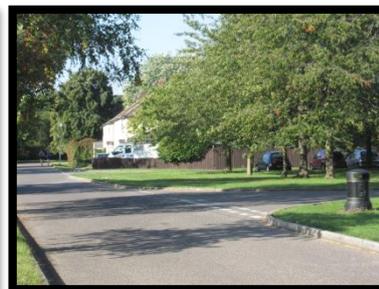




COMMUNITY LED our view
PLAN our voice
our vision

Upwood & the Raveleys



October 2015

Foreword

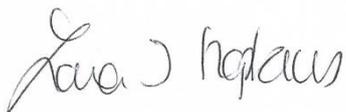
Welcome to the community led plan for Upwood and the Raveleys. This has been an ambitious project to find out how parishioners feel about living in this community, what they like and what could be done to make living here even better.

The consultation period has involved the community from the very beginning, finding out about the issues that matter and looking at how ideas for improvement, be they big or small, can be realised. This community led plan gives us strength locally because it truly represents residents' views. It gives us a real say with those who can influence our future within our district and county council. This plan is just the beginning. In the prevailing economic climate of less money and growing needs making things happen can be done much more effectively together as a community than we can do individually.

Open and proactive communication gives this plan greater strength and we will use every possible communication channel available so that everyone can be informed; be included; and 'feel' included.

Together, as a community, we can achieve what we set out to achieve - if we want to - and we can celebrate the achievements of our parish today knowing that we have done our best to promote sustainability for the future.

Thank you for your continued support of our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa J. Hopton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Introduction to the Community Led plan

Background

This is the community led plan for the parish of Upwood and The Raveleys. It is a new type of community document produced in the parish as part of the Government's new approach to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act that came into force in April 2012.

The community led plan seeks to represent the views of the parish set in the context of the emerging "Huntingdonshire Local Plan", which, when adopted, will cover the time period to 2036. Whilst not a legal document, it is a recognised tool to guide the long-term future of the parish and surrounding countryside and will clearly indicate to the district council the community's views on important issues such as planning and road safety.

One of the purposes of the community led plan is that it gives all residents within the parish ownership of managing what happens in their community. It is not driven by the parish council but involves an active partnership between the parish council and parishioners in order to develop the community sympathetically and cohesively.

We have to recognise however that decisions on local issues do not always rest in the hands of local residents. The plan has to be more than a wish-list of bright ideas. It has to be realistic and pragmatic in today's climate of austerity because many worthwhile initiatives will not get off the ground without the necessary funding and support from local authorities and the commitment of local residents willing to drive improvement projects forward.

It is a 'live' plan with various groups working on projects/issues in response to the feedback derived from the consultations with parishioners (questionnaire / open afternoon / stand at the village fete). Regular updates are provided in the parish newsletter and on the parish website and Facebook page.

The map on page 4 shows the boundary of the community led plan, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish.

The Consultation Process

The plan represents the culmination of over 2 years of consultation and hard work by the community led plan team.

The main questionnaire was distributed in June 2014 to every household in the parish (550). 179 were returned - 32% which is in line with the national average return rate. Although this response rate was disappointing the CLP team did knock on every door in the parish (twice in most cases!) so a significant effort was made to gather as many completed questionnaires as possible.

However, the consultation process has not just focused on the questionnaire. Feedback has also been received over the course of the two years from the stand at the village fete and the autumn 'open'

afternoon together with individual conversations that have taken place with CLP team members. Key issues have emerged and these have been addressed in the community led plan.

The role of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

The parish council represents the interests of the local community and aims, within its resources and authority, to improve the local quality of life and the local environment. It is therefore the principal body best placed to oversee and review the progress of the community led plan. However, it must not be considered to be solely responsible for progressing most of the actions set out in the plan. This responsibility also belongs to those parish organisations, groups of residents and individuals promoting specific improvement projects or addressing certain local issues, although often with the guidance or support of the parish council.

The parish council manages an annual budget of c. £20,000 - the parish precept gathered as part of the overall council tax charges - and this money is carefully budgeted to provide essential services in the parish. Therefore, projects requiring significant funding will need to generate their own resources through targeted grant applications and local fund-raising initiatives.

Parish councils have only limited decision-making powers. This is no more apparent than in consideration of planning matters where decisions are taken at district council level with parish councils limited to the right to comment and recommend. Nevertheless, in this and other areas, subject to external policy and decision making, Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council endeavours to reflect the body of local opinion on issues affecting the village.

Delivering and reviewing the Plan

This document contains a summary of the results from parishioners' feedback and includes a series of recommendations that can be taken forwards. An action plan can be found at the end of the document which gives details about individual action points, the primary stakeholders and how the action points are going to be taken forward and monitored.

Many of the actions detailed in this plan will fall to the management teams of existing organisations, even if only to provide guidance or oversight. It will take joint action to ensure that potential projects are investigated properly, launched and seen through to completion - or abandoned if not viable. The CLP team will meet on a regular basis during the year to monitor progress, giving feedback to the community via the parish newsletter and website. A formal report will be delivered at the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2016 and annually thereafter.

All the results of the parish questionnaire have been collated and are available to view via the link on the community led plan page of the parish website [<http://www.upwood.org/Community%20Led%20Plan.htm>]. The spreadsheet contains whole parish response details as well as giving the results for each part of the parish via the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet.

Upwood and the Raveleys - a brief history

The three communities of Upwood, Great and Little Raveley can trace their origins back to Saxon times with the Domesday Survey, 1086, showing all 3 communities as part of the holdings of Ramsey Abbey. All three villages remained part of the estates of Ramsey Abbey until the Dissolution in 1539.

The joint parish of Great Raveley and Upwood St. Peter's was created in medieval times, whilst the chapelry of St. James in Little Raveley was granted parish status in the 15th century.

Little Raveley has remained a small hamlet over the course of time but both Upwood and Great Raveley, being larger communities, had their own schools, public houses and small commercial businesses. The school at Great Raveley opened in 1866 and closed in 1962 and the village school at Upwood opened around 1869, moving to new premises near Farm Close in 1959. The original buildings are now used as the village hall.

Whilst only one public house now remains in the parish there used to be two in Great Raveley and three in Upwood. Early records show the Cross Keys in Upwood as being a centre for the village in the 17th century, a function it still fulfils today with family entertainment and good food.

Upwood had a village store – Fordhams – from the late 19th century and the Post Office survived for 100 years before finally closing in 1994. There was also a wheelwright's and blacksmith's in the High Street and a butcher's shop attached to the Cross Keys. Milk could be bought from the dairy on the corner of Church Lane. Alas, all of these have vanished but we do retain our red phone box as a book exchange.

Between 1951 and 1971 the population of the three villages doubled, from 569 to over 1100, reflecting the influence of RAF Upwood. The high ground at the top of Upwood village was commandeered by the War Office in 1917 to provide an Emergency Landing Ground and by 1918 it was renamed Upwood Airfield under the 6th Brigade, 47th Home Defence Wing of the new Royal Air Force. The airfield closed in the 1970s but aerial activity remains in the parish with the Nene Valley Gliding Club using part of the site.

Upwood and the Raveleys today

At the 2011 census Upwood and the Raveleys had a population of 1,285, with just over 60% being of working age and 18% being 65+, in line with national averages. The parish supports 550 households, with over 75% being privately owned and the remainder being in the social or private rental sector. Just over 40% of the local housing stock comprises detached houses or bungalows with a further 40% being semi-detached houses and the remainder split between terraced homes and flats.

Above-average car ownership, with over 45% of households owning 2 cars (average in England is 24%) is a reflection of the scarceness of public transport services and restricted local employment opportunities. Most of those in employment commute out of the parish to work.

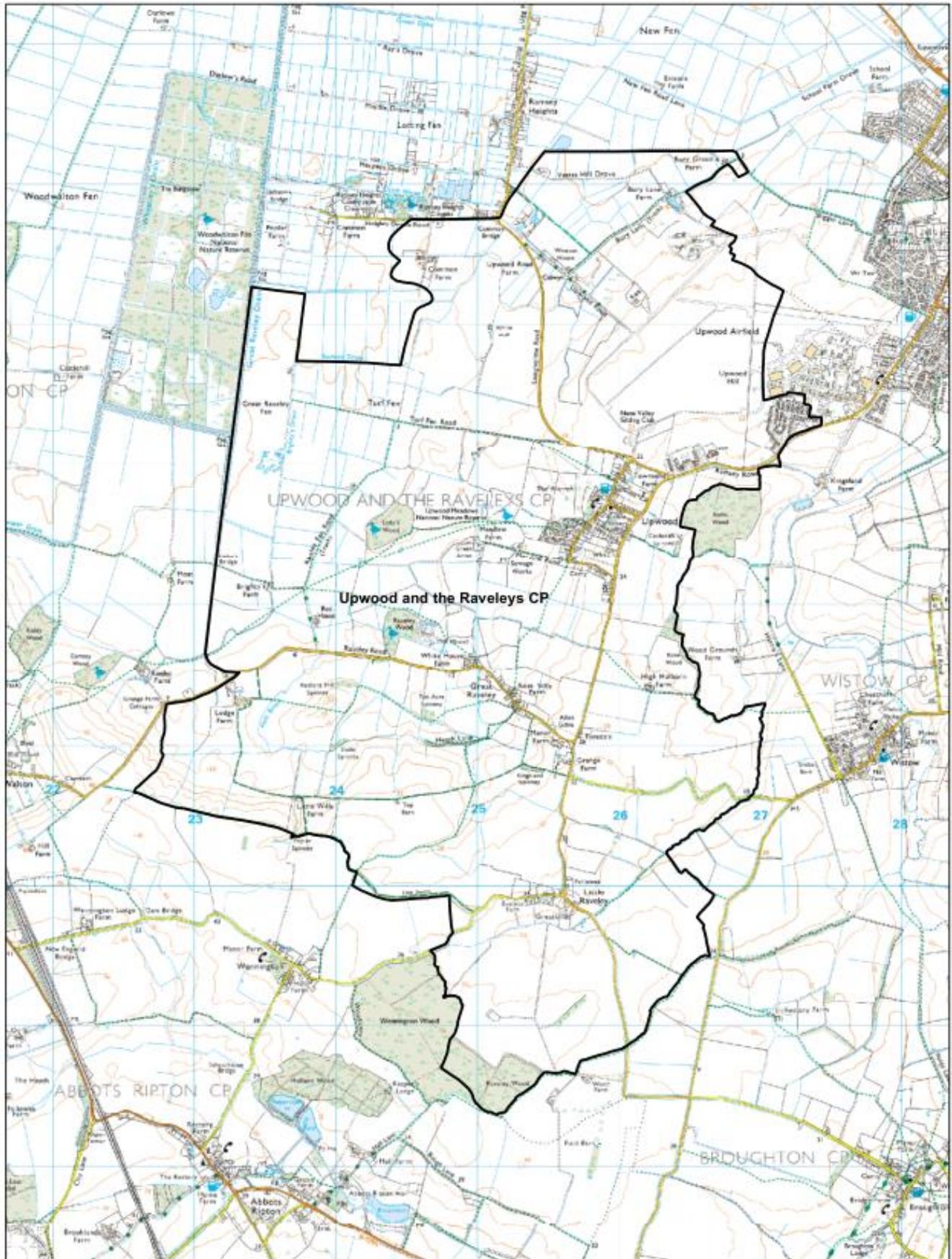
The parish no longer enjoys the services of a local shop or post office but continues to support the core pillars of a rural community with a church, primary school, village hall and pub in Upwood. Local organisations and clubs thrive and there is a good community spirit.

Description: Upwood and The Raveleys Parish Boundary



Scale = 1:25,000

Date Created: 26/07/2013



1.0 TRANSPORT, ROADS AND FOOTPATHS



What do you think about the transport, roads and footpaths in the parish?

Good transport services and facilities are essential to link people to jobs, schools, health and other services. Transport is an over-riding necessity for all residents in the parish to enable them to access shops and services, the nearest ones being in Ramsey, 3 miles away.

The preliminary consultations in the parish raised a variety of concerns relating to traffic speed limits, volumes and safety. Current speed limits in place are 30 mph in the villages and 40 mph along the Huntingdon Road. The national speed limit applies to the road between Fairmead and Upwood School. The possible housing development of the airfield (initially 160 but with the potential for an additional 650 new homes) would have an impact on traffic movement through the parish.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

- The question about the need for additional speed restrictions on the roads *between* the villages in the parish produced a mixed response with 41% of respondents indicating that there was no need for further speed restrictions but 48% indicating that there should be further speed restrictions.

The issue of speed restrictions *in* the villages provoked a strong response from Great Raveley residents who have a daily commuting 'rat run' through their village and they also clearly indicated that they would like a pavement in the village to improve pedestrian safety. Little Raveley residents also indicated a desire for a pavement.

- There was clear indication of a need for a recognised crossing at the junction of Longholme Road and Huntingdon Road with over 60% of Upwood respondents ticking the 'agree' / 'strongly agree' box. The junction safety at Great Raveley was also highlighted as needing consideration with over 60% of the Great Raveley residents indicating that visibility at this junction was unacceptable.
- Pot-holes and road maintenance were seen to be a problem with 76% of all respondents unhappy with the current level of maintenance.
- The results of the questionnaire suggest that there is an adequate number of footpaths and bridleways in the parish with adequate signposting but that some maintenance is required.

- Finally, over 70% of respondents in the parish indicated that pavements in the villages should be cleared and gritted in icy conditions.

Recommendations

- 1.1 Investigate speeding issues between the villages**
- 1.2 Consider options for traffic calming measures in Great Raveley**
- 1.3 Investigate the feasibility of a crossing at Longholme Road and Huntingdon Road**
- 1.4 Investigate the feasibility of a pavement in Great Raveley and Little Raveley**
- 1.5 Review the gritting policy in the parish**
- 1.6 Review the effectiveness of pot-hole and road maintenance in the parish**
- 1.7 Walk all the parish footpaths and bridleways to identify areas requiring maintenance**
- 1.8 Investigate the feasibility of junction improvements at Great Raveley**

2.0 PUBLIC TRANSPORT



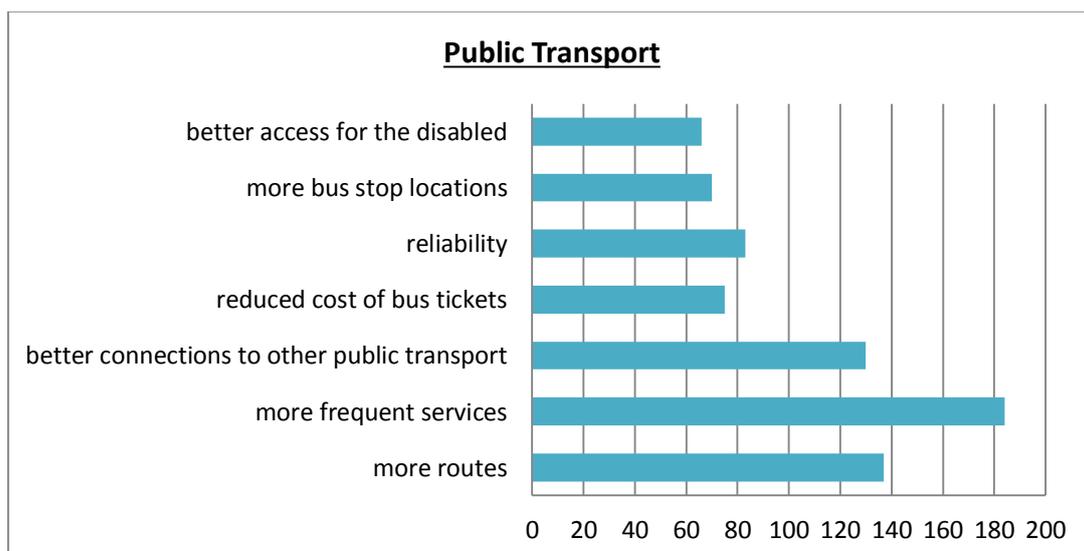
How efficient and useful is the public transport?

The parish is currently served by:

- **Stagecoach bus service**
Route Number: 31 Peterborough - Whittlesey – Ramsey
- **Ramsey & District Community Bus Association**
*This service provides transport for non profit making organisations within the rural area of Ramsey and its surrounding villages.
On a Thursday and Friday they also provide a weekly Rural Hopper return services – Thursday RH3 Upwood to Huntingdon and Friday RH2 Upwood to Ramsey.*
- **Huntingdon Association for Community Transport (HACT)**
HACT provides a variety of services to towns throughout Cambridgeshire to HACT members.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

Responses to the questions about public transport in the parish produced strong trends with a clear wish for more frequent bus services, more routes and better connections to other public transport.



Recommendations

- 2.1 Discuss findings with the county council which is responsible for public transport services**

3.0 HOUSING AND PLANNING



The nature, extent and pace of housing development within the parish of Upwood and the Raveleys is fundamental to our future in order to sustain a well-balanced community it is important to assess our local housing needs and plan accordingly.

Planning decisions are informed by the National Planning Policy which is implemented in this area by Huntingdonshire District Council. Huntingdonshire is predicted to be one of the fastest growing regions in the United Kingdom with the development of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone anticipated to create over 8,000 new jobs over the next decade. New houses will be needed for people migrating into Huntingdonshire and Huntingdonshire District Council has been given a target by central government to incorporate 21,000 new homes into the new Local Plan.

At the time of writing the development of 4,500 homes at Wyton is under considerable pressure. It is perceived that plans for supporting infrastructure are inadequate to support such an extensive development. If this development is suspended or rejected the district council would need to look elsewhere for housing development.

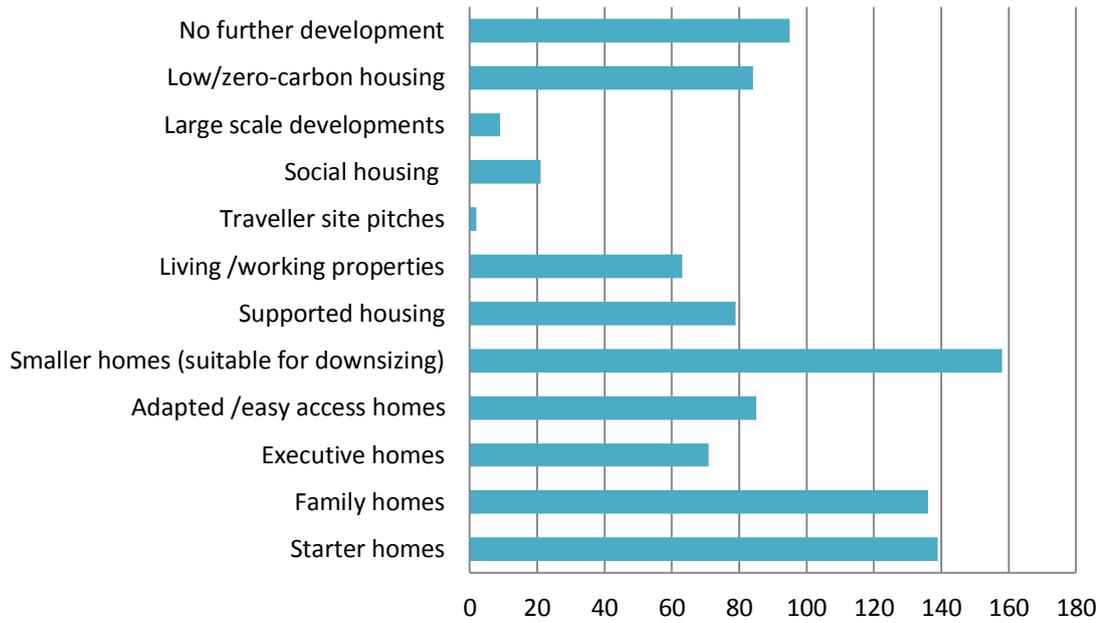
At the moment there are plans for 160 houses to be built by Strawsons Property on the old airfield site in the neighbouring parish of Bury. The long-term plan of the company is to build a further 650 houses on the airfield which falls within Upwood and the Raveleys parish boundary. This has already been rejected by the parish and district council and was turned down when the decision was taken to appeal. The plans are still under discussion and if the Wyton development is halted there is a real likelihood of the development of the airfield taking place.

On one hand, if planned appropriately, the expansion of housing stock can do much to sustain the infrastructure of local life, providing homes for local families and contributing to a broader range of amenities and services. On the other hand, significant and rapid housing growth without the necessary supporting infrastructure could weaken community cohesion and damage the local environment.

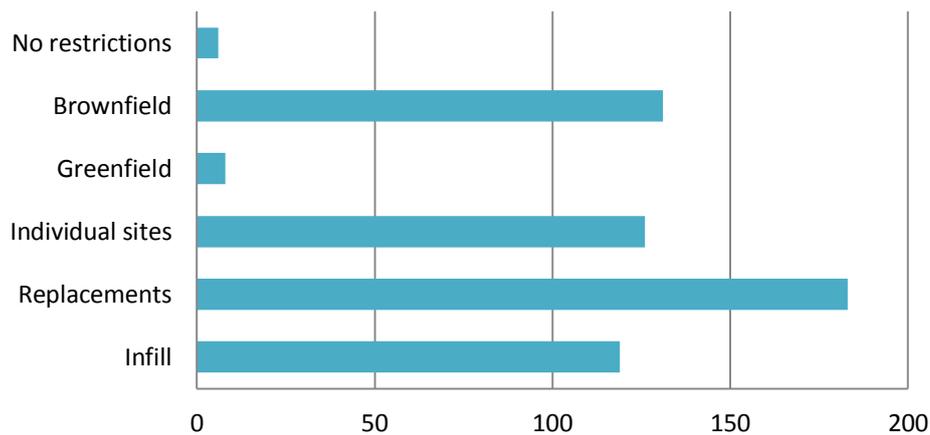
FEEDBACK RESULTS

The results of the questionnaire showed that parishioners favoured a range of housing types but that development locations should be small and kept within the existing built-up footprints of the villages. There were many varied comments regarding the airfield at Upwood. Some expressed the wish to leave it undeveloped, whilst others felt that if development was inevitable, the appropriate planning of infrastructure needed to be in place first.

Types of new housing acceptable in the parish



Preference for potential development locations in the parish



Recommendations

- 3.1 Assess the development potential within the parish, identifying land use and potential areas for development**
- 3.2 Parish council to use the CLP evidence when considering new planning applications**
- 3.3 Liaise with neighbouring parishes to create a unified response in the event of proposed large-scale development in the area**

4.0 COMMUNICATION



Are we reaching you?

Effective communication is essential to ensure that information is available to residents of the parish in the right format.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

The results of the questionnaire indicated clearly that people use the bi-monthly parish magazine as their primary source of information for what is happening in the parish but 'word-of-mouth' and notice boards also play an important role in getting information to people.

Whilst the majority of residents in the parish are aware of the existence of a community website only a few are aware of the community Facebook page.

Recommendations

- 4.1 Consider relocation of the parish notice boards to more accessible positions
- 4.2 Appoint a representative for each of the 5 areas in the parish to be responsible for posting notices and upkeep of the notice boards
- 4.3 Update and re-launch the parish website to increase community awareness
- 4.4 Undertake active promotion of the parish Facebook page
- 4.5 The parish council to consider holding an 'open forum' session at each meeting to encourage more participation from parishioners
- 4.6 The parish council to consider how to engage with younger members of the community

5.0 ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND APPEARANCE OF THE PARISH



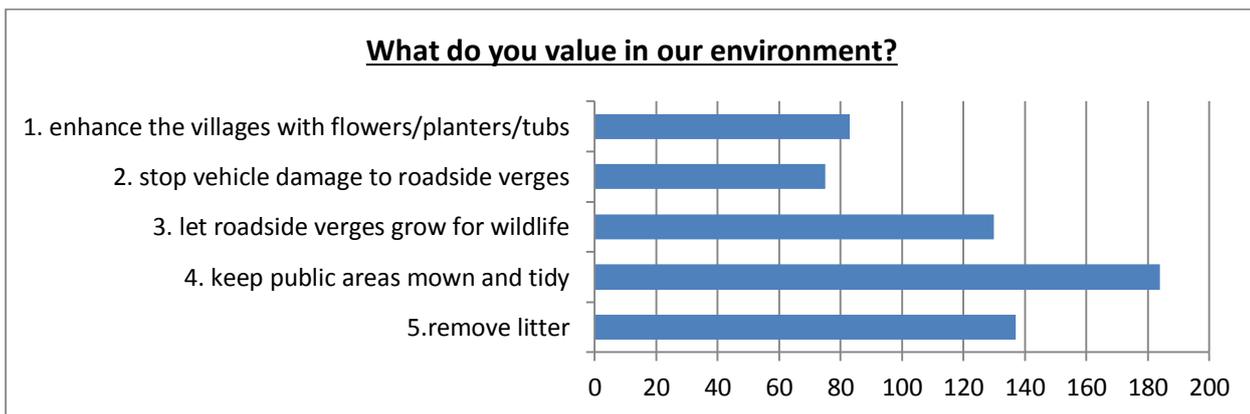
What do you value in our surrounding environment?

The parish is a rural community and we live with the countryside on our doorstep. Lady’s Wood and the Great Fen Project have made national newspaper headlines as places to visit and we also have a network of footpaths and bridleways crossing the parish.

There could be many opportunities to improve our local environment, dependant on the willingness of the relevant agencies, land owners and the local community to get involved.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

The questionnaire responses clearly indicated the importance the community places on living in a pleasant environment. Public areas are kept mown and tidy through contracts issued by the parish council and the maintenance of the highways verges are managed by the county council.



Recommendations

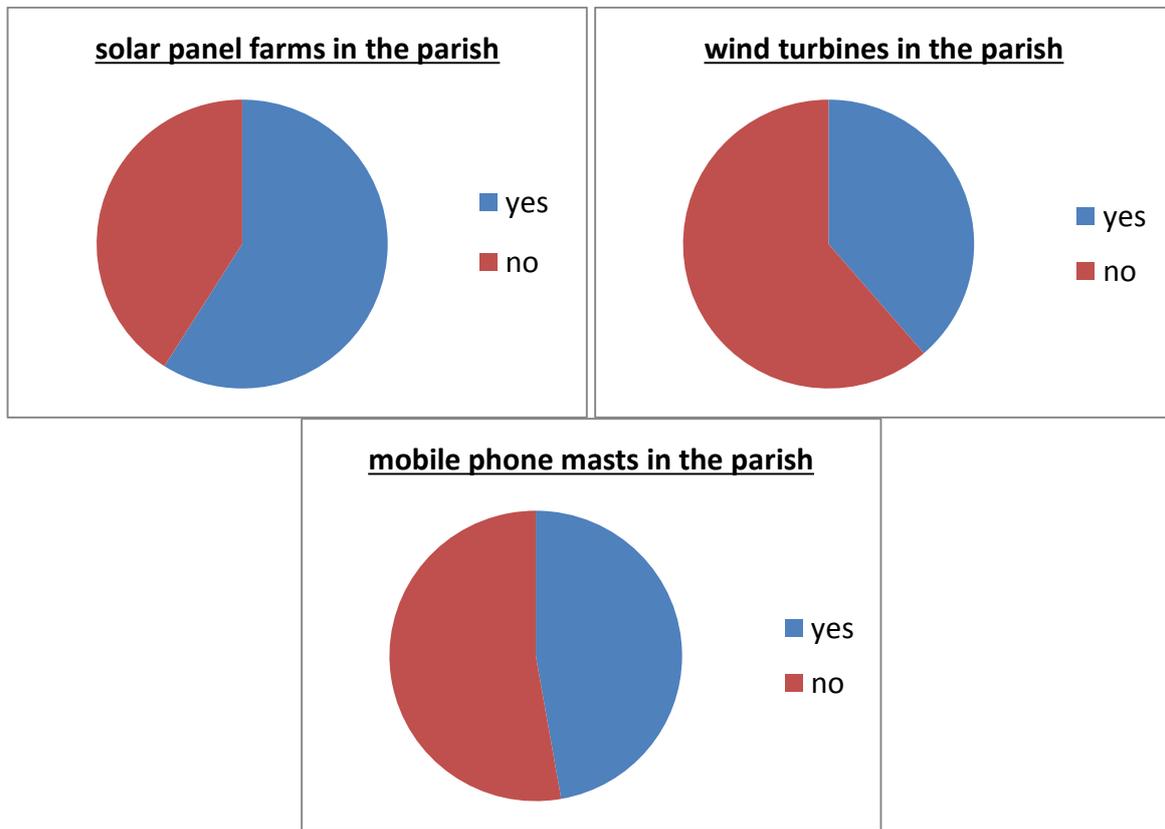
- 5.1 Publicise the cost of maintaining the parish appearance to raise awareness of how the parish precept is spent**
- 5.2 Create working parties of volunteers to address points 1 and 5 of the feedback results**

In 2012, 43 communities in the United Kingdom were in the process of, or were already producing renewable energy through co-operative structures. Local community members participating in these initiatives have a significant, direct financial stake in the project beyond land lease payments and tax revenue. Projects may be used for on-site power or to generate wholesale power for sale, usually on a commercial-scale greater than 100 kW.

In the local area land owned by Lord de Ramsey has been converted into a 140 acre solar farm and the district council is currently considering a planning application for a solar farm at the north end of Upwood airfield.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

Parishioners were asked their opinions about different forms of renewable energy schemes being located in the parish and there was a mixed response. There was a similar reaction to the question about having mobile phone masts located in the parish.



Recommendations

5.3 Investigate further the feasibility of solar panel farms on the land owned by the parish council - optimum size / location requirements / financial implications

6.0 LOCAL ORGANISATIONS, GROUPS AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES



Do you take part in any of the parish groups or organisations?

The parish is very fortunate in having many active groups and organisations which attract wide participation. The groups and contacts are listed in the bi-monthly newsletter together with reports of recent activities and forthcoming events. The key to this success lies with the volunteers who put in the time and effort to make things happen but continuity of parish groups can only be ensured if new people step forwards to participate and assist.

- *Upwood Village Hall is run by a committee of volunteers. They selflessly provide an invisible service that is essential to the life-blood of the many groups and activities that use the hall every day.*
- *There used to be an extremely active and popular youth club on a Friday evening in Upwood Village Hall but the committee folded because of lack of volunteers and the youngsters lost a valuable meeting place.*
- *The village fete has ceased to function because of lack of volunteers to sit on the committee.*
- *The village pantomime has been a phenomenal success, winning national awards, playing to packed out houses and providing opportunities for young and old to take part in a wonderful community activity but again, this has stopped after 20 years under the leadership of the same group of volunteers.*
- *Upwood Village Hall Performing Arts events have grown over the past 4 years. Residents have been given the opportunity to see acts of international renown as well as more local artistes.*
- *Community Navigators are local volunteers who help older and vulnerable people find their way to local activities or services.*

Time moves on and unless new people are prepared to help and step up to be part of the organisation of such groups we risk losing them and, in doing so, forfeiting our community spirit.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

Over 65% of respondents believe that the village hall in Upwood is adequate for the needs of the parish with only 21% in favour of a major redevelopment or relocation of the facility. Interestingly however, there was very limited interest in the concept of the village hall opening on a regular basis for light refreshments. There were various comments about such things as booking processes, costs and Wi-Fi access and these have all been passed on to the village hall committee for their consideration.

Over 70% of respondents would like a general store in the parish and whilst this may be considered a challenging concept to realise in the current economic climate it has been achieved in other small communities.

Recommendations

- 6.1 Liaise with the village hall committee re. comments from the CLP questionnaire**
- 6.2 Endeavour to make contact with younger members of our community to try to ensure continuity within local groups**
- 6.3 Consider the feasibility of a local general store or suitable alternatives**

7.0 EMERGENCY SERVICES, CRIME AND SAFETY

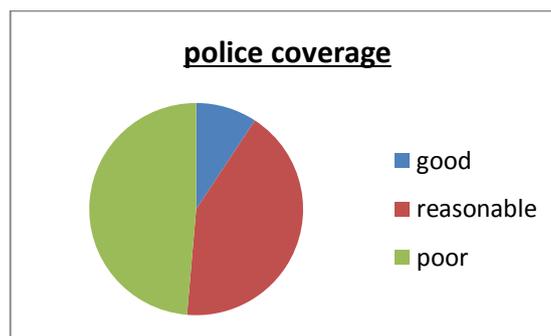


What are your opinions about safety in our community?

The parish is fairly isolated with the nearest emergency services being seven miles away. There are a very limited number of formal schemes in place such as Neighbourhood Watch although neighbours do watch out for each other.

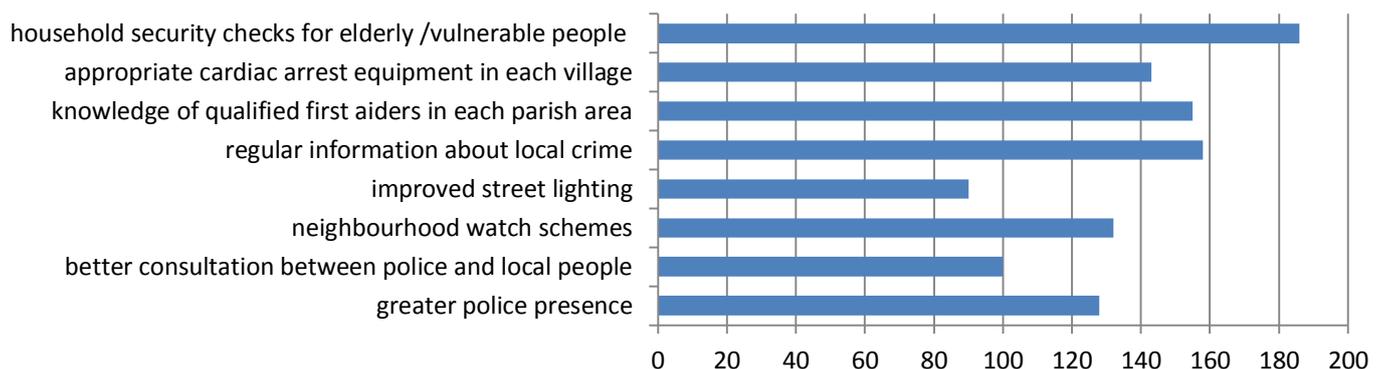
FEEDBACK RESULTS

Whilst crime rates in the parish are relatively low it is nevertheless deeply distressing for those people who have been affected by some form of crime. Opinions about police coverage of the parish varied:



The questionnaire also asked parishioners what measures they felt could make the parish a safer place to live in. The results are detailed below and show strong responses to the majority of the suggested measures. The street lighting scheme was in progress at the time of the questionnaire which may explain the low response rate to this particular measure.

What measures are needed in the parish?



Recommendations

- 7.1 Raise awareness of 'e-cops' e-mails about local crime**
- 7.2 Consider how to address demand for household security checks**
- 7.3 Initiate more Neighbourhood Watch schemes across the parish**
- 7.4 Identify how many qualified First Aiders there are in the parish**

8.0 SERVICES



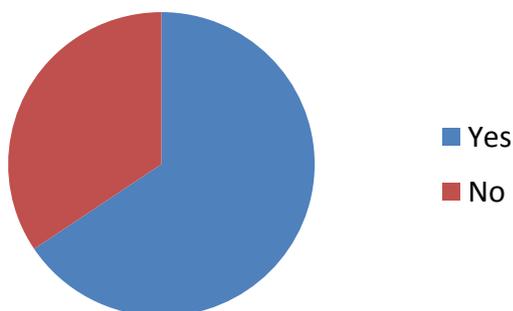
Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

Do you feel well-informed about local issues?

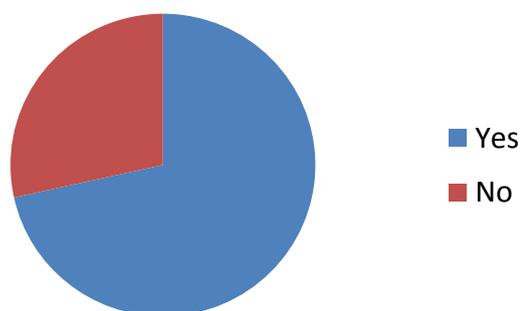
FEEDBACK RESULTS

The majority of respondents know what the parish council does and how to contact them:

Do you know what the parish council does?



Do you know how to contact the parish council?



Services in the parish are, on the whole, considered to be good with the exception of the broadband provision, winter weather services and sewerage issues in Great Raveley.

Recommendations

- 8.1 Make contact with Connecting Cambridgeshire re. broadband provision
- 8.2 Review district council and parish council policies for winter weather services
- 8.3 Investigate sewerage issues in Great Raveley and contact relevant stakeholders with a view to improving provision

9.0 YOUNG PEOPLE



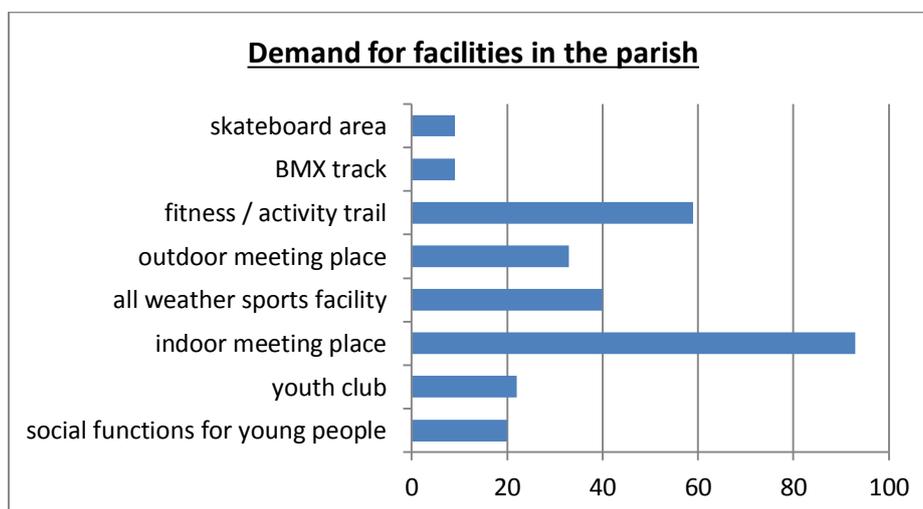
Are we doing enough for young people in our parish?

The parish has open spaces for young people of all ages to enjoy. The playing field behind Manor House has goal posts for football and a large expanse of grass to ride bikes, to fly kites and drive remote controlled cars. Farm Close has an enclosed basketball court and Bentley Close has the pre-school children's' play area.

Unfortunately there are not many structured activities or groups in place. Brownies meet on a regular basis but the youth club and the toddler group both folded due to insufficient numbers of volunteers to help run the groups.

FEEDBACK RESULTS

The play areas in the parish are considered to be good and there was a varied response to the question about what activities young people of the parish would like to see:



Recommendations

9.1 Investigate feasibility of a fitness trail in the playing field

9.2 Speak with young people to hear their ideas for future activities

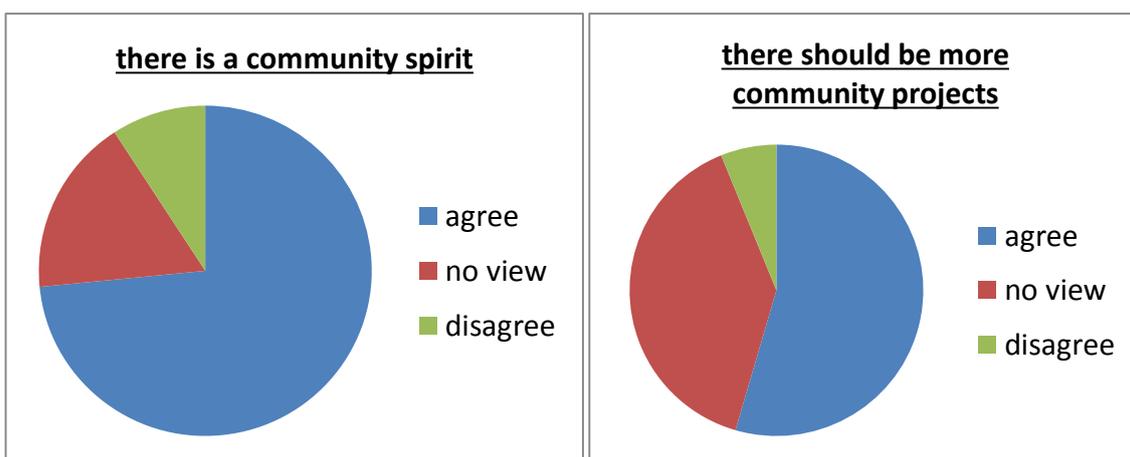
10.0 COMMUNITY



Do you feel part of the Upwood and the Raveleys Parish community?

FEEDBACK RESULTS

Parishioners feel that there is a good community spirit in Upwood and the Raveleys but that more could be done. Initiating community projects generated a mixed response with many people indicating that they would get involved but a considerable percentage had no view. In practice community projects have received mixed support - the proposed community litter pick in the autumn was cancelled due to a lack of volunteers but the community orchard got excellent support and more trees are being planted.



Recommendations

10.1 encourage more parishioners to contribute to the community that they live in

Conclusion

The community led plan team would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to participate in the consultation process over the past two years. It has been heartening to see the effort so many people have made to give their opinions and thoughts on the variety of topics covered in the questionnaire. These have all helped to form the community led plan for the parish of Upwood and the Raveleys.

The plan is a living, working document and regular updates will be provided through the parish website, Facebook page and newsletter. Alternatively, residents are invited to talk with one of the community led plan team members and, if possible, get involved in one of the current action points to help make a positive difference to our community.

Contact details

More information and contact details can be found on the Upwood and The Raveleys website (<http://www.upwood.org/Community%20Led%20Plan.htm>), Facebook (*Upwood & the Raveleys Community Led Plan*) or contact us direct on upwoodandtheraveleysclp@gmail.com.

Information and contact details for the parish council can be found on <http://www.upwood.org/ParishCouncil.htm>.

Acknowledgements

The community led plan team would like to thank the many people who have contributed to the development of the plan, including:

- the parish newsletter delivery people who distributed the questionnaires
- parishioners who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire
- Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council for funding the printing and production of the community led plan documents
- Cambridgeshire ACRE for its ongoing support of community development
- Liz Carter for providing a brief history of the parish