

Results of the Sutton Neighbourhood Plan survey

We had an excellent response rate of 61% to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire survey carried out last autumn, with over 210 completed questionnaires being collected out of just under 350 delivered. This provides a sound basis on which to carry on with work on the Plan – so many thanks to everyone who took the time and trouble to give us your views.

The survey results have been independently analysed and are due to be published at the end of February. There will also be a separate report listing all the comments that were made to the various ‘free-write’ questions.

To keep everyone as up to date as possible, here is a sample of some of the initial findings. Where percentages are given below, they are calculated on the basis of the number of completed questionnaires (211) unless otherwise stated. Full details will be available in the published reports.

Village boundary

- 90% supported the principle of keeping a settlement boundary to control village growth.
- Opinion was divided as to whether to keep the existing boundary (52% of who supported the principle) or to revise and extend it to allow for new development (48%).
- Where comments were made, these tended to favour boundary extensions, seeing little scope otherwise to accommodate development without compromising the village’s rural character.

Housing

- 65% favoured smaller-scale developments within the existing village boundary as a way of accommodating new development, ahead of individual infill plots (54%) or larger developments on the edge of the village (25%).
- Owner-occupied was the preferred tenure (82%).
- Houses should be family homes (82%), starter homes (72%) or bungalows, rather than flats/apartments (8%).
- Flood risk, highway limitations and the need to keep open spaces to safeguard the rural character of the village were all seen as constraints on new homes. Many of you said there were no locations suitable for new housing.

Jobs and the local economy

- Agriculture was the most favoured form of employment (70%), but 68% supported shops – especially a village shop/post office, a recurrent topic.
- New jobs would be best provided by converting existing buildings (66%); just 21% of you thought that new employment sites should be found.
- Again, many people said there were no suitable locations for new employment development, or thought that further employment was not required.

Open spaces and the environment

- Protection of views/landscape (82%) and open spaces (78%) ranked highly.
- Several village open spaces were identified as valued features together with Sutton Walls, The Rhea/Lugg, the Quarry and farmland around the village. .

Next steps

A key next step is to meet with those who own land in or bordering the village and which may be suitable for development. This meeting will bring local landowners up-to-date on work so far and how they might be able to contribute to the Plan. The meeting is to be held on Thursday 26th February at 8:00pm at Sutton Village

Hall. If you own land in or adjacent to the village boundary which you think has development potential, do come along.

Once the reports are published, they will be available to download from the Sutton Village website www.suttonstnicholas.co.uk or from the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Sutton Neighbourhood Plan Project Team