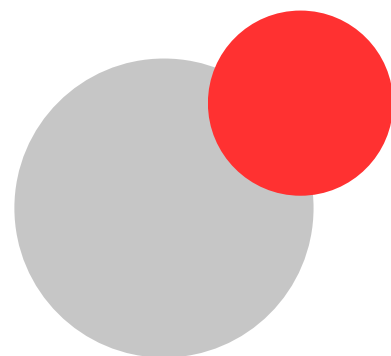




# Leigh on Mendip Community Review 2022-23



## Executive Summary



Supported by



# Introduction & Methodology

Mid-way through 2022 the Parish Council were made aware of the opportunity to bid for support from SMART Communities in the development of a new Community Plan. As the previous plan was now 14 years old, the Parish Council decided to bid for that support and were pleased to be accepted. Following guidance and support from SMART Communities, the Council set up a small steering group made up of members from a representative section of our community. Working together that team deliberated and finally agreed a set of topics that it felt the community would wish to be consulted on.

SMART Communities supported the team to develop a set of appropriate questions for each topic, in particular the style of question to enable actions to be developed. This became our Community Plan Survey.

The team produced a Communications and Marketing Plan which set out how they would engage the community both before the survey went live and during its availability. This included social media, traditional leaflets in every household and making personal visits to all known active community groups. The steering group decided that the survey should be on-line only but held two open house sessions in the Memorial Hall to allow members of the community unable to complete the survey on-line to do so with the support of members of the steering group.

The survey was completed by 136 people representing just over 30% of our community which the steering group felt was a good response.





# Key Findings



## Demographics

The results reflect the 2021 census results. Our village residents are of the older generation with 89 out of 136 of respondents being 55 or over. This section was completed by all respondents giving an idea of the village demographic.



## Communication

A key factor to a village community is communication. 106 out of 131 of Leigh residents felt well informed, suggesting village communication is good with the main methods of communication being word of mouth and Facebook. The village website was the sixth most popular method of communication, so it is worth the Parish Council considering alternative or improved methods to communicate.

Improvements suggested by the questionnaire suggest improving the Village magazine as well as better use of social media. A community noticeboard was also suggested.



## Housing

The majority of residents in Leigh upon Mendip (112 out of 129 respondents) are homeowners. Respondents felt any new housing in the village should be affordable and low-cost starter homes. There is less support to new housing and luxury housing developments in particular. The respondents felt it is important to ensure plenty of green space remains between any houses and that any housing built should be of a traditional style. The main concern with any new housing is the lack of parking and increased traffic through the village. The Parish Council should keep these points in mind for future planning applications.







## Climate Emergency/Environmental Issues

Climate change is important to the respondents. An efficient bus service was the top priority that respondents thought would help them to reduce their carbon footprint with more options for recycling and reusing, possibly a community compost scheme and more on street recycling also being a priority.

The Parish agrees that planting more trees, having more recycling facilities and local solar projects are climate change actions possible for the village. These are areas the Parish council will research further.

Respondents are most satisfied with the rights of ways and air pollution and least satisfied with safe cycle routes and biodiversity.

It was important to 105 out of 123 of respondents to live in a village, with parishioners expressing that the village maintains its character when any new developments are considered. The important village factors being open spaces, the pub, the school, the hall and community events.

The respondents did not necessarily feel improvements to village facilities or activities were needed but areas in the village that respondents felt could be improved were the children's play area, parking, rec field pavilion, having removable church pews and increased footpath maintenance.





## Community Facilities and Services

The most used recreation facilities in the village are the footpaths, pub, village hall and park. Respondents would like to see a post office/village shop and possibly a repair shop in the village.

Future investments for the Parish council were seen to be parking, improved footpaths/bridleways as well as improved buildings such as the village hall and rec pavilion.

Community events that the respondents would like to attend were the village fete, local produce festival, bonfire night and live music events. A village “social” committee not linked to the individual organisations might help with this. The respondents to the survey use the village hall but not the rec pavilion. Additional uses of the pavilion should be investigated.



## Technology

Respondents were satisfied with the broadband in the village (with superfast broadband recently introduced to the village by Truespeed) but dissatisfied with mobile phone reception, including 4G coverage.







## Traffic, Travel and Transport

Speed of cars, parking and parked cars are the main areas of concern in the village with most villagers relying on cars as their main mode of transport. Public transport concerns included frequency, times and no weekend buses. If these concerns were addressed 54 out of 118 of respondents would choose to use public transport.

73 out of 120 of respondents were unaware of the community transport scheme for those without access to transport and those that were aware were unsure how to access it. This is something the parish council could address by publicising the scheme.

There is a possibility to run a community speed watch scheme within the village with 27 respondents keen to be involved.



## Health and Wellbeing

116 out of 120 of respondents feel they are in good physical and mental health. When questioned they were happy with what the village offers to improve health and wellbeing. However, 33 people think a community exercise area would help with health and wellbeing needs including reduced isolation.



## Community Safety

30 of 117 respondents felt that community safety is not an issue in the Parish. Other respondents felt community safety could be improved by traffic calming schemes, activities for young people and first aid training. Findings chimed with those around Transport and Housing (see above), with calls for improved parking.



## What Next...

The Parish Council is now developing an action and funding plan to delivery on those issues raised by the community through this work. This will be the focus and priority of the Parish Council over the next couple of years. The Parish Council will review progress against actions on a regular basis and will include an update in its annual report.

## Privacy Statement

Analysis was conducted by Smart Communities Ltd part of Community Council for Somerset (CCS) Group. Data was captured for legitimate and contractual purposes. Information was collected and analysed in accordance with Smart Communities Ltd role as a Data Controller and Data Processor.

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# Community *Your future plan* Review

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