

## 4.0 OUTLINE OF THE KEY RESULTS (data presented are given on the number of respondents, rather than percentage of the parish)

The questionnaire considered the future parish needs against eight topic areas.

- Village appearance
- Security and safety
- Village Hall, Recreation Field/Social Club, Youth Club
- Parish Information services
- Affordable Housing/Further Housing
- Environmental Improvements
- Employment activities
- Transport

A series of questions about the village clubs and activities, and the household returning the form were also asked to provide background information.

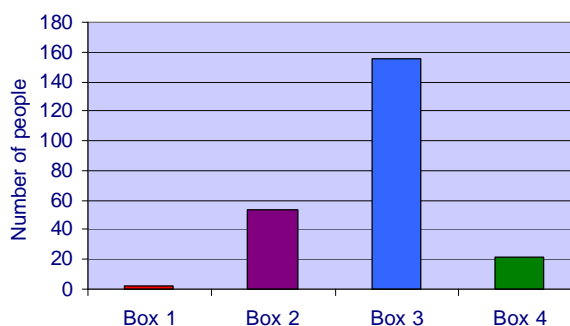
Those responding were asked to ring the answers they wanted. In the questionnaire Box 1 represented negative, of lowest importance, poor, not good, not appreciated, not wanted. At the other end of the scale Box 4 was positive, of highest importance, very good, well appreciated, most wanted.

So for the question on what was thought about village appearance Box 1 would be used if the appearance of Leigh on Mendip was considered to be very poor whereas Box 4 was ringed if the appearance was considered to be very good.

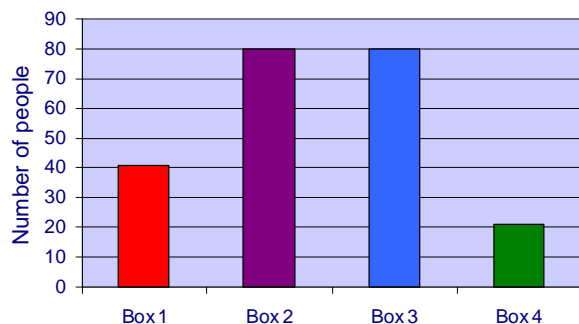
### 4.1 Village Appearance

Most people rated the village appearance towards good (Box 3). The main dissatisfaction was caused by the number of parked cars, properties being worked on and fly tipping on the back roads.

#### Appearance of village



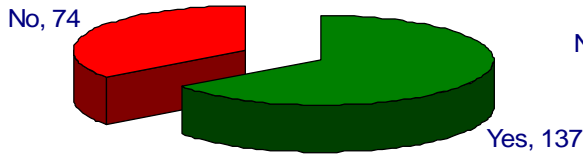
#### Village signage



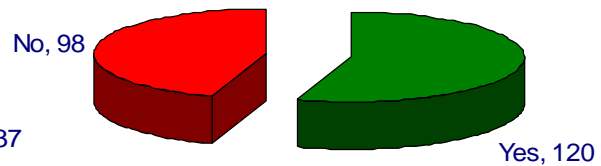
Generally village signage was rated as average, however, there was support for further improvements. This included better finger posts and a slight preference for additional signs e.g. welcome signs.

However, arguments were raised both for and against these. Typically ‘a village sign was a wonderful idea’ and also that outlying areas such as Tadhil could do with inclusive signs (see Action J) and ‘there were too many signs already’, ‘they would clutter’ and that ‘welcome signage was not in keeping with a Mendip village’.

### Finger posts



### Welcome signs



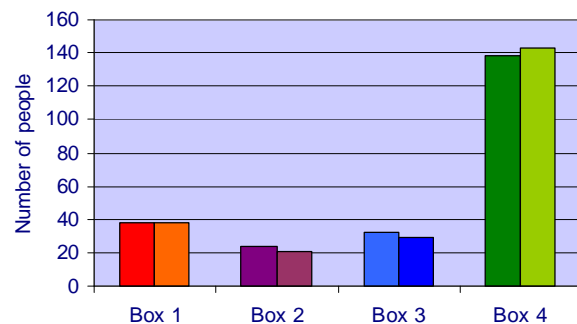
Maintenance of finger posts can be very effective – painted 2006



**Recycling:** There was very strong support for both a plastic and cardboard recycling facility. Some of the reasons against included that this should be Mendip District Council responsibility (i.e. taxes should pay for this), that a facility already existed at Coleford and that recycling facilities could be messy or untidy. However, it should be considered that if everyone takes their recycling to Coleford, say once a month, then a substantial mileage is done, and the elderly mostly do not have this option (See Action 1).

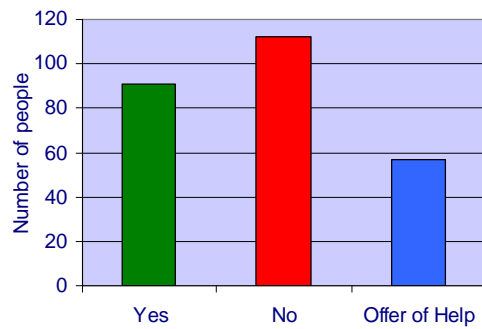
A range of suggestions were made as to where the recycling could be located – the main suggestions were the Recreation Field area and the Memorial Hall car park. Some suggested further outside the village such as the quarry area – however, it should be noted that the working and disused quarries are privately owned.

### Plastic and cardboard recycling

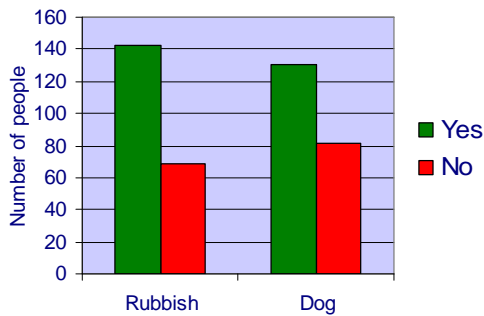


**Litter:** Litter featured quite strongly in responses. Whilst some did not see a litter problem, others thought there was an issue and that those who dropped it should be educated to change their ways. There was not a strong support for more regular litter collections (other than the annual one organised by the WI), however, quite a number felt that litter was sufficiently an issue that they volunteered to help in the future (See Action 2).

### Regular litter collection



### Litter bins

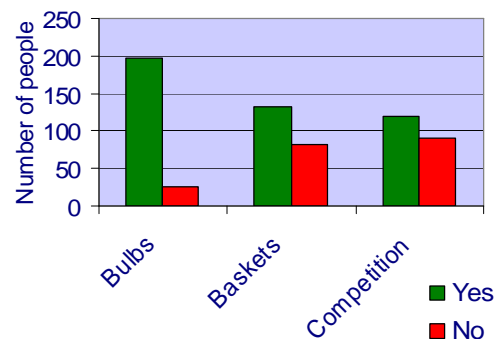


More wanted extra general litter and dog bins than did not. The support for litter bins was higher than for dog bins although arguments against included that bins can create more mess and must be emptied regularly. There was a wide range of suggestions as to where to put them – these included ‘where people drop the litter’ to the car parks, Recreation Field, bus stops or equidistant up the main street.

The argument against dog bins in the village was the cost of emptying them. It was also suggested that ‘dog owners people should be educated to use poop scoops’. Suggestions on where to put them were near the school (a problem area, particularly identified by the children at Leigh on Mendip First School), the Recreation Field and near gates on walks.

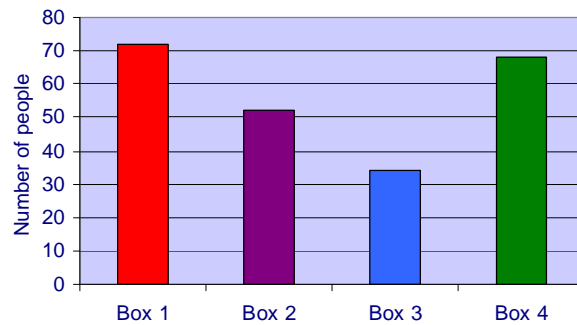
**Attention to the village:** There was good support for each of the three areas suggested to improve the village appearance. More spring bulbs had the highest priority, particularly snowdrops (to complement those planted within the Millennium project) or bluebells, but not large daffodils, see short-term Action K. A kind offer to pay towards the cost of the bulbs was also received. Flower baskets received support with offers to help, but the comment ‘not in keeping with a Mendip village’ was again made. Entry to a competition received some adverse comment but overall more supported than did not.

### Attention to village



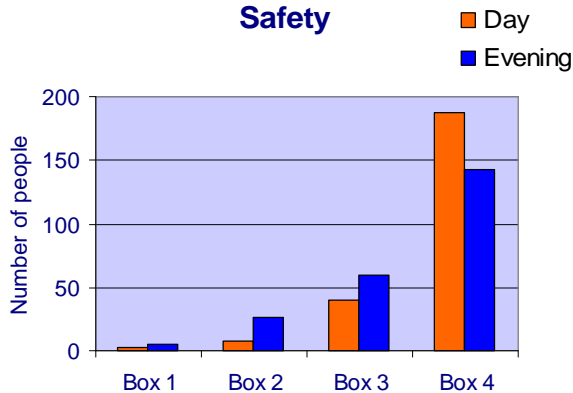
**Gated entrance signs:** These had been suggested as a feature on the verge (one either side of the road) which could include a 'Welcome to Leigh sign' and might in some locations, e.g. Townsend, act as a method to slow down the traffic approaching the narrow section. Slightly more people supported the idea of a 'Welcome to Leigh' sign than did not but there was a mixed response to the idea of the gated entrance. Whilst we received a generous offer to design and pay for one set of gates, arguments again included the now familiar 'not in keeping with a Mendip village', a 'stupid' idea, 'would not slow traffic down' and that 30mph limits or flashing lights were needed. However, in contrast, an almost equal number thought it was a good idea, and comments included 'great idea, all for it', with suggestions 'to go for it' and a sign saying we 'welcome careful drivers'.

**Gated entrance signs**



**4.2 Security and Safety**

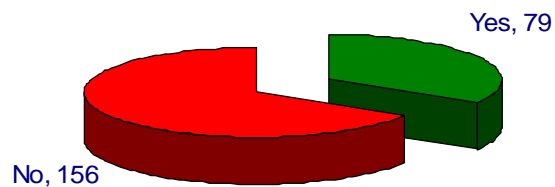
**Safety**



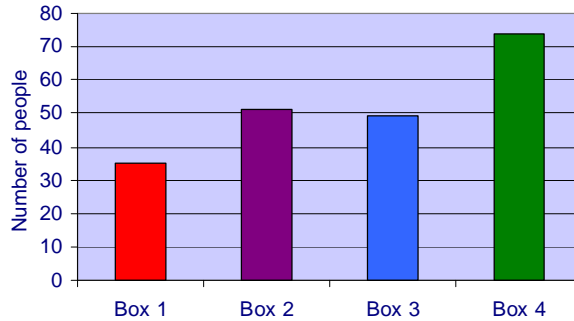
**Safety:** In response to the question how safe do you feel in the daytime/evening, most parishioners indicated that they felt safe in Leigh on Mendip. Views expressed against mostly related to what were described as 'numbers of youth who congregated within the village', which some found intimidating, although a few examples were given of more serious issues in both the daytime and at night.

Of importance was that many parishioners did not know how to contact the PCSO (Police Community Support Officer). In fact some stated they did not know we had one, others had never seen him. (See short-term Action B). However, there was very strong support for the PCSO whilst the responses to the other safety issues – Support for Neighbourhood Watch (short-term Action I) and the Police were more variable.

**PCSO - know how to contact**



### What support was there for PCSO?



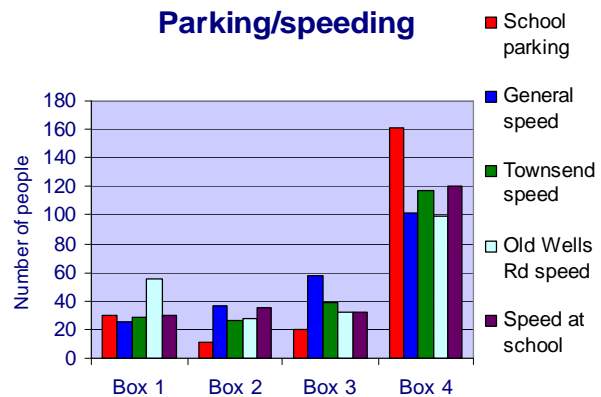
The Neighbourhood Watch response was however, geographically based – some areas were good and no change was recommended but in other areas people were almost unaware of having a representative and wanted change. There was support for a greater police presence but comments were varied (for and against) such as ‘no good riding through the village at 50mph!’

Collectively the responses on security and safety indicated that although the village had a secure feeling, there was room for improvement in this area.

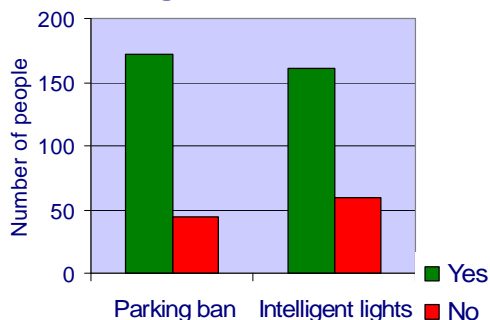
**Car parking and traffic issues:** The issue of car parking and traffic/traffic speed in the village was generally an emotive area with some very strong feelings about the parking issue, in particular near the school and speeding traffic, particular at Townsend. A number of parishioners emphasised that the parked cars in the village, particular in Leigh Street, although appearing to be a problem, actually acted as a restraint to speed and that this should be considered in any change process.

There were many suggestions on how to control speed – mostly well tried and tested methods used in other villages such as sleeping policemen, chicanes, bumps, speed cameras and flashing lights (See Action 3).

### Parking/speeding



### Parking ban/Intelligent lights at school

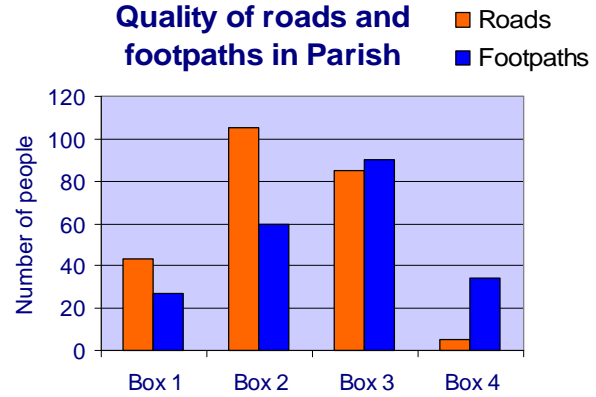


There was strong support for both a parking ban and flashing lights in the lower village near the school. However, in respect of the parking ban, arguments included – ‘how are mothers and toddlers expect to manage with a ban’, ‘should ban all parking on pavements’, ‘parking should be provided elsewhere’ (suggestions included the Memorial Hall in the day and on waste ground(?) in the village). There was support for moving the garage-related cars and whereas some felt that the whole of this area of the village had a car park problem, those who lived closest to the school were very strongly against a parking ban (See Action 4).

**Quality of roads/footpaths in parish:**

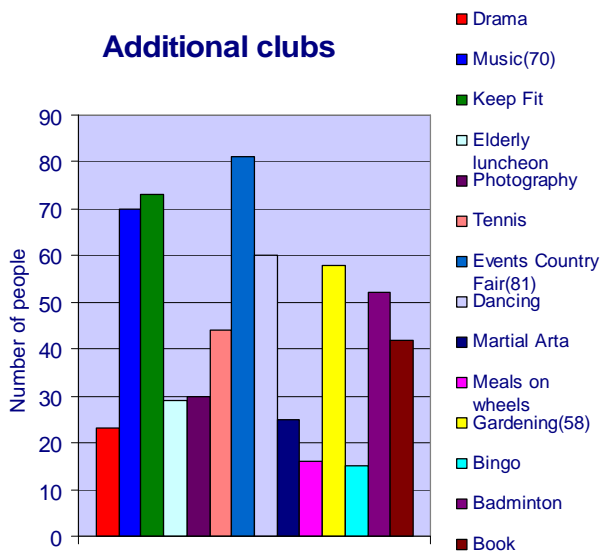
There were mixed views on the quality of the parish roads and footpaths with comments about overgrown pavements, potholes and mud. Few rated the roads as good (Box 4), although it was commented that roads in poor condition helped slow traffic down!

**Quality of roads and footpaths in Parish**



**4.3 Village Hall, Recreation Field and Clubs**

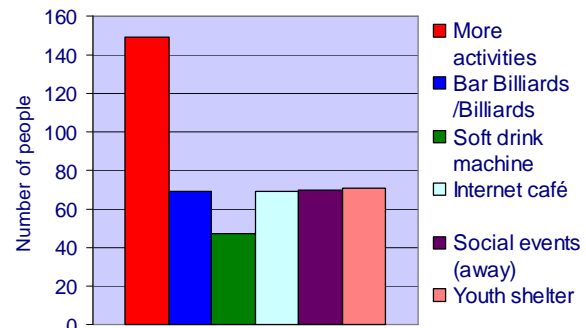
**Additional clubs**



There was very strong support for additional recreational facilities in the village. Interest was greatest from those already active in community life and a wide range of potential new clubs received support with the highest support for ‘activities’ such as keep fit, events linked to the Country Fair, dancing, gardening and badminton with lower support for drama, photography, meals on wheels and bingo.

More activities/facilities for young people were strongly supported with 148 parishioners in favour and 16 against, see Action 5. Some who voted against argued that the village does not want billiards as there is pool already in the Bell Inn, soft drinks were not healthy and they did not want a youth shelter – ‘where would you put it’ / ‘it would not be used’.

**Youth facilities**

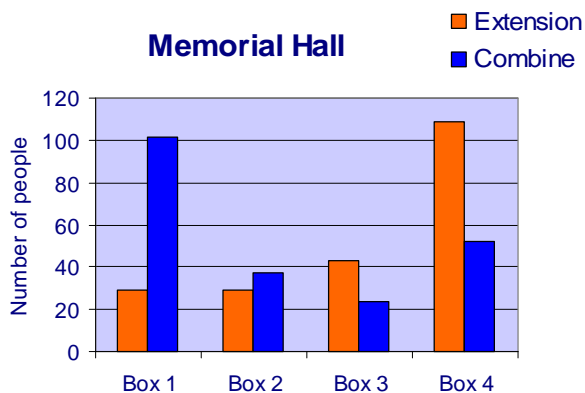


The strong support for more for the youth to do was echoed by the youth themselves at the cheesy chip evening, attended by 14 young people in the age range 10-17 years. They indicated that there was nothing to do in the village and that they would like to

have a youth club rather than hang out in the park, or around the benches and in the Bell Inn. A wide range of activities were suggested by those attending (for full details see Table 3) which included a youth shelter and cyber café, as well as more active sports, like a BMX type facility as well as football / rugby. Visits / social events were also suggested.

There was strong support for better play equipment for the recreation field (144 in favour with 22 against). Most who supported gave positive suggestions which covered all age groups but particularly included facilities for older youth – skate / cycle park, climbing frame, climbing wall, adventure area, plus more youth sport teams. Those who were critical of the current facilities suggested that the current play area did not suit toddlers, the slide was not slippery enough and there was not enough variation.

**Village facility improvements:** In the early stages of the Parish Plan it was identified that the current Memorial Hall was heavily used in the evenings and its location meant that there was only limited room for any extension. Also the Village Design Statement suggests that any building here should not obscure the view of St Giles’ Church. At the same time the Recreation Field ‘hall’ was under utilised and in fairly urgent need of attention due to the poor state of the building. The suggestion was made in the ‘Call for Ideas’ by a number of parishioners that one solution to the limited facilities available to the village was to combine both halls into one purpose built building on the Recreation Field, where space was less limited. It was suggested in the ‘Call for Ideas’ that if this was done then the Memorial Hall land might have other uses. The options in the questionnaire arose from these ideas.



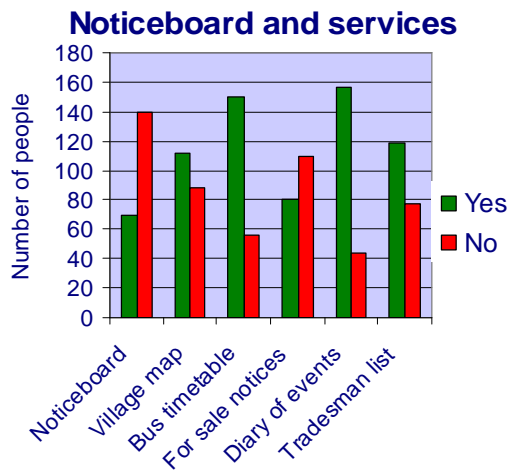
The suggestion to combine the Memorial Hall and the Recreation Field building produced the most emotive response to the questionnaire. There was very strong feeling against a combined new facility which would have meant the loss of the Memorial Hall and its significance in respect of the remembrance of those in the parish who had died in the two World Wars. Although the main memorial plaque is in St. Giles’ Church, the hall was dedicated to the remembrance, and has

a small plaque near the kitchen area. Objections to the potential loss of the Memorial Hall came not just from the more elderly parishioners, who remembered the fund raising, building and dedication of the hall. Where there was support for building a new facility on the Recreation Field, then there were positive offers of help with the work (36 parishioners), and others said they would have supported the idea of a new building on the Recreation Field had it not been for the emotive issue around the Memorial Hall. Support for a small extension to the Memorial Hall was high, whilst some expressed views that any loss of parking in this area would be bad for the village and for the Bell Inn. To overcome these issues the recommendation from the plan is to provide immediate support to the proposed small Memorial Hall extension (Action 6) and to encourage the Recreation Field committee to investigate the options for a substantial refurbishment of the Recreation Field building to meet the wider needs of the plan (Action 12).

## 4.4 Parish Information/Services

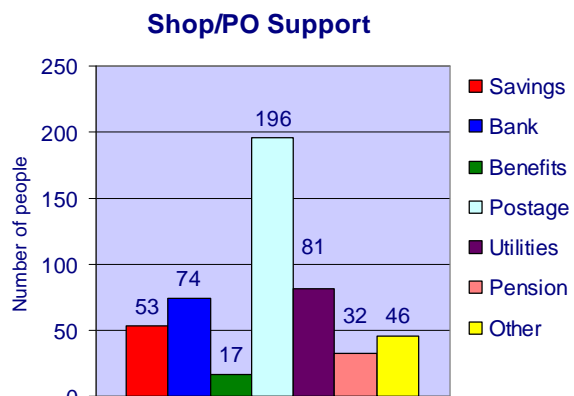
**Village Information:** There was strong support (148) in favour of a village information pack every two years with 66 against. However, the distribution of the current pack was clearly geographically based with many indicating that they had not received one when they moved to the village. Approximately 90% of the village receive the Village Connections magazine (current charge, 2006, £3 p.a.) and whilst there were clear indications for improvements, most felt that it was a very useful magazine and did not want a different magazine (180 against, 36 for). Improvements with more information on village events (a monthly diary produced through a co-ordinator), other useful parish information and Parish Council minutes were all seen as desirable (See short-term Actions E and F).

The overall response to the questions on the Leigh on Mendip web site was confusing and it was not possible to fully analyse the data. Whereas 192 parishioners indicated that they knew about the website, and just 31 indicated they did not, usage appeared to be generally low with 90 indicating that they never access it or could not. Advertising the web site address in the Village Connections magazine was seen as useful. Quite a number thought the website was out of date and never changed, in contrast an equal number thought the web site was very informative, up to date and regularly changed! In a recent Somerset parish competition, the Leigh on Mendip web site was runner-up in Mendip, losing to the village that won the overall Somerset competition!



There was no support for a new parish notice board although various areas of additional information were requested – this could logically be added to the Village Information Pack or Village Connections magazine. Loan equipment to raise funds, village support to the school and better liaison with Mendip District Council and the Village Design statement were all supported, although some indicated that they answered ‘no’ to better liaison with MDC, because they thought that no notice was taken anyway. Neither twinning nor CAB visits received strong support.

**Shop/Post Office:** There was very strong support for a subsidised shop / post office facility in the village. 177 were in favour compared to just 40 against, with just one response objecting to the idea that the facility would be subsidised. However, in reality most village shops are not subsidised as such, but are run as a community not-for-profit venture, managed by volunteers, such that they can be viable in a competitive market place. Further analysis suggested that the main post office facilities wanted were postage stamps and utility support (See Action 7).





## 4.5 Affordable Housing

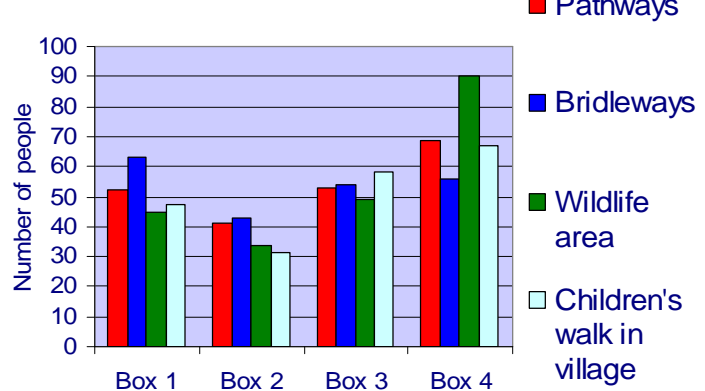
More affordable housing, renting to locals: this produced consistent strong support in all the categories suggested. Rent/buy produced the highest response with 150 in favour and just 58 parishioners against. Location for any new development was less clear with little difference between the three areas suggested – lower, middle and upper village – the middle part of the village was just the most popular. See Action 9 – this recommends further discussion on the issue of further housing in the parish.

Strict controls on new building were, however, strongly supported (171 for, 43 against) with a very positive response to include environmental measures in any new build (90% in favour).

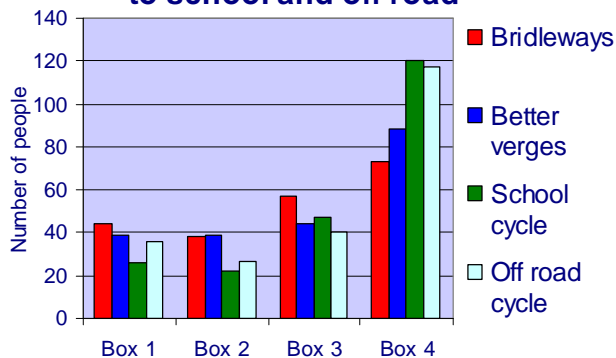
## 4.6 Environmental Improvements

There was generally positive support for the creation of new environmental areas – pathways, a wildlife area and children’s walk in the village all received support although the creation of bridleways on their own was less strongly supported (106 against, 110 in favour). When asked if areas such as verges should be improved for bridleways there was more support in favour, and the combination of bridleways and new cycles ways should be considered(see Action 10).

**New environmental areas**



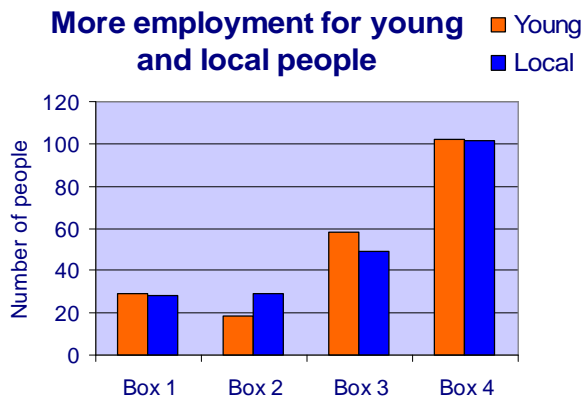
**Bridleways (more areas including verges), Cycle routes to school and off road**



Other environmental areas such as a youth adventure area received strong support (139 in favour with 71 against) and 43 parishioners indicated that they would wish to join an environmental group as part of the creation of a wildlife area (see Action 11), also strongly supported was cutting back overgrown paths (200 in support, 27 against) and continuing to improve stiles. Replacement of stiles with kissing gates received a number of favourable comments following the recent addition of kissing gates as part of the Village Access Walk.

## 4.7 Employment Activities

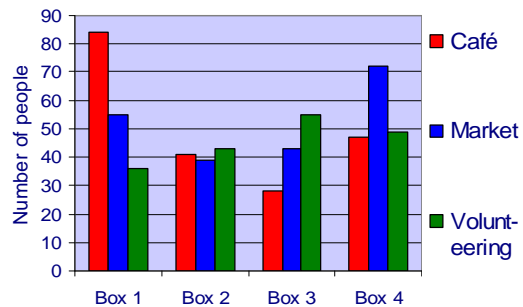
More employment for young people and action to encourage new businesses employing local people were both strongly supported although questions were asked as to what was envisaged. Whilst at the parish level it must be appreciated that it is not really possible to influence employers' choice of location, it is important to know how the parish feels on this issue to inform the Parish Council in respect of assessments, when planning applications are submitted that could offer job opportunities. Action 8 addresses this and was given Medium priority to reflect the level of support and the



limited opportunities. At the local level, volunteering opportunities, for experience, are easier to create and this area of the questionnaire received 104 in favour and 79 against. As an example, several parishioners who joined the Parish Plan Steering Group had had limited involvement in parish activities previously and no experience of being on a committee – the group worked together well and useful experience through volunteering was gained by all those involved.

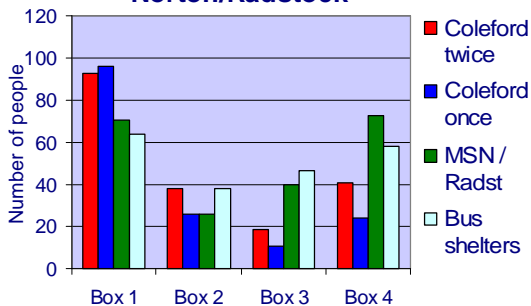
Opportunities for a village market (fortnightly) and the creation of an internet café were marginally supported and rejected respectively. Note: the youth of the parish separately supported the idea of a cyber café.

### Create internet café, village market, volunteering



## 4.8 Transport

### Buses (weekly to Coleford), service to Midsomer Norton/Radstock



There is a regular bus service from Frome to Wells via Shepton Mallet and therefore the questions on public transport were directed to the areas that currently have no service. It was considered that the response on transport availability was strongly influenced by the number of households in the parish who had access to a car and regularly used their own transport. For those without access to a car, the presence of bus services was much more important, however, as a result of limited requirement at present from

much of the parish, the response rates were lower than for other areas of the Parish Plan. Whilst we have not recommended a specific action as a result of the responses received, it is recommended that further consideration is given to this area in the future.

## 4.9 Responses from Younger People

Responses from the younger people in the village were gained from the completion of the Parish Plan questionnaire by all 21 of Eagle class at Leigh on Mendip First School and from discussions with the 14 young people from the parish who attended the cheesy chip evening. Their combined suggestions have been considered in the light of the overall response and built into the forward actions in the plan.

**Table 2 Activities that received support (Eagle class, 7-9 years)**

<b>Response to the Parish Plan</b>
Generally thought the village was fairly tidy
Recycling facilities: cardboard 7 yes, 3 no; plastic 9 yes, 1 no
Strong support for more signage and gated entrance – they very much liked the new signs by the school
Very good support for further measures on village appearance – bulbs, flower basket and competition
The children generally felt safe in the village with the exception of traffic (see below)
Safety – the children do not feel safe walking past Ivy Cottage (to east of school) because the cars are going too fast. Scary! They also do not want big lorries in the village
The children gave the same answers as the adults in respect of their wish to see the PCSO, Neighbourhood Watch and Police strengthened
The children expressed considerable concern about the problem of speeding traffic generally and poor parking near the school
There was strong support for more activities for children and youth – they supported the idea of a greater range of clubs and activities except Meals on wheels and an Elderly luncheon club! They liked the idea of more challenging climbing frames
There was strong support for better facilities to be provided through the Memorial Hall and Recreation Field



The summary response from the Young People's cheesy chips meeting on 8 May 2006 is given in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 Activities that received support (10 - 17 years)**

<b>General response</b>
Arranged visits to Frome / Radstock for a specific purpose i.e. skate boarding. Arranged days out / trips / visits and would be prepared to help arrange these. They would use a bus service to other places.
Social events / places they would like to go – Ten Pin bowling, ice skating, cinema, go-karting, paint balling, Alton Towers.
Sports activities, including football and rugby
Live music events and music practice.
Shop / facility in the village.
Broadband Cyber Café
Ideas were to have flood lights, a push bike track / BMX. A concrete skate park or possibly portable ramps
<b>Response to the Parish Plan</b>
50% supported and 50% did not support an internet café
Billiards was not supported as pool was available in the Bell Inn
A youth shelter and a soft drinks machine were supported

Note: The young people recognised that adults would need to be involved in running many of the activities.