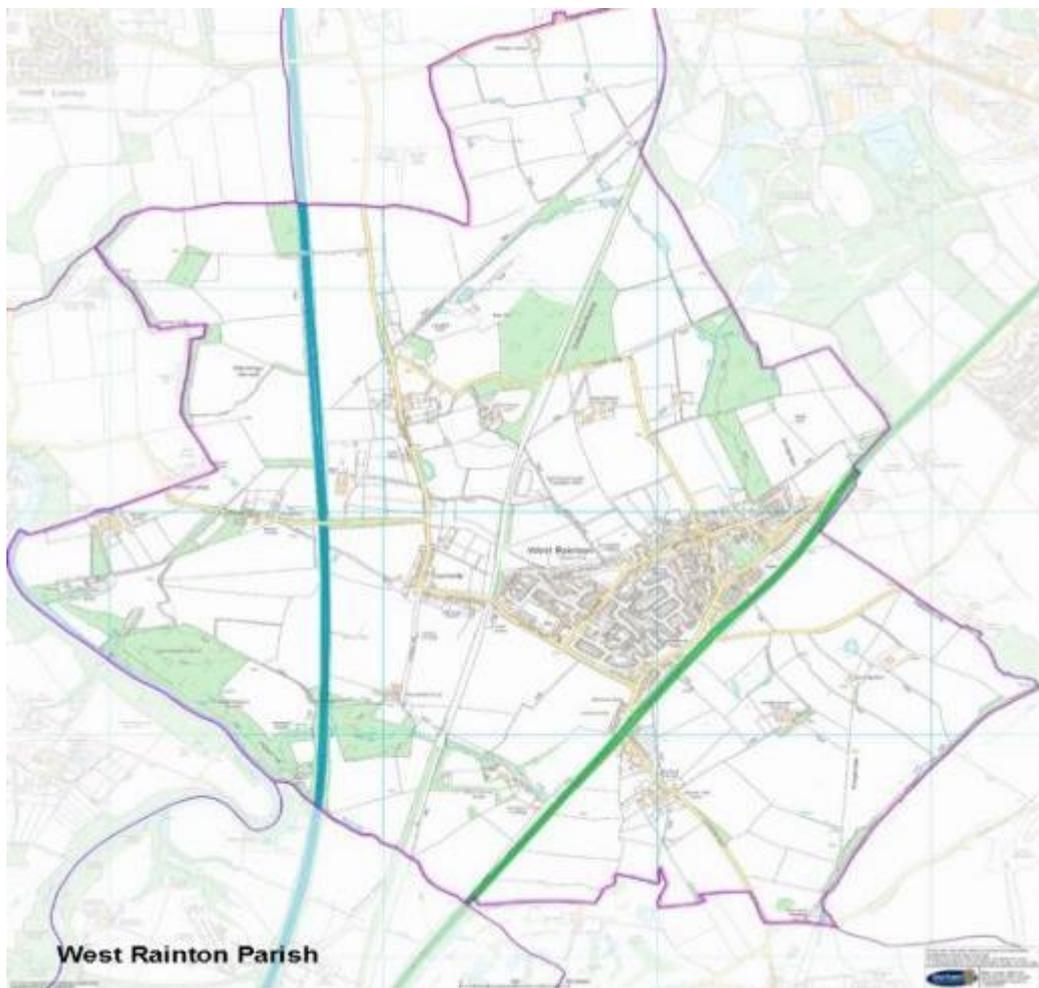


# **West Rainton**

# **Parish Plan 2017**

## **Summary Report**



**Version - 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

## **Background**

In 2015, West Rainton Parish Council felt a need to consult with the households of the Parish to understand local views and to enable them to re-affirm local priorities. In early 2016, Durham Community Action was commissioned to facilitate community consultation with residents and produce this Parish Plan. Based on the views of local people, it aims to inform future actions and developments in the Parish including a realistic and achievable Action Plan developed as a direct response to community needs and aspirations.

### **Research:**

The development of a Parish Plan was launched at the Annual Parish meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 with 32 local people being consulted. Further consultation was undertaken at the Big Lunch on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2016 where a further 40 individuals participated. Consultation included what local people liked and disliked about living in the parish and for them to suggest on how improvements could be made.

Information gathered was used to inform the first meeting of the steering group and reviewed alongside previous village surveys provided by West Rainton and Leamside Village Partnership (WRLVP).

### **Steering Group:**

The steering group met monthly for a year and was assembled from interested local people consisting of; members of the community, representatives from Durham County Council Ward Councillors and WRLVP, with facilitation, advice and administrative support from Durham Community Action. The group followed a recognised planning process, a timeline was developed and tasks were monitored at each meeting.

### **Questionnaires and survey:**

The steering group drafted key questions based on issues raised at initial consultation and from past village surveys. These centred on the following themes:

- Environment and Housing
- Transport and Traffic
- Social & Community
- Your Village

Three surveys were developed in both paper form and online to capture the views of adults, young people and businesses. Promotion was through the Village News, the West Rainton Parish Council Website and at various community venues/events as well as “out on the street” at events, into retail businesses and one to one interactions with individuals.

The Adult Resident questionnaire was open from October 2016 to January 2017 and distributed to various collection and drop off points around the parish. This was completed by 75 people.

The Young Person questionnaire was distributed electronically to West Rainton Primary School and Belmont Community School, as well as neighbouring primary and secondary schools where young people from the parish attend. Paper copies were also delivered to West Rainton Primary and Belmont Community School. Copies of the Adult survey were also distributed to parents via the primary school. The young peoples’ questionnaire was open from October 2016 to December 2016 and was completed by 33 individuals.

The Business questionnaire was sent electronically to local business contacts and paper copies delivered by hand. Follow up visits were made to collect completed surveys. The businesses questionnaire was open from January 2017 to March 2017 and was completed by 5 companies.

All consultations and questionnaires closed in February 2017 after which the results were analysed and used to populate an action plan for inclusion in the Parish Plan. A full copy of the questions and results from the survey are available.

A public feedback session was held 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 presenting the results and to identify any potential actions to address the issues raised. The draft action plan was made available for comments.

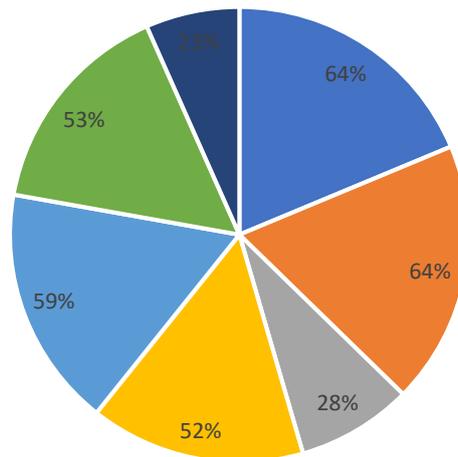
Results of the questionnaires and feedback from consultation events were collated to produce an action plan. The background of the parish, key research and common themes throughout the planning process, results and action plan all combine to make the parish plan.

## Community Consultation Survey Results

### Environment & Housing

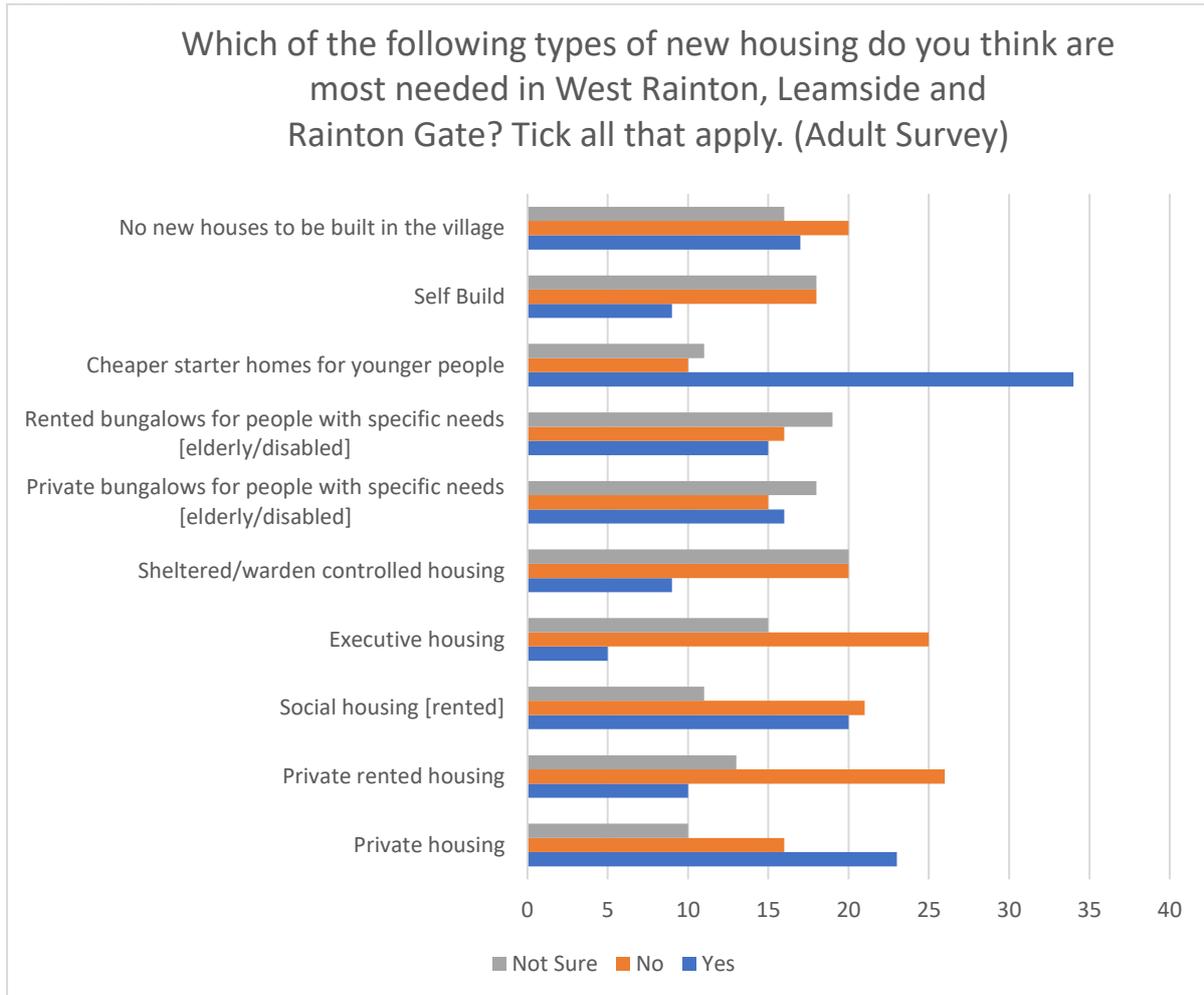
We asked....

What do you like most about living in West Rainton, Leamside and Rainton Gate? Tick all that apply. (Adult Survey)



- Being part of the local community
- Living in an historic village setting surrounded by country side
- Sports and leisure clubs, community groups and social facilities
- Special events such as music, big lunch, village show, monthly events e.g. arts and crafts
- Easy access to other towns/villages by road, or bus services
- Green spaces, recreation ground, walkways around the village
- Shops, restaurants, cafes

We asked....



There was a mixed reaction to the question around where new housing developments should be built. Responses ranged from no new houses and if there was they should not be built on green sites only brown sites. Respondents were concerned that the infrastructure in the village was not big enough to take more new houses but recognised they were essential to attract newcomers to the village and as a sign of economic growth. The majority told us that they would like to see derelict buildings demolished and the land regenerated.

The survey was designed to highlight problem areas within the village and areas that needed improving. Both litter and dog fouling scored highly as did fly tipping and vandalism. Additional comments included; littering on main routes through the village, poor lighting going past the park onto the crescent, not enough bins around the village, dog waste bins overflowing and cars parked on footpaths.

### Traffic and Travel

80% of the business survey identified that the village has easy access to other towns/villages by road or bus services. 60% liked being part of the community and 60% said they liked living in an historic village surrounded by the countryside. When asked if the household has access to a car, 90% replied that they did with 50% having 2 cars, 40% 1 car and 3% 3 cars. Poor parking in the village was reported by 41% with 36% saying it was average, 17% thought it was ok and 6% saying excellent.

Many respondents told us they liked living in the parish because of easy access to other town/villages by road or bus.

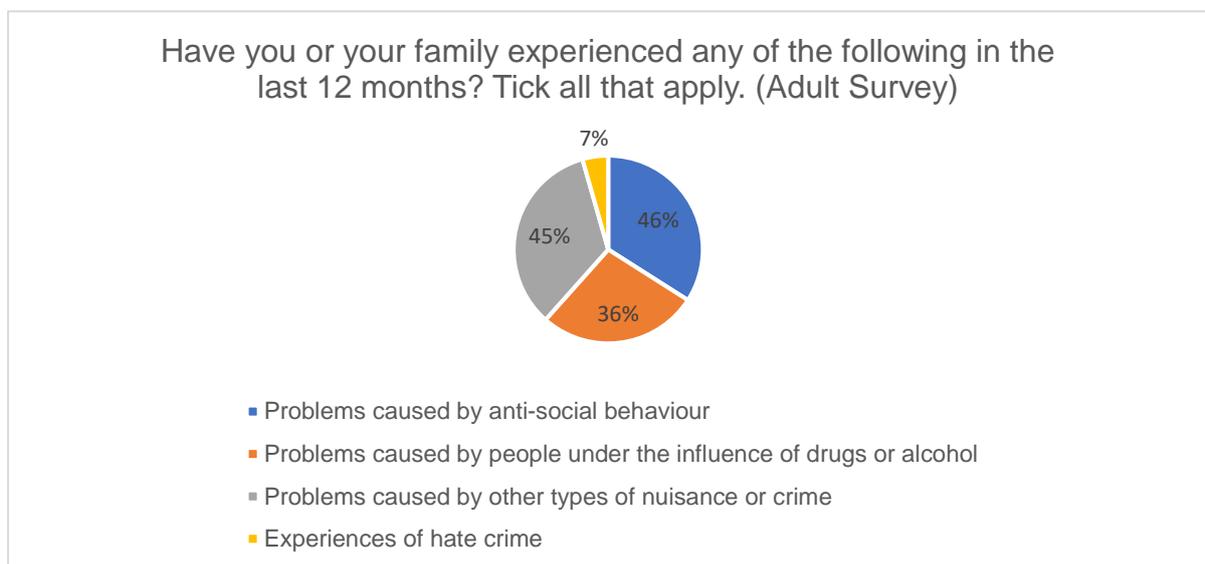
- The most commonly used form of transport is the car.
- Over 75% of families use public transport
- Some residents don't use public transport because it's too expensive, not on time, or the nearest bus stop is quite a walk.

Residents supported a 20 mile an hour speed limit throughout the village with 81% in favour of this action. Comments also included slower speeds approaching the school.

The safety of the A690 included 93% reporting it as dangerous for pedestrians and 77% as dangerous for vehicles. The business survey showed that 100% thought the A690 was dangerous for both pedestrians and cars. Respondents thought that pedestrian and traffic signs could be a lot clearer and more visible including streets having clearer names/numbers and the need for more 30mph signs.

## Social & Community

We asked ....



Anti-Social Behaviour is reported as the most common problem with 46% of Adult respondents and 40% of Businesses having experienced this. When asked how problems could be addressed respondents said there was nothing for 'kids' to do so they get drunk and cause nuisance. To resolve the issues would include more visible Police or Neighbourhood Wardens on patrol.

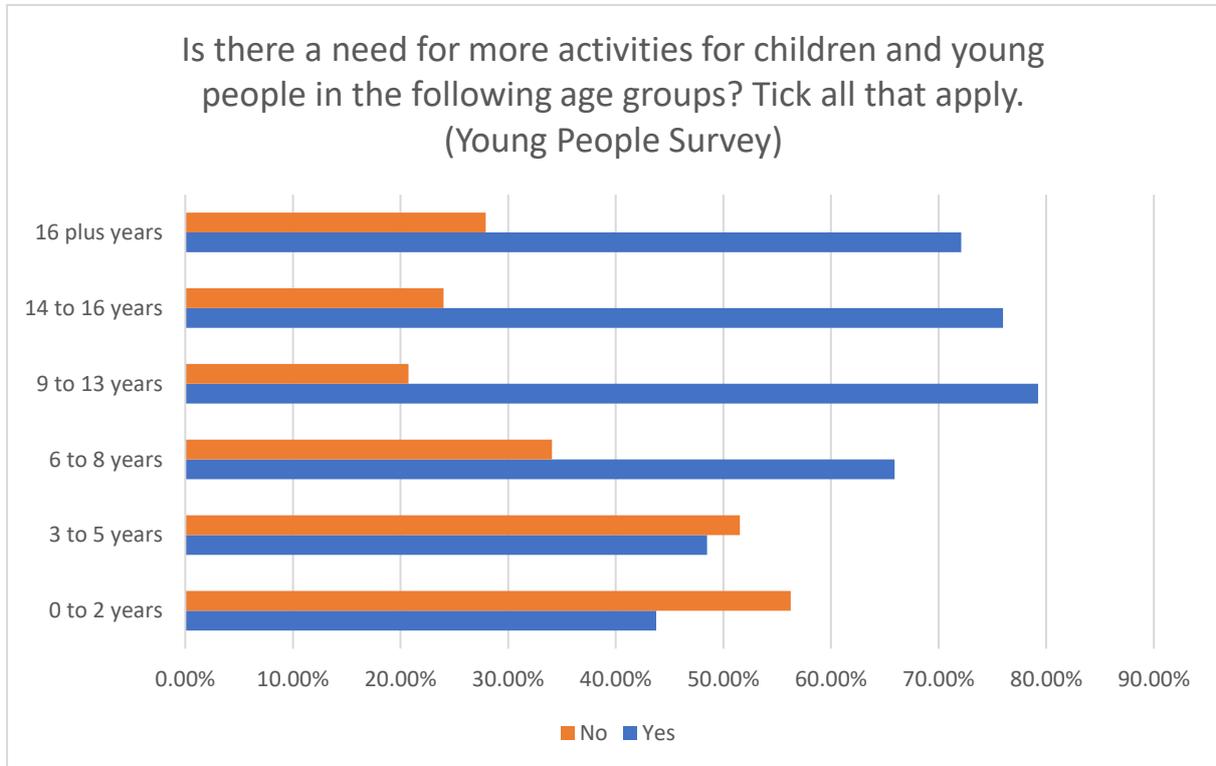
When asked about the use of community buildings, there was great support for the Jubilee Hall. 85% of the adults surveyed said they used the hall for playgroups, gym, youth group, parties and exercise. Those that don't use the hall reported nothing of interest happening there and it is not welcoming. Of those people that do use Jubilee Hall 67% felt that it was very important to the local community.

73% told us they don't use Arden House. The main reason being that, apart from bingo sessions, there isn't much going on there that interests them. Of the 27% that did use the building the majority go to bingo sessions or meetings.

Of the young people who responded to the survey 91% liked growing up in the parish, however, 61% go outside of the villages to take part in activities. When asked if there were any problems living in the parish they responded in a comparable way to the adults by saying litter and dog fouling were high on the list.

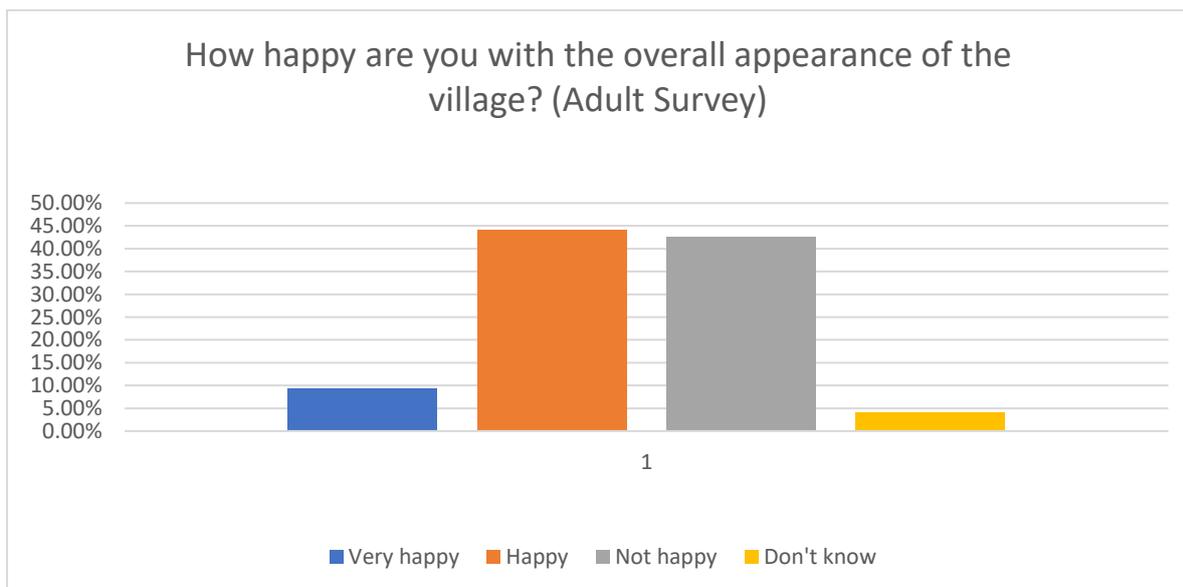
The young peoples' survey highlighted that there is a need for more activities for children and young people. 79% said 9-13 years and 76% 14 -16 years were the two groups that

needed more activities in the village, with Youth/Sports clubs coming top. Young people said they liked the play parks, grassed areas, playing football, cricket and rugby. 63% of adults surveyed also felt that additional facilities were needed for 9-13 year olds with parks and sports facilities the most popular.



### Your Village

Respondents were asked if they were happy with the overall appearance of the buildings, parks, green spaces and roads etc. The main comment was to demolish the Masons Arms followed by improving Jubilee Hall's exterior.



## Services

When asked about services that are provided in the village, the survey highlighted that almost all were happy with the services. Comments made in relation to where improvements were needed included salt bins not replenished regularly, roads not gritted often enough in the winter, pavements used for car parking and difficulty in getting a GP appointment. The business survey showed that 80% were happy with the services.

## Parks and Open Spaces

When asked “Are you happy with the Adventure Lane Play Park?” the results highlighted concerns regarding broken glass and vandalism. Positive comments were also made where people felt it was a good venue for kids and well maintained recognising all the work that had gone into its creation.

Regarding the School Avenue Play Park issues raised included vandalism, lack of activities and in particular for younger children. On a positive note, comments included “...it generally looks tidy and a nice area for families”.

There was strong support to maintain green areas and all open spaces.

## Shops, Eating and Drinking Venues

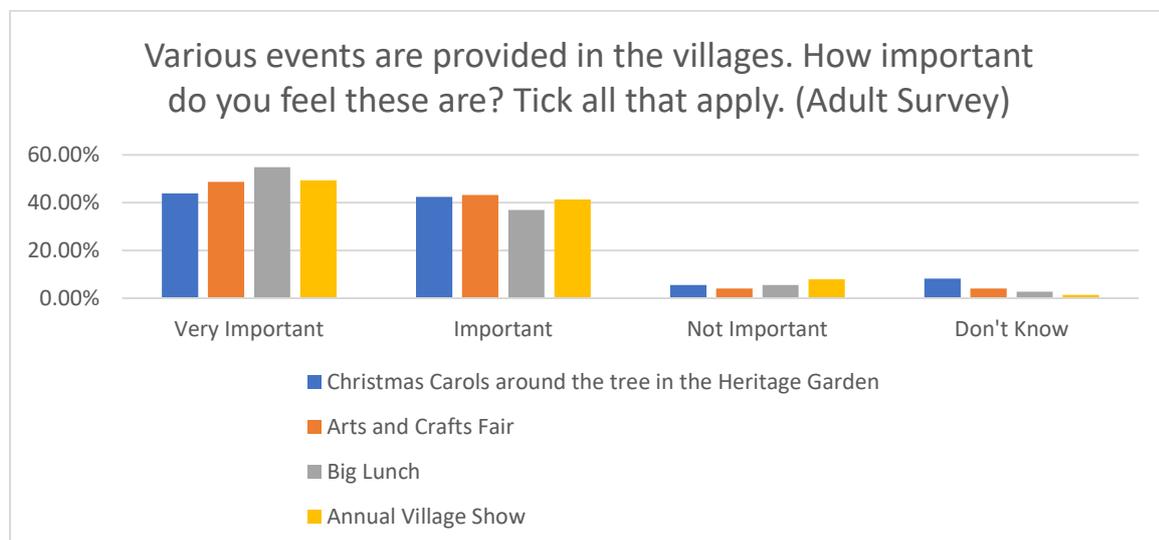
Responses were evenly split when asked if the villages have the right mix of shops. Some thought that local shops were too expensive and others suggesting more shops and bigger choice. This included the need for smaller shops who offer a good standard of food for example butchers, greengrocers and a café.

When businesses were asked the same question, 60% said there is a right mix.

When asked about the mix of eating and drinking venues, 64% of residents and 40% of businesses thought there was the right mix. Comments included a family based pub and a café/coffee shop to provide more variety of eating places and to help bring the community together.

## Events

When asked about the importance of village events, most respondents said that they were important or very important.



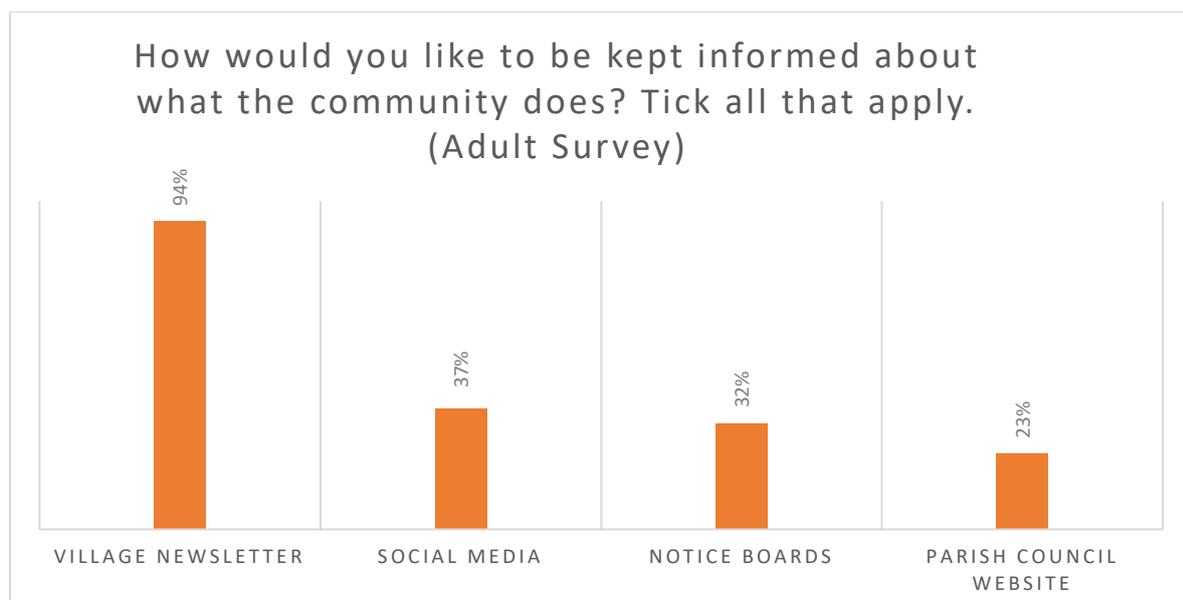
Additional comments included need for putting the community spirit back into the village and anything that develops the village would keep people more interested.



## Communications

It was evident that many residents are not aware of some community events and facilities.

A clear majority, 94%, thought that a village newsletter was the best way of keeping people informed about what the community does with social media 37%, notice boards 32% and West Rainton Parish Council website 23%.



From the business survey 100% thought the Village Newsletter was the best way of letting them know what the community does with 40% also identifying social media as a useful tool.

## Action Plan and Recommendations

Information was gathered from a wide range of local people of varying ages and backgrounds; although the response rates to the engagement methods from the community were lower than expected, those that did respond, did so with a good knowledge of the local issues and this is evident from the consistency of comments throughout the surveys and community consultations.

The involvement of local people to identify and address concerns raised has helped produce this action plan.

Required outcome	The Action
1. Parks and green spaces are improved and retained	The School Avenue Play Area is updated
	The Village Green and the area known as the "Rec" is improved with bulbs / flowers / planters.
	Improve safety and maintenance of Adventure Play Park
	Consider potential sites and costs for additional play areas
	Work with the GPs / Doctors Surgery to improve the maintenance of their green areas
	Improve public footpath to Middle Rainton Picnic Area and further improve the Picnic Area for long-term usage
	Reduce the use of herbicides in public open spaces and around the large blocks of stone surrounding these areas
2. Litter, fly tipping and dog fouling is reduced	Recruit Volunteers
	Install additional bins
	Carry out a publicity campaign to raise awareness
	Promote the valuable work undertaken by Green Group Volunteers
	Hold a big "Community Clean Up" or Pride in the Village Day
	Install covert cameras in identified blackspot(s),
	Work with local businesses
	Encourage people to use bins or take their litter home.
	Provide more information to residents
3. Improve footpaths/paving	Identify priorities for urgent repairs
4. Housing development & Mason's Arms	Continue to lobby Durham County Council
	Improve communications with residents
5. Reduce the level of anti-social behaviour and crime	Raise awareness of local PACT meetings
	Improve communications with Police
	Request Community PACT meetings to be held in West Rainton on rotation
6. Improve awareness of community groups, facilities, events and what's happening in the parish.	Improve publicity and promotion of existing facilities, community events, groups and activities

<b>Required outcome</b>	<b>The Action</b>
7. Enhance community facilities and activities	Improve the kerb appeal of Jubilee Hall
	Initiatives to resolve West Rainton Community Association's financial position
	Improve the promotion of existing activities/facilities of Jubilee Hall
	Review the options for improving or providing additional activities for all ages
8. Improved Community Spirit	Develop and implement a programme of community wide events/activities, at various locations across the parish
9. Improved road safety	Implementation of school safety 20 miles an hour safe zone and safe crossing
	Explore traffic calming measures
	Arrange speed checks in high risk areas
	Explore options for making the A690 safer for cars and pedestrians
	Ensure signage is visible
	Volunteers to monitor and report concerns to Durham County Council
	Recruit volunteers to monitor salt levels / disperse if needed and report concerns to Durham County Council
	Ensure residents know where salt bins are and where to report concerns
	Hall Lane and middle junction on gritting routes
10. More parking space in village	Design a village parking scheme
11. Better use of bus services available	Promote awareness of the Link2 bus scheme
12. Meet the need for more social activities	Improved communication of activities
	Explore the potential for access to facilities at Moor House Scout Centre and/or the establishment of a Scout Group in the village.
13. Increase the level of community spirit	Village clean up
14. Improve road signage	Adventure Park more clearly sign posted
	Ensure signage is not obscured by grass, plants etc. especially in summer



It is intended that this Parish Plan will support West Rainton Parish Council and other local partners to prioritise issues and activities for the residents both now and in future years. Implementation of actions to address identified issues lies with partners. Overall responsibility for implementation/delivery will lie with West Rainton Parish Council who commissioned the Parish Plan. West Rainton Parish Council will arrange regular communication to residents, monitor delivery/completion of actions and update the plan as and when necessary.

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## **Acknowledgements**

West Rainton Parish Council would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in expressing their views and contributing to the creation of this plan.

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