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Catalyst

AYLESBEARE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - COMMUNITY SURVEY

OCTOBER 2015

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| October 2015 | i |
| Martin Parkes – Senior Projects Advisor..... | i |
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Catalyst..... | 3 |
| Neighbourhood Planning..... | 3 |
| Methodology..... | 3 |
| Key Findings..... | 4 |
| Survey Results | 5 |
| Response Demographic..... | 5 |
| Questions 1 and 2..... | 5 |
| Questions 3 and 4..... | 7 |
| Question 5..... | 8 |
| Question 6..... | 8 |
| Question 7..... | 9 |
| Question 8..... | 10 |
| Question 9 and 10..... | 11 |
| Question 11 and 12..... | 12 |
| Questions 13 and 14..... | 12 |
| Questions 15 | 13 |

INTRODUCTION

Aylesbeare Parish Council is undertaking the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish. As part of the process community engagement is essential. A community survey was therefore considered the best way to ensure all residents had the opportunity to engage with the issues that were of importance to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

To help the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with this task, they engaged the services of Catalyst.

CATALYST

Catalyst is the in-house consultancy service provided by Devon Communities Together.¹ Aylesbeare Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group invited Catalyst to support them in developing a community survey to consider the key issues emerging for the Neighbourhood Plan.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Neighbourhood Planning is one of the new rights introduced in the Localism Act 2011. It is a way that communities can have a say on the type of development they want to see in their local area. A Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, will form part of the Local Development Plan.

Developing a Neighbourhood Plan requires a significant amount of community consultation to ensure that the planning policies it contains reflect the views of residents.

METHODOLOGY

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had already undertaken some community consultation, as well as reviewing evidence already gathered from East Devon District Council and other statutory bodies.

It was clear that the key areas for the Neighbourhood Plan were whether the community were supportive of more housing development within the parish, despite East Devon District Council identifying the parish as 'unsustainable' and therefore an inappropriate location for further housing.

Previous surveys had identified the preferred site, if further housing was desired. In addition the incorporation of a community space/village green as part of the development had already been identified in previous community engagement.

Further questions about the nature of any further housing were also important.

Beyond this more general questions about the social and digital-connectivity needs of the community were asked. It was understood that these may raise issues that cannot be addressed via a Neighbourhood Plan, but would be valuable to the Parish Council and community groups within the parish.

¹ www.devoncommunities.org.uk

With this in mind a suitable survey was developed. It was hand delivered by volunteers to almost all households within the parish. A few received it by post. Volunteers also collected completed forms, although respondents could complete the survey online, or post them directly back to Devon Communities Together should that be easier, or to protect the anonymity of respondents.

These responses were then digitised by Catalyst and the data analysed and this report written.

KEY FINDINGS

- The majority of residents would like to see some further housing development within the parish on the site behind the Aylesbeare Inn.
- Any future development should deliver a range of houses, but with a majority of 2/3 bedroom 'starter homes' for young families. The houses should be in-keeping with the rest of the village.
- There is strong support for the establishment of a multi-use hardcourt and village cinema.
- The landscape, views and scenery, and a sense of tranquillity are important values to residents.
- Broadband and mobile connectivity are poor across the parish.

SURVEY RESULTS

RESPONSE DEMOGRAPHIC

A total of 303 individuals responded to the survey. 12 chose to do this online, with the remainder completing the paper survey and returning it either to their volunteer collector or posting it directly to Devon Communities Together.

The population of Aylesbeare Parish is 585², therefore the response rate was 52%.

13 households returned their survey paper blank, and a further two wrote comments on them without responding to the questions.

168 individuals provided their postcode, from which we can see that responses came from across the parish, with the majority being from the village centre as expected.

281 respondents supplied their age bracket.

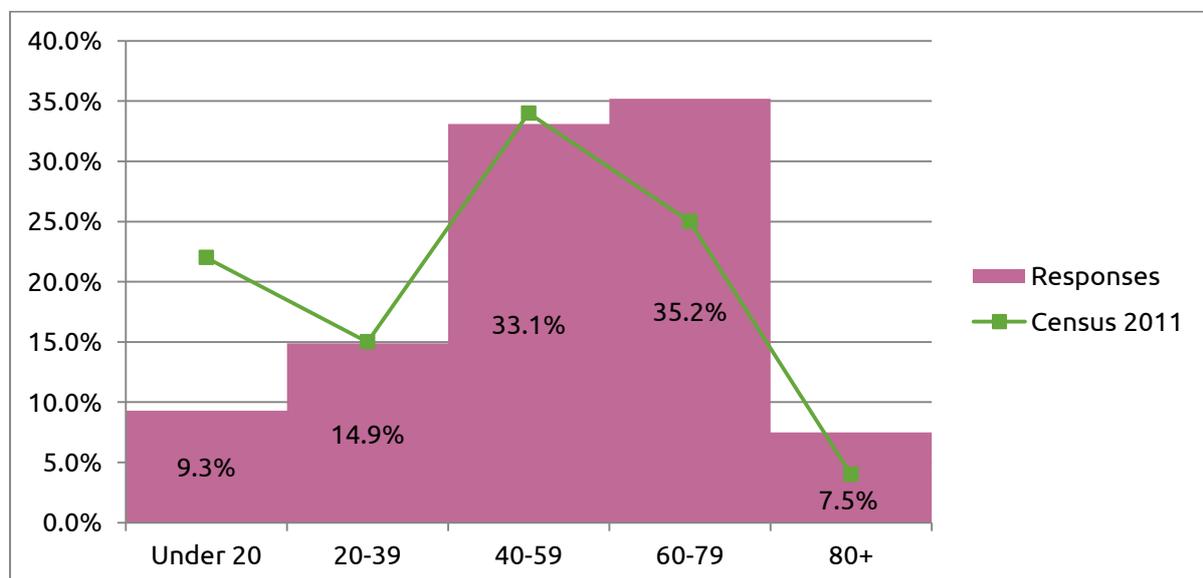


Figure 1

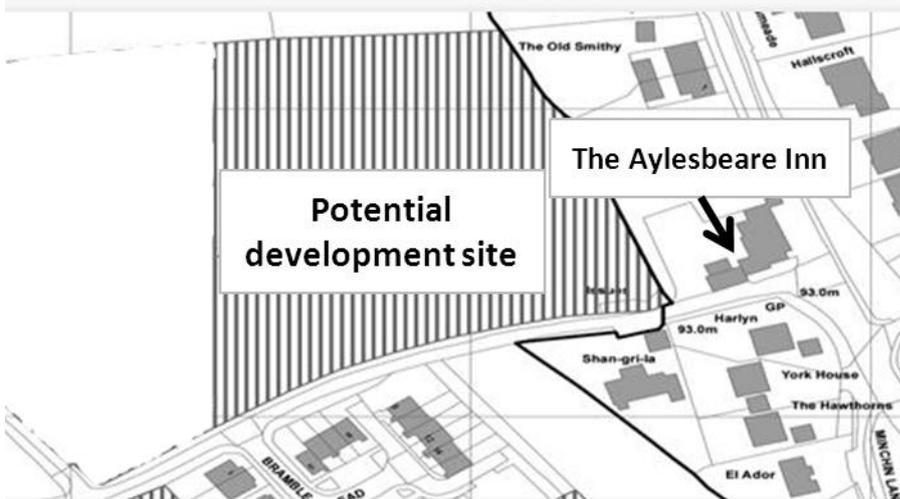
The age profile of respondents closely follows that of census 2011 data. The difference between response rate compared to population of the Under 20 age group is to be expected as very young children were not expected to respond to this survey.

With a good response rate, from an expected geographic spread across the parish, and with an age profile in line with that of the community, we can have confidence that the responses to this survey are representative of the community.

QUESTIONS 1 AND 2

The first two questions of the survey were regarding the possibility of allocating the site behind the Aylesbeare Inn for further housing development.

² Census 2011



Question 1 presented two options:

Option 1; no sites for housing development within Aylesbeare Parish to be allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Option 2: allocate the site indicated in the above map for a housing development of approximately 10 homes (depending on size and style) with community space, for example a village green.

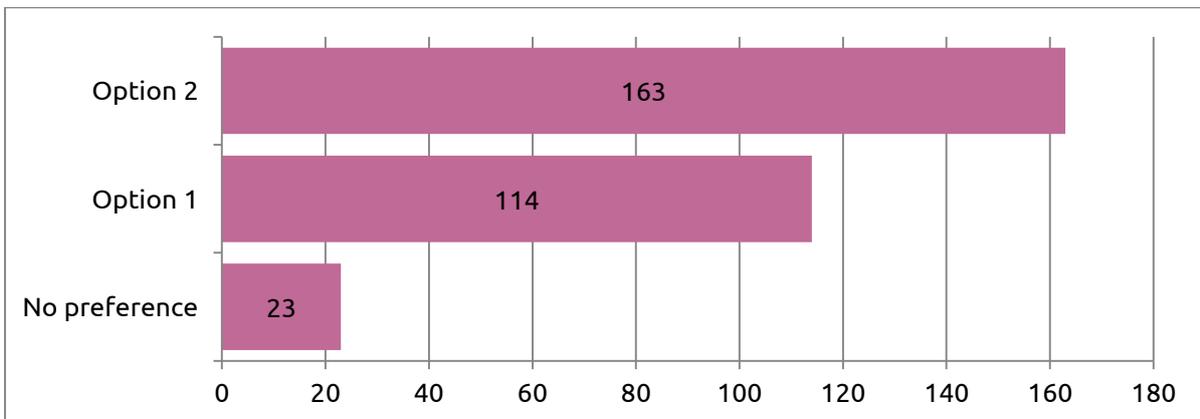


Figure 2

Of those that expressed a preference, the breakdown of responses was:

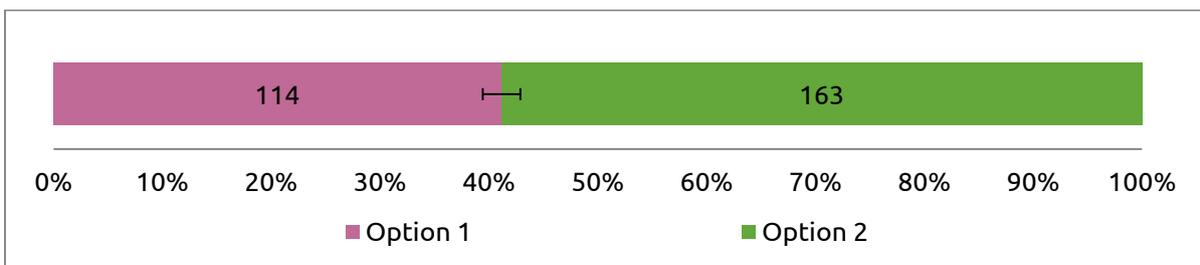


Figure 3

Therefore 59% of those expressing a preference chose option 2, and 41% chose option 1. Statistically we can be 95% confident that $59 \pm 4.21\%$ of all Aylesbeare residents are supportive of option 2.

Strongest support for Option 2 came from residents living within the village, but at its northern and southern ends. Strongest support for Option 1 came from those living within the centre of the village settlement, closest to the possible development site.

Those living in surrounding hamlets and farms provided support for both options.³

Question 2 asked respondents to give a reason for the option they had chosen. In summary, the most common reasons for not wanting the site allocated for development were:

- The village is already an adequate size with no need for more houses, with several already on the market
- Concerns about access and an increase in traffic
- The lack of local infrastructure, currently no shop, pub or school
- Agreement with East Devon District Council that Aylesbeare is not an appropriate place for further development
- Citing previous community surveys that suggested 5 more homes were the preferred option of residents

A full list of respondent's comments is available in Appendix A.

The most common reasons given for choosing option 2, allocating the site, were:

- A desire for the village to grow and become more sustainable, with more people to support community initiatives
- The village green, as a community space was desirable
- Expressing a need for more affordable or starter homes for younger and local people to be able to purchase

A full list of respondent's comments is available in Appendix B.

QUESTIONS 3 AND 4

Question 3 explored what type of housing would be most beneficial to the community.

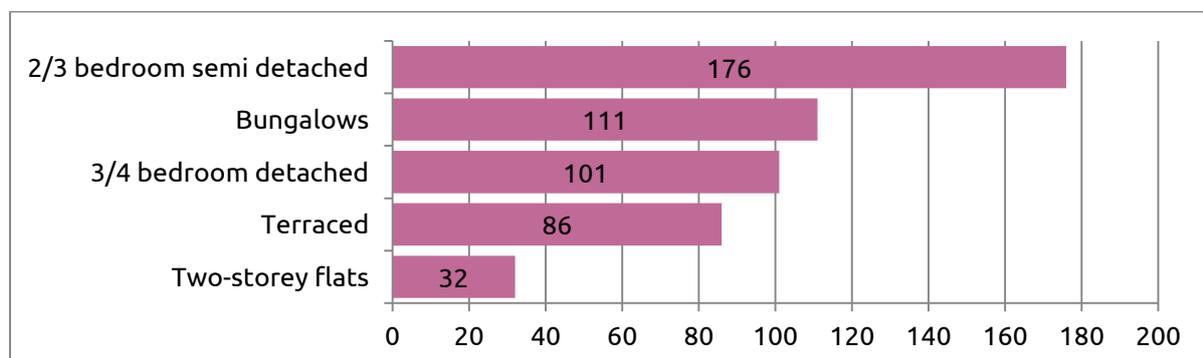


Figure 4

³ Maps of these responses are not included within this report as they may make it possible to identify which option a resident chose, therefore contravening data protection.

2/3 bedroom houses were the clear preference, chosen by 67% of people who answered this question.

Two-storey flats are clearly the least desired form of housing, chosen by 12% of respondents to this question.

Many people thought a mix of housing styles and sizes were preferable, choosing more than one option and this is reflected in the comments in response to question 4. The range of comments given can be seen in Appendix C.

QUESTION 5

Question 5 considered two statements from the Aylesbeare Parish Plan design statement:

Statement 1: If new areas of the village or parish are to be developed, the designs used should be in sympathy with the existing housing stock.

Statement 2: Experimental or "Eco" housing should be considered, even if it deviates markedly from existing houses, provided that it has architectural merit and does not dominate the area in which it is built.

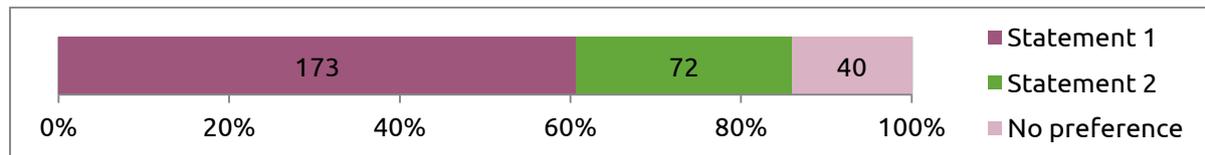


Figure 5

Statement 1 is clearly the preferred choice, chosen by 71% of people who expressed a preference.

QUESTION 6

Question 6 asked which of the following outdoor equipment the respondent would be likely to use:

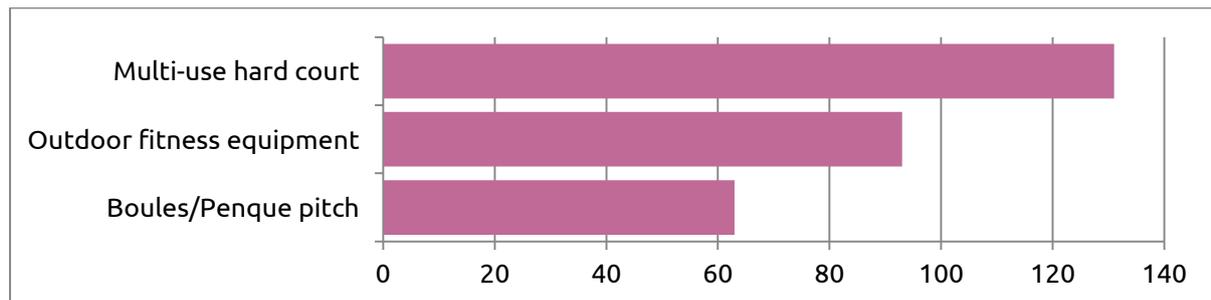


Figure 6

A multi-use court can be used for a variety of sports such as 5-a-side football, basketball, netball etc. This is the preferred option for the community.

QUESTION 7

Question 7 explored the community groups already established within the community and some that might be wanted to see which people might like to join or would like to see started. Those in green already exist; those in pink would require volunteers to start.

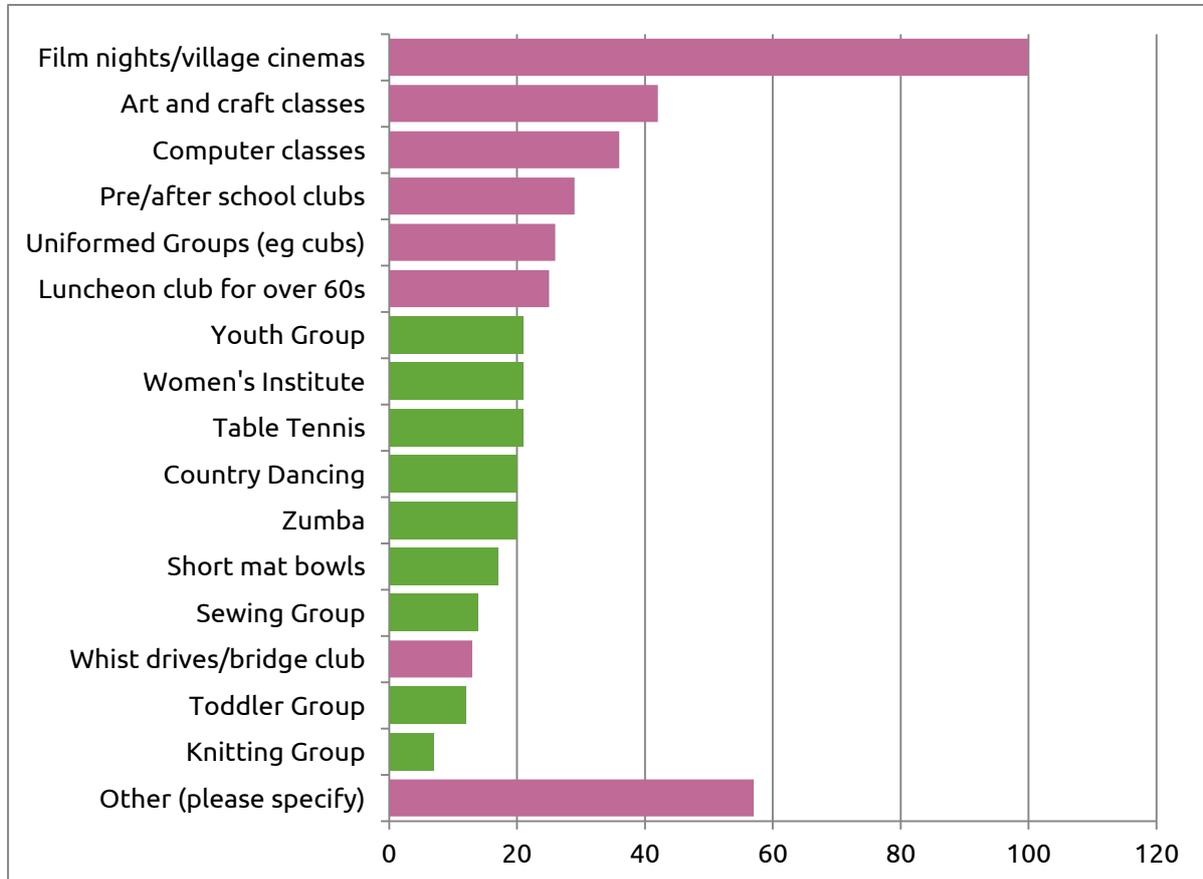


Figure 7

With the support of 100 residents it seems a village cinema would be very popular within the community. It would require the commitment of a team of volunteers to make this a reality.

The 'other' options that respondents provided did not provide significant support for any other form of community group.

QUESTION 8

Question explored what 'values' make Aylesbeare a special place to live. Respondents were asked to rate the following qualities, from 1 for the most important to 7 for the least. They are ranked here in order of priority, from top - the most valued - to the bottom - the least valued. As explained in the survey question, just because an option is somebody's 'least valued', does not mean it is unimportant, just less so than the other options presented.

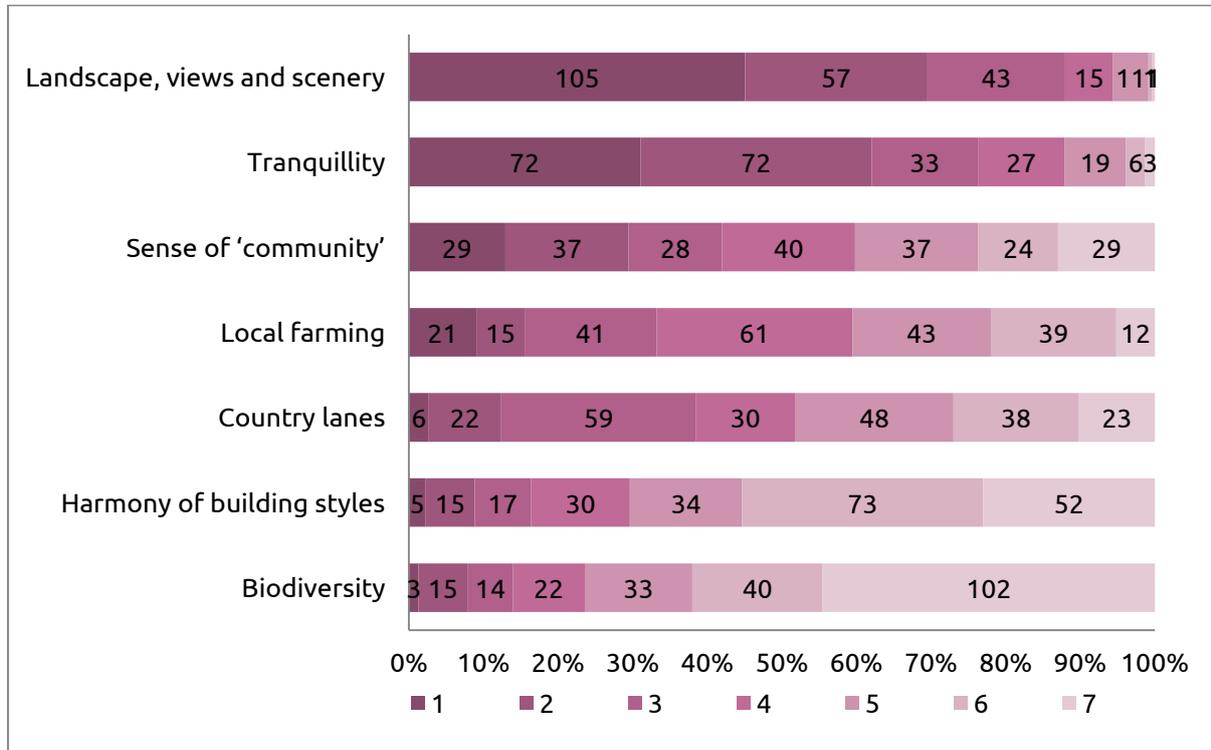


Figure 8

Landscape, views and scenery, and the sense of tranquillity are clearly the two most valued aspects of what Aylesbeare a special place to live. The neighbourhood plan should therefore seek to ensure these values are at the heart of what it seeks to do.

QUESTION 9 AND 10

Questions 9 and 10 explored people's broadband speeds. Questions 9 asked how residents would rate their broadband speed.

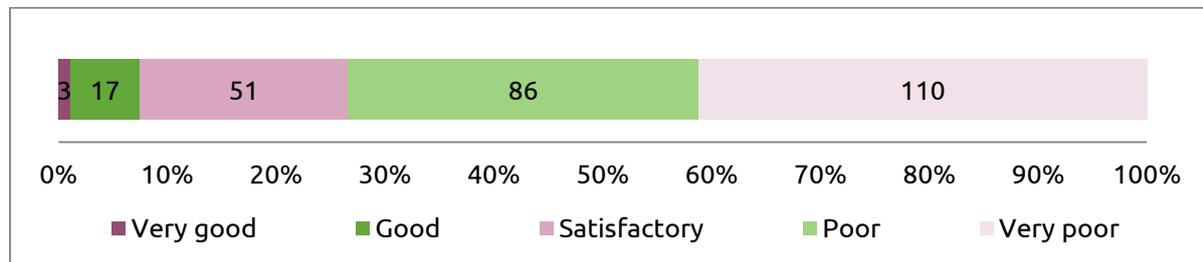


Figure 9

Question 10 followed this up by asking for the speeds households were receiving. 156 people provided this information, measured in megabits-per-second, mbps.

| | Highest | Lowest | Average [median] |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Download Speed | 72 mbps | 0.25 mbps | 4.32 mbps [1.9 mbps] |
| Upload Speed | 20.3 mbps | 0.2 mbps | 1.67 mbps [0.69 mbps] |

Figure 10

The median gives a more accurate figure of the overall speed across the parish. There were a few individuals that reported very fast speeds which distort the mean-average. Whether these very fast speeds are due to individuals leasing their own line to run a business from home, or typing error we cannot know.

Using the postcode data provided there doesn't appear to be any areas of the parish that seem to be receiving faster or slower speed specifically.

Whilst it is unlikely the Neighbourhood Plan will be able to do anything significant about these speeds, the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme from BT is will see superfast broadband become available for some Aylesbeare residents.

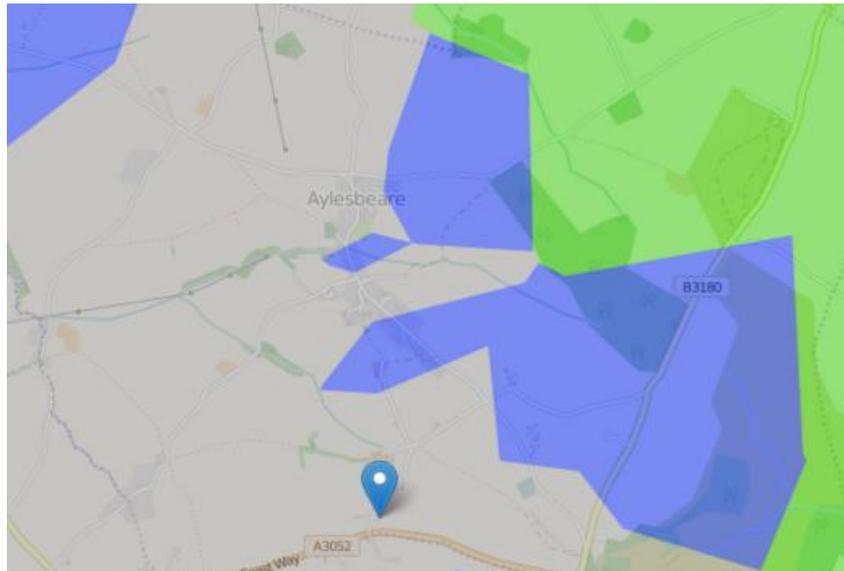


Figure 11⁴

In the map above the areas that are green should already have the option of superfast broadband, those that are blue are currently 'under evaluation' and grey are currently out of the programme. Further details are available from the Connecting Devon and Somerset website. (<http://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/where-when/>)

QUESTION 11 AND 12

Questions 11 and 12 explored resident's mobile phone reception. Question 11 asked how residents would rate their mobile phone reception.

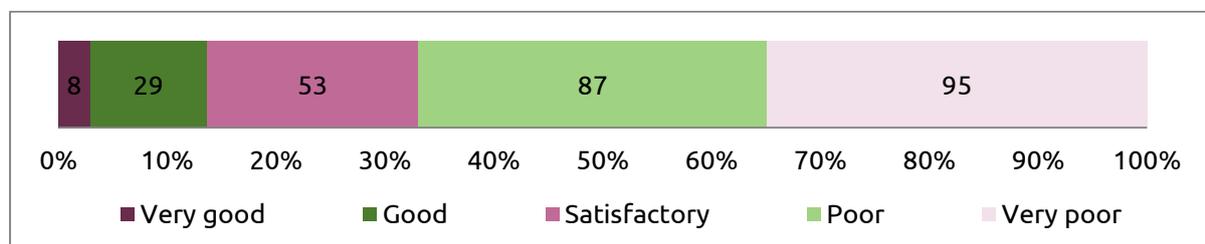


Figure 12

67% of respondents considered their mobile reception to be poor or very poor.

Question 12 asked for the mobile provider. The data about location and mobile provider does not give any clear indication of one provider being particularly good or poor, nor any location being giving particularly better or worse signal.

QUESTIONS 13 AND 14

Question 13 asked for people's age bracket, and this is reported in Figure 1.

Question 14 asked for people's full postcode. This data has been used in relation to other questions to see if there are any geographical trends.

⁴ Map taken from: <http://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/where-when/> Follow this link and insert your own postcode to see a larger and clearer version of this map.

QUESTIONS 15

Finally, respondents were asked for any other comments. 68 people provided a comment The complete list can be seen in Appendix D.

Many of the comments related to the retention of the Aylesbeare Inn, particularly as it functioned as a meeting place within the parish. People commented on a reduction in the sense of community since its closure and are therefore keen to ensure it is reopened in some fashion, to once again be a focal point for the community.

Another significant issue raised was the perceived increase in traffic through the village, both the speed of vehicles and the size.