish Councils, North Wilts District Council, Wiltshire Constabulary

The Next Steps

This Community Plan for the Corsham Area represents a major step on the way to achieving what the majority of the people who live in the Area actually want – we now have a clear idea of what that is! Previously the Corsham Area Community Partnership had no Mandate. Now it has one – and it is one that stands up to scrutiny. The Survey will be a powerful tool in our hands.

It is time to think about how we proceed, both short-term and long-term. Here are some of the things we must do:

- Hold an early Wider Partnership Meeting to pull the community into the process and begin to establish some appropriate Action Teams to begin work on the prioritised actions. This is now planned for 30 June 2005.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that every household in the Area receives a short-form version of this Community Plan - so that people can see what to expect. This will also provide the opportunity for us to thank all those who have helped so far.
- Analyse the responses to the “What do you like best about the Corsham Area?” question incorporated into the survey questionnaire.
- Run a so-called “Healthcheck” (a detailed study of the area) on those aspects of the issues raised by the Survey which can readily be seen to be “key”. This will build on the research support already provided to the Corsham Area Community Partnership by Andrew Jack of the Wiltshire Market Towns Partnership.
- Begin work on a document to be known as the Partnership’s **“Strategic Action Plan for the Years 2005-2010”**. This will identify the priority actions to be undertaken by the Partnership over this period, and, per action, will provide details of key tasks, key partners, costs, timeframes, likely funding sources, etc. The document will also review the appropriateness, per action, of adopting the “Development Trust” structure, for example, as a means of progressing the work. A Development Trust has the ability and legal power to engage with the community, initiate and manage projects and programmes, raise funds, employ staff, employ consultants and own assets.
- Continue to establish solid links with partners.
- Continue to play an active and full role in the North Wiltshire Local Strategic Partnership – and use it to make progress on Corsham Area projects where cross-cooperation between service providers arising from the existence of the LSP is more likely to take place under its influence than was otherwise the case. The next meeting of the North Wiltshire Local Strategic Partnership takes place 27 June 2005 when its intention is to adopt the LSP’s “Community Strategy”.
- Continue to use the recognition which the Partnership has already gained for being representative of the Corsham Area Community’s views on how (all) things should develop. An early example of this is the Partnership’s participation in the “Pathways for Change” review recently launched as a joint exercise by the Primary Care Trusts of Kennet and North Wiltshire, on the one hand, and West Wiltshire, on the other. The first meeting took place on 19 May 2005. Four further meetings are planned.
- Establish excellent communication facilities to the Corsham Area Community – including the setting-up and maintenance of a website, by which to keep people informed on progress (both good and indifferent).

Acknowledgments

The project is supported by the regional Market and Coastal Towns Initiative.

The Corsham Area Community Partnership is grateful to all the partners and organisations that have contributed to the development of our local community area plan, these include:

- Box Highlands School
- Box Parish Council
- Bridge Centre, Chippenham
- Butfield Breach Estate Agents
- Colerne Parish Council
- Colerne Primary School
- Corsham Bookshop
- Corsham Chamber of Commerce
- Corsham Civic Society
- Corsham Community Centre
- Corsham Library
- Corsham Primary School
- Corsham Print Limited
- Corsham Town Council
- Flemish Weaver Corsham
- Ideas Pictures & Words Limited
- Kennet and North Wilts PCT
- Lacock Primary School
- Lacock Residents Association
- Mansion House Corsham
- Martingate Centre Limited
- Ministry of Defence
- Neston Primary School
- North Wiltshire District Council
- Open Blue Bus
- Pickwick Residents Association
- Royal Oak Corsham
- Rudloe Community Centre
- Somerfield, Corsham
- Westlea Housing Association
- Wiltshire College
- Wiltshire Constabulary
- Wiltshire County Council
- Wiltshire Gazette & Herald

Corsham Area Community Survey – February 2005

Results

1. INTRODUCTION

The Corsham Community Area Partnership commissioned a postal survey of local residents in order to establish priorities for improvement in the local area and to build these into a local area plan. A questionnaire was designed with help from the County Councils Market Research Section and this was posted to a sample of residents in late January 2005.

2. RETURNS

In total 5,643 questionnaires were sent out by post to a selection of households in the community area in the following ratios.

Parish	Population	Households	Ratio	Questionnaires
Box	3,437	1,531	1 in 1	1,531
Colerne	2,807	1,074	1 in 1	1,074
Corsham	10,771	5,056	1 in 2	2,578
Lacock	1,000	460	1 in 1	460
Total	18,015	8,121	1 in 1.44	5,643

The Parish of Biddestone nominally within the Community Area was not included in the survey by the Community Planning Partnership as this Parish is now considered part of the Chippenham Community Area.

A number of spare questionnaires were sent out to the local library and other contact points for the public to pick if they wanted to take part and had not been included in the initial posting. The number of returns from this method is not known.

Accepting the above, the return rate for the survey was 28% with 1,611 returns by the closing date. Late returns will probably boost this to over 30% which is around the average for similar community surveys to households taken from the electoral register. Surveys to named individuals usually elicit a response rate of 35%.

Return rate varied somewhat between the town and its villages. Return rate within Corsham was as high as 36% while village returns averaged only 21% suggesting that the villages perhaps feel less engaged.

3. SURVEY TOPICS

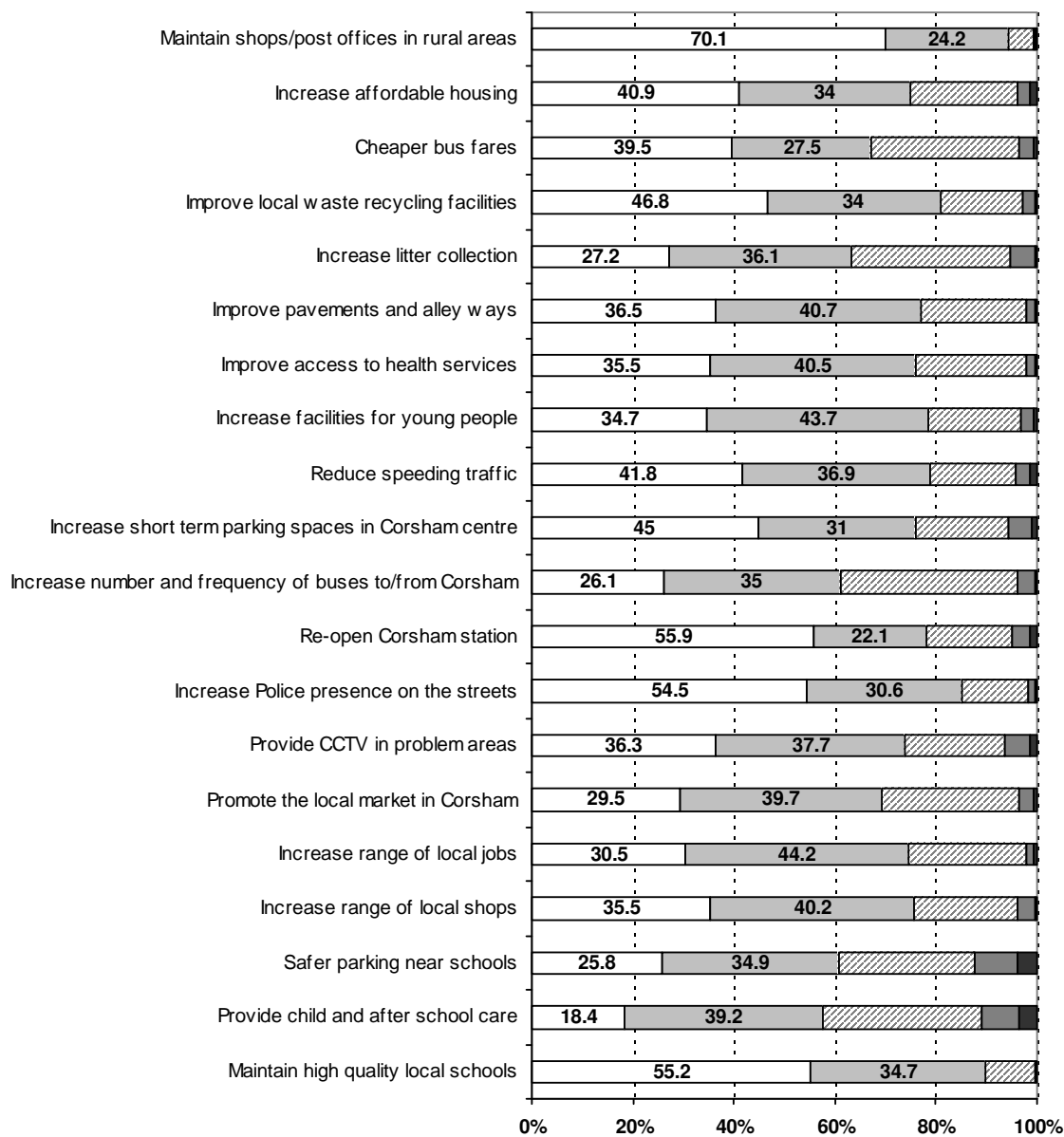
The survey covered a section on the issues that had been previously identified as being important to the area and ranged from the quality of local Schools to the maintenance of shops and or Post Offices in rural areas. Respondents could indicate how strongly they agreed that the issue was an important one as well as being allowed to choose the three most important issues to them personally.

Other sections were less prescriptive and gave space for people to indicate in their own words what they would like to see improved in Corsham town centre, what they would like to see improved in the area where they lived and finally the one thing that they valued most about the area.

Respondents were finally given an opportunity to leave their own contact details if they wanted to get more involved.

4. RESULTS – LOCAL PRIORITIES

The following issues have been identified as important to the local community



Agree strongly
 Agree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Disagree
 Disagree strongly

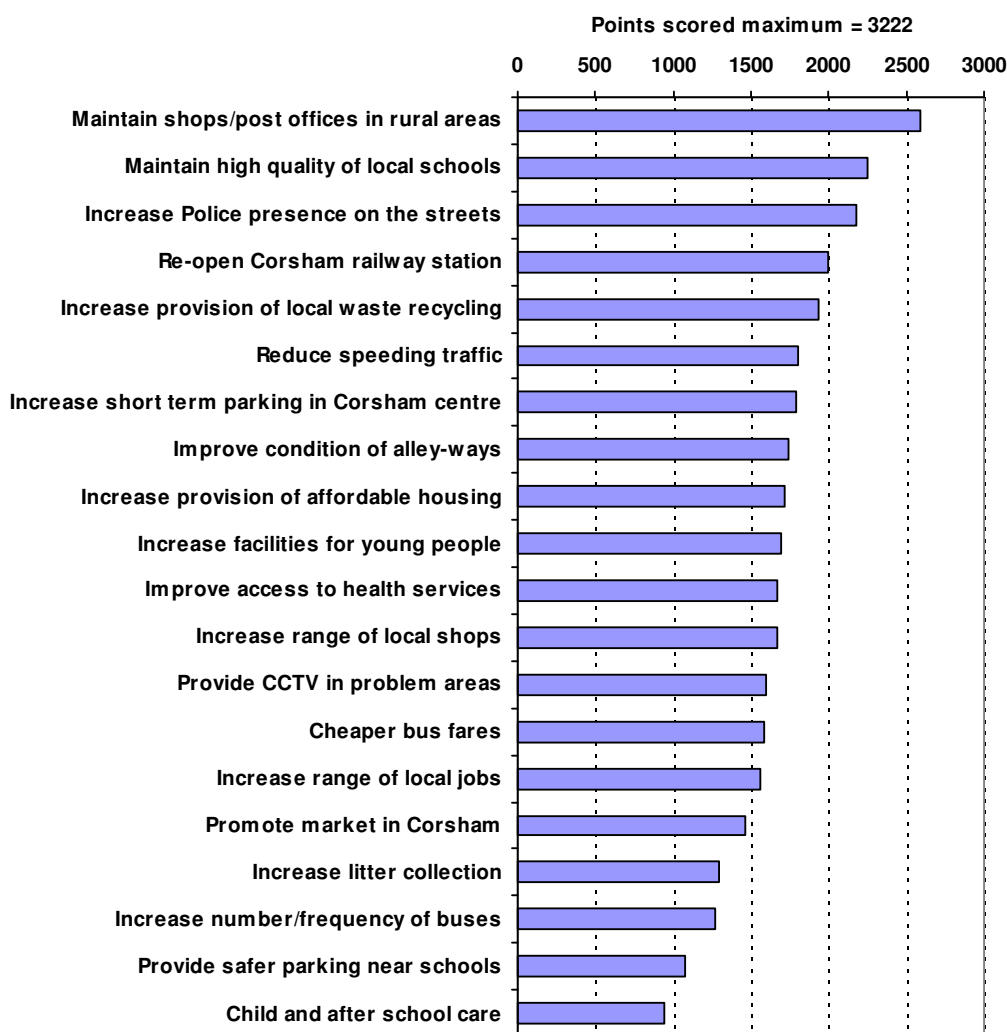
As can be seen there are no issues that respondents feel are not important. This is not surprising as the list was carefully put together from knowledge of what local people had through previous contact said was important in their area. In terms of depth of feeling, there are four areas that stand out as having a very high level of importance placed on them with over 50% of respondents saying they strongly agree. These are as follows:

Appendix 1

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Maintain the shops/post offices in rural areas | 70.1% strongly agree |
| 2. Re-open Corsham railway station | 55.9% strongly agree |
| 3. Maintain high quality local schools | 55.2% strongly agree |
| 4. Increase Police presence on the streets | 54.5% strongly agree |

In order to show the priorities more clearly we can apply a scoring regime to the answers given by respondents. Those saying strongly agree are, given +2 points, those saying agree +1 point, those saying neither agree nor disagree are given 0 points, those saying disagree -1 point and those saying strongly disagree -2 points. In this way an overall score can be given to each issue and their relative standing visa vie each other more clearly represented. The graph below shows the relative score of each issue using this technique. What is important here is the relative positions of each of the issues and not their actual points score.

Priority points score



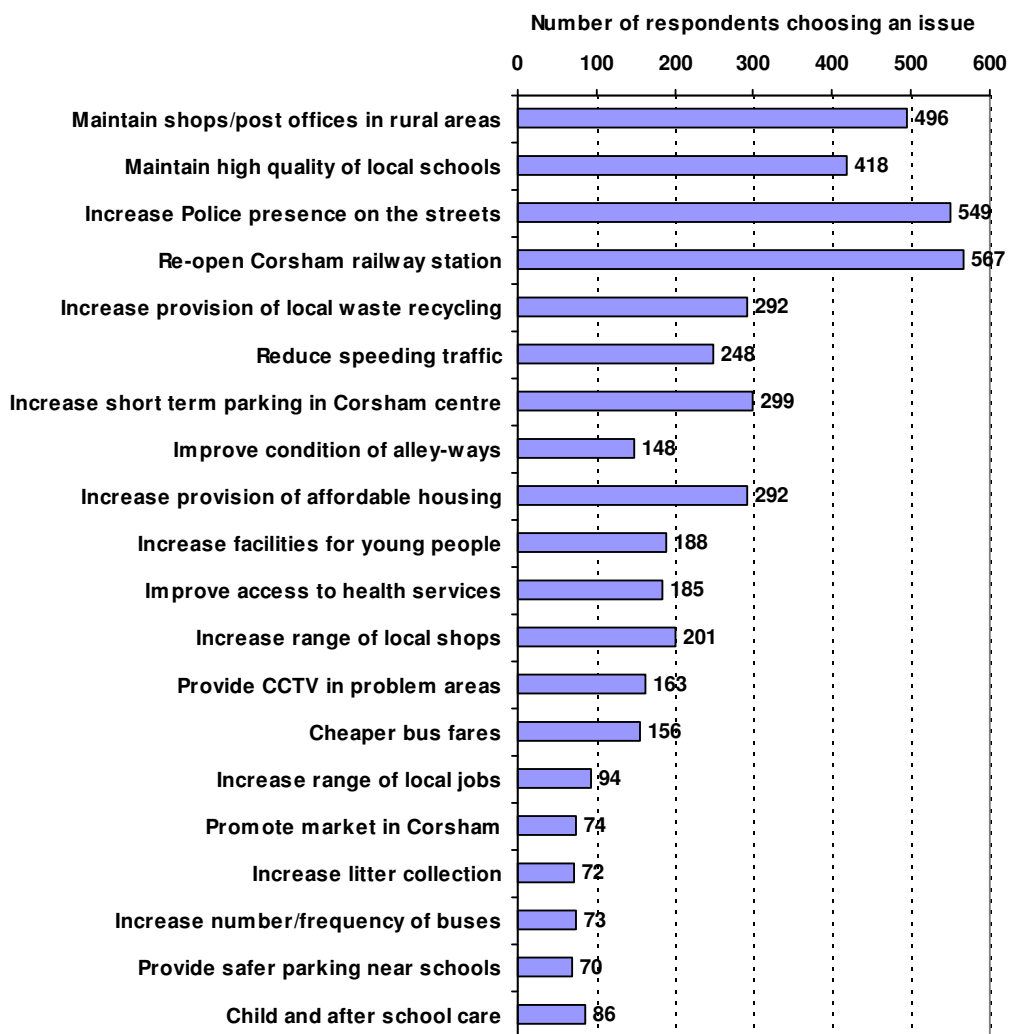
The above chart shows that taken together maintaining shops and Post Offices in rural areas appears to be over twice as important to people than say child and after school care.

Appendix 1

5. MOST IMPORTANT PRIORITY

Respondents were asked to identify the three most important issues to them from the long list of twenty issues provided. This was designed to concentrate respondent's minds on the three things most important to them rather than allow all twenty to be ticked as important. The pattern that emerges is somewhat different than that seen in the first question (when everything could be ticked as important) and shows that given a constraint what respondents really want to see as priorities for improvement are the following;

The three most important issues



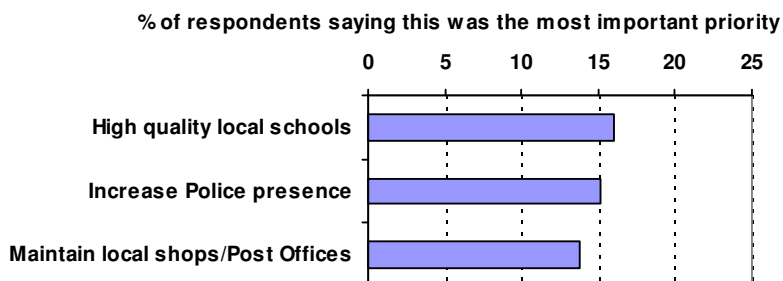
By keeping the same list, order of issues that arose from the previous analysis one can see that given a constraint respondents have a different view about what must be a priority for improvement. Now Corsham Railway Station becomes the most important issue followed by increased Police presence and thirdly maintaining shops/post offices in rural areas.

Appendix 1

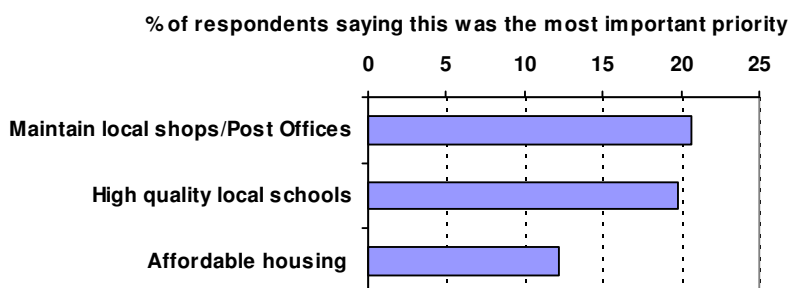
6. PRIORITIES WHERE YOU LIVE

Respondents were asked to indicate the nearest large settlement to where they lived. By using this factor, we can compare the most important issues from across the whole area with those emerging from each settlement and see if there are any mayor differences.

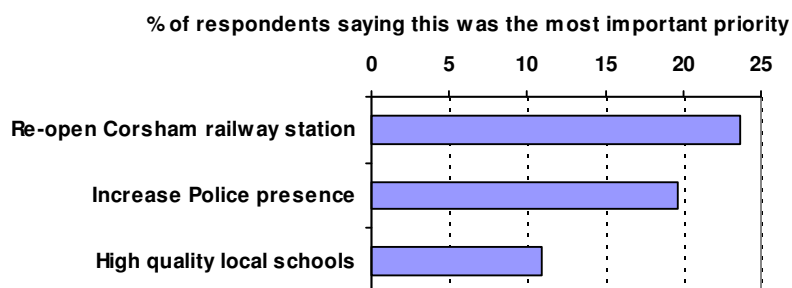
The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. BOX



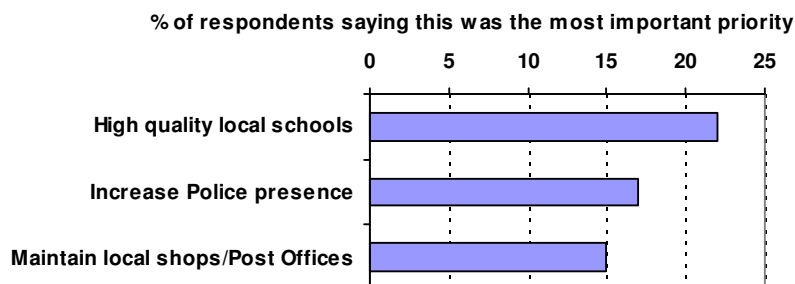
The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. COLERNE



The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. CORSHAM

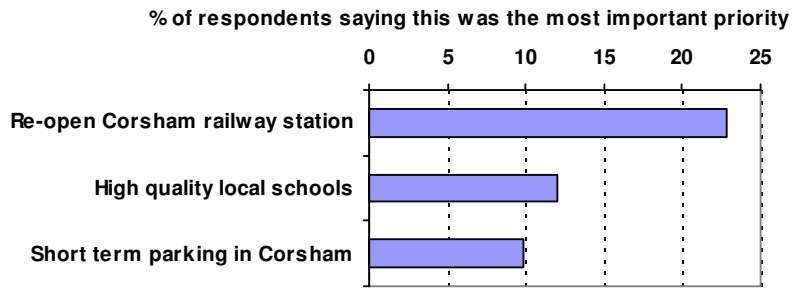


The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. LACOCK

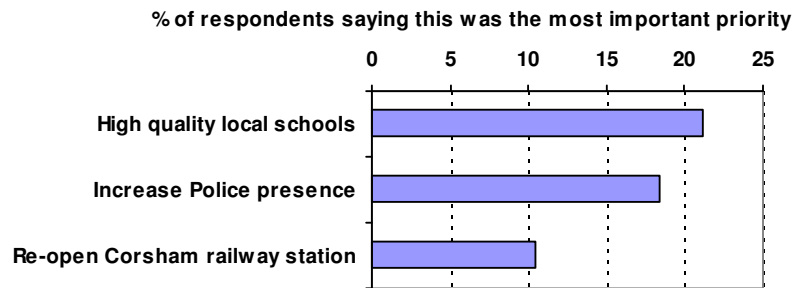


Appendix 1

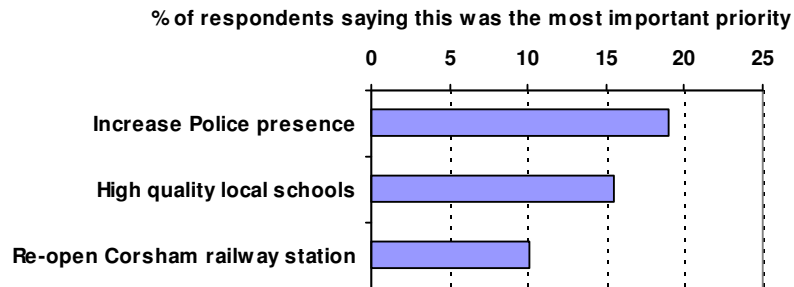
The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. NESTON



The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. GASTARD



The most important thing you would like to see as a priority in your local area. RUDLOE



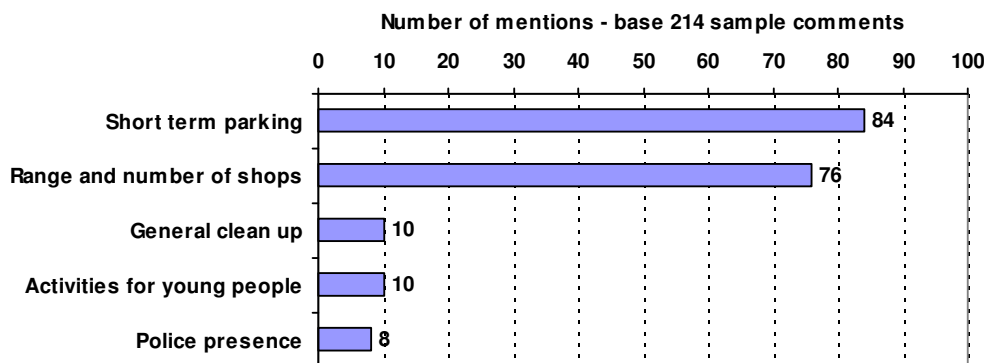
As can be seen, priorities change dependent where people live. Schools featured in all areas while Police presence featured in five out of the seven areas. The railway station featured in those areas closest to Corsham.

Appendix 1

7. CORSHAM TOWN CENTRE

Respondents were asked in their own words to say what was the main thing that they would like to see improved in Corsham Town centre. All together, some 1,358 written comments were received. Many of them refer to specific things that need improving and will provide a useful data bank of issues right across the town. In general, a sample analysis of the first 200 comments showed that there was a distinct pattern emerging with two topics dominating responses.

Most like to see improved in Corsham town centre - top five answers

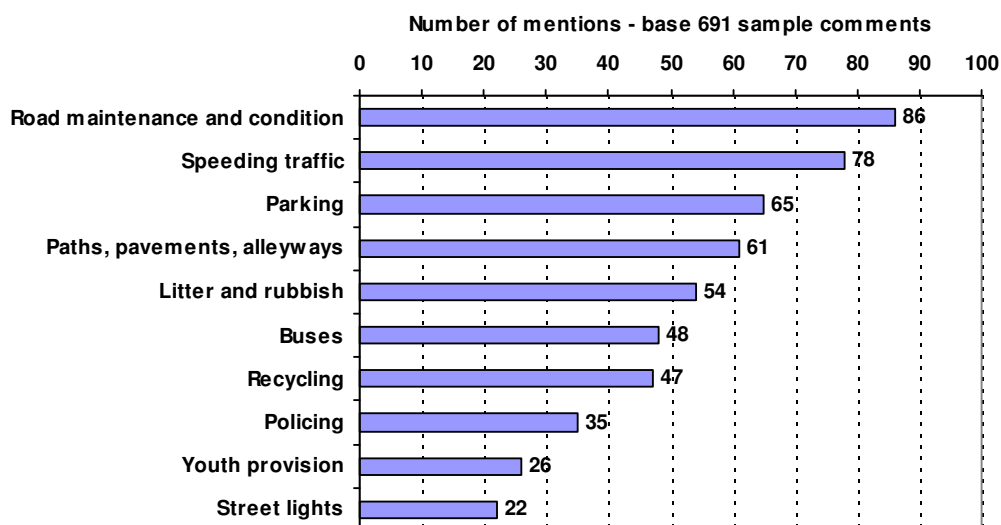


As can be seen, the main areas are short term parking problems and the number and range of shops. No other factor came even close to these two dominate topics.

8. THE AREA WHERE YOU LIVE

Respondents were, asked in their own words to say what was the main thing that they would like to see improved in the area where they live. All together, some 1,473 written comments were, received. A sample analysis of around half of them (691) has been undertaken to see if there is a pattern. The individual comments which often mention specific areas will need to be analysed carefully and this is not possible within the constraints of this report. The following broad areas were, identified from the sample comments.

Most like to see improved in the area where you live - top ten answers



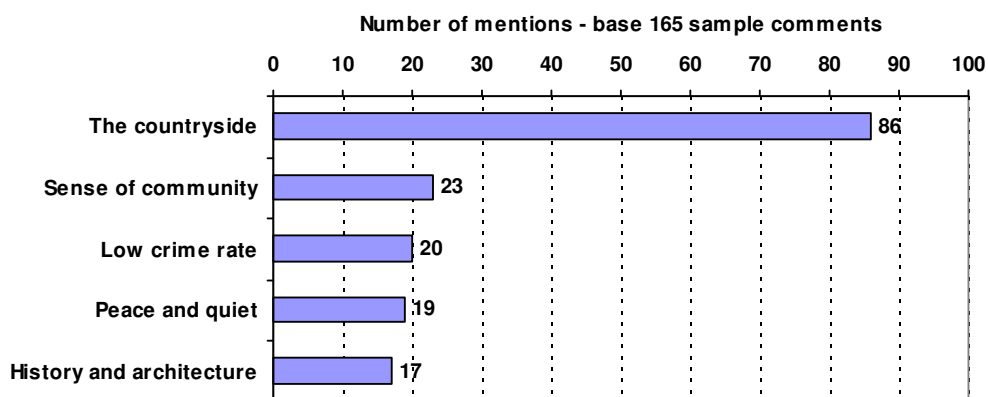
Appendix 1

As can be seen the most mentioned was the condition of local roads, followed by speeding traffic with the main A4 road through the area singled out more than any other road. Parking was third most mentioned, particularly focused on inconsiderate parking and parking on pavements and grass verges.

9. THE MAIN THING YOU LIKE OR VALUE

Respondents were asked in their own words to say what was the main thing that they valued most when thinking of the area as a whole. All together, some 1,363 written comments were received. A sample analysis shows that these fell into the following broad areas.

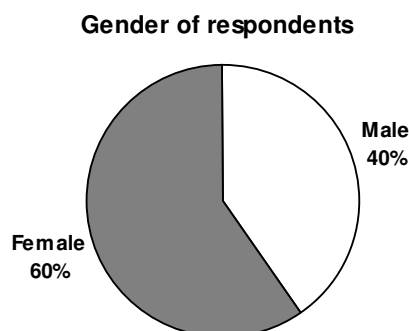
The main thing you like or value - top five answers



As can be seen the main thing that respondents said they valued most was, the countryside its beauty, unspoilt nature and ease of access.

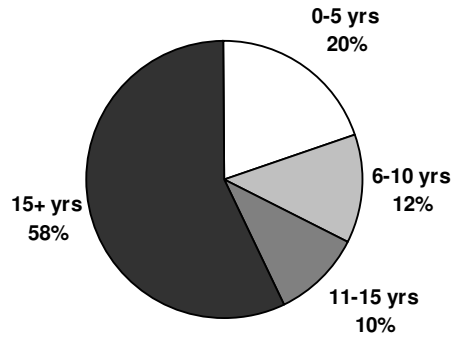
10. WHO WERE THE RESPONDENTS

The make up of the respondents was as follows;



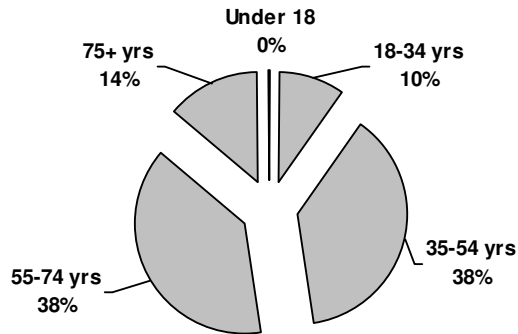
Within the Corsham community area the 2001 census returns suggest that the split between male and female 16+ is 51% female and 49% male showing that our survey has far more female returns than one would expect.

Appendix 1
Length of residence in the area



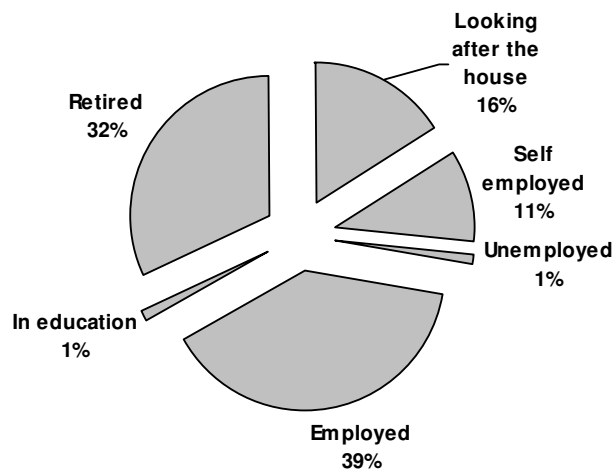
Over half of those surveyed had lived in the area for over 15 years but interestingly a fifth were relative newcomers.

Age of respondents



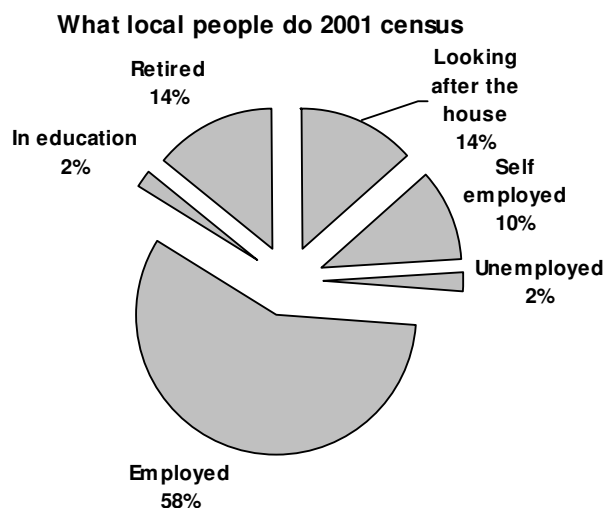
Data from the 2001 census suggests that the youngest age ranges (those up to 34 yrs) are under represented and the over 75's over represented. This is reflected in the high percentage of retired people who filled in the survey.

What respondents do



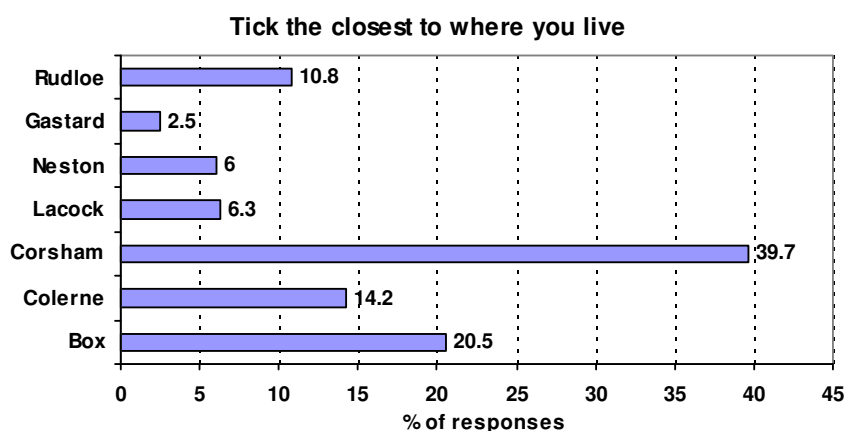
Appendix 1

Comparison with the census for 2001 shows that in terms of what people do the survey respondents are broadly representative of the population as a whole excepting the high percentage of retired people who took part in the survey.



11. WHERE DID RESPONDENTS COME FROM

Nearly 40% of respondents came from Corsham itself the rest (60%) from surrounding villages giving a good geographical spread.



12. CONCLUSIONS

This is the first large scale household survey on local issues attempted in the Corsham community area. The results will be used to inform the emerging community plan and with such a large number of people, contributing to the issues the plan should be much better informed as a result. The written comments will take time to go through and establish priorities.

The survey has also allowed people to say whether they want to be involved. As a result 497 people gave their contact details which, demonstrates, perhaps more than any other factor how keen local people are to be part of the development of their local area.

A newsletter of the key findings and plans for action as well as coverage in the local press would be a good way of informing people of the results of this key local survey. Copies of this report will also be shared with key stakeholders to encourage action on the priorities listed.

Corsham Area Community Partnership

It's your future, have your say!

Please take just 5 minutes to complete this survey and return it in the pre-paid envelope provided. All the local Councils, residents' and local business representatives have come together to form this partnership to try and improve the Corsham Area. Whilst we have some ideas about what matters to you most from the consultation days held recently in Corsham, Box, Colerne, Rudloe, Neston and Lacock we really want to get the views of local people across the whole area. So even if you gave your views then please could you respond so that we have as complete a picture as possible.

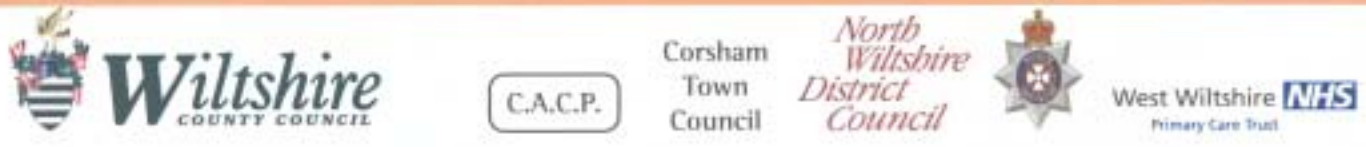
Q1: The following issues have been identified as important to the local community. Please let us know how you feel about them by ticking the relevant boxes.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1. Maintain the high quality of local schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Provides sufficient child and after-school care for working parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Provide for safer parking near schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Increase the range of local shops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Increase the range of local jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Increase promotion for the local market in Corsham	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Provide Close Circuit TV in problem areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Increase the police presence on the streets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Re-open Corsham railway station	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Increase the number and frequency of bus services to and from Corsham	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Increase short term car-parking spaces in Corsham centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Reduce speeding traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Increase facilities for young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Improve access to health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Improve condition & maintenance of alley-ways and pavements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Increase litter collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Increase provision of local waste recycling facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Cheaper bus fares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Increase the provision of affordable housing for local people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Maintain the shops/post offices in rural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q2: Using the numbered items above please write down the three most important things that you would like to see as priorities in your local area.

Most Important: Second Most Important: Third Most Important:

Write a number:



Q3: Thinking of Corsham town centre, what is the main thing that you would like to see improved?

Q4: Thinking of the area where you live, what is the main thing that you would like to see improved?

Q5: Thinking about Corsham and the surrounding villages as a whole, what is the main thing you like or value the most?

Q6: Please tell us a little about yourself by completing the following:

- Are you: Male Female
- How long have you lived in the area: 0-5yrs 6-10yrs 11-15yrs 15yrs+
- Your age: Under 18 18-34 35-54 55-74 75+
- What do you do: Looking after the house Self employed Unemployed
 Employed full/part time In education Retired

Q7: Please tick the area closest to where you live:

Box	Coleerne	Corsham	Lacock	Neston	Gastard	Rudloe
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q8: Would you be prepared to come to a meeting to find out more about how you can help improve your local area. If YES please provide your name and contact details:

Name:

Address:

Postcode: Telephone No:

Thank you for taking part in this important survey. Result of the survey will be published locally and made available in the Library and local council offices. Please be assured that none of your personal details will be passed onto or used by anyone else. Your privacy is protected under the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

Partnership Working and Contacts

Most issues raised by local people are not the sole responsibility of any one organisation or group, so it is important to work in partnership to get things done.

Most projects will need money to get them off the ground. Increasingly, many of the major funding opportunities can only be taken up if there is strong evidence of need in the community and if local people are very much involved in the process.

North Wiltshire District Council wants to make the most of funding opportunities and can sometimes assist in gathering evidence to support any bids.

For further information please contact:

**Corsham Area Community Partnership
c/o Community & Visitor Information Point
Corsham Town Hall
High Street, Corsham
Wiltshire SN13 0EZ**

Tel: 01249 706446

Vicky Welsh, Community Partnership Officer

e-mail: CorshamIP@northwilts.gov.uk

or visit the North Wiltshire District Council website at www.northwilts.gov.uk

