

WEEDON BEC'S PARISH PLAN 2009



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SUMMARY

Pages 2, 3, 4 & 8 comprise the covering letter and Summary of a questionnaire that was delivered to every household and business in the parish. Its inclusion here provides a précised guide to the more detailed information that follows.

WEEDON BEC'S PARISH PLAN 2009



This Plan is based on information gained from Village Vision's Future Needs exhibition and Questionnaire.

It contains the wants, wishes and views on current and long-standing issues within the community. It also points to residents' preferred direction for the village to follow over the next decade. Please note for the sake of clarity that the information offered within the following pages is based solely on replies given by those people who answered Village Vision's questionnaire. With this 'blueprint' to hand, it is hoped that the elected councillors and officers of Weedon Bec Parish Council, Daventry District Council, Northamptonshire County Council and other agencies will use the Plan as a reference document whenever relevant. Indeed, the Parish Council has already indicated its willingness to support the Plan as best it can, when appropriate and within its remit.

All households and businesses have already received a Summary. The full Plan – this document – will be available during an exhibition in the Village Hall on Saturday May 16th 2009, when representatives of a goodly cross-section of local clubs, classes and interests will be on hand. The idea is to stimulate more participation in local events. Equally, it is hoped that new ventures may be started. People have expressed a strong desire to see a return to a good old-fashioned community spirit where all age groups come together for the sheer pleasure of it, look out for each other in everyday life, respect each other and generally make the village a truly pleasant, safe place for everyone.

All that could happen. It only needs team spirit. This village has much going for it already, especially its amenities. It could have so much more as well. It is up to us.

Remember:

~ WEEDON BEC THE VILLAGE WITH VISION ~

Geraldine Newbrook
Chairman
Village Vision

As a matter of interest: the title, 'Village Vision', was something which I thought rather appropriate when first tasked with setting up a committee to devise this Plan. Only much later did I discover that other people from other villages had had the same idea. But not to worry, there is only one Weedon Bec Village Vision!

SUMMARY OF KEY RESPONSES

This document reports on the Weedon Bec Parish Appraisal, **Village Vision 08**. The appraisal was conducted in 2008 by means of a questionnaire sent to every parish household. **399** responses were received from **1242** households/businesses.

The figures and statements given in this summary are a précis of more detailed information presented in the main body of the full report. We hope that the detail in the main body of the report will give you a better understanding of this summary.

Please note: all statistics contained and quoted in this report are from the sample size of 399/1242 i.e. 32.1% of households returning completed questionnaires. Village Vision Core Group and participating helpers are unable to accept any responsibility for the statistical reliability of summaries and conclusions contained within this report.

The Parish of Weedon Bec

The parish of Weedon Bec lies some 8 miles west of the town of Northampton. The electoral roll for 2008 records is 2,141 people

Of those who supplied details:

1. 32% of parishioners are aged 60+
42% of parishioners are aged between 19-59
8% of parishioners are aged between 11-18
8% of parishioners are aged between 5-10
10% of parishioners are aged between 0-4
2. 58% of adult parishioners are full- or part-time employed
32% are retired whilst 10% of adult parishioners selected 'other' as their occupation
3. 80% of housing is 'owner occupier'
15% Private Tenant or Housing Association
5% 'other' or didn't answer
4. 58% of parishioners have lived in the village more than 10 years
5. 25% perceive there to be a housing shortage in Weedon Bec
65% disagreed with this
10% skipped the question
6. 52% wished to see housing development at the Depot
7. 29% of parishioners had personal safety concerns in various areas of the village, primarily around the Bridges and outside the main Village Store

8. 50% of parishioners use the playground/open areas in Weedon Bec
9. 92% think there are traffic danger spots in or around the village with the vast majority nominating 'Plume Crossroads' as their main concern
10. 18.5% thought the village could be improved by floral planting whilst 15% thought more litter bins would help
11. 25% consider 'yellow lines' would help alleviate traffic congestion in the village centre
12. 56% have concerns over cars parking on pavements
13. 74% think a Weedon Bec Village Handbook (covering local services/facilities & amenities) would be useful
14. 70% consider we don't make enough of the village heritage
15. 95% are either happy or very happy to be living in Weedon
16. 71% are in favour of a pocket park (a small wild nature site in the village)
17. 76% use public footpaths, canal paths and bridleways but only 25% consider them to be well maintained





WEEDON BEC PARISH COUNCIL – PARISH PLANS

Parish Plans are all about planning for the future of the community and managing change; identifying local problems and opportunities whilst consulting with parishioners about how they want their community to develop. In turn, these plans then provide guidance to local government and other organisations, giving them the opportunity to make informed decisions on matters which affect our community.

In putting together Weedon Bec's Parish Plan there has been tremendous community effort which has given us a thorough snapshot of ideas for the future.

Out of 1,242 households/businesses, a total of 399 questionnaires were received back and these came from all areas and age groups of the parish. Whilst it may seem a small amount, given the size of the village, it still gives a good starting point to work from and we hope that, in the future, more people will get involved with the project. We can see from the questionnaires that the majority of people are happy to live in the village and that some do not want any change. However we cannot become too complacent with what we already have and we must, of course, be realistic with what we hope to achieve.

It is anticipated that fundraising activities and grant support will be required to fund some of the projects identified, particularly those which would not normally be covered by the Parish Precept. At this early stage, funding sources have not yet been fully identified but with the continued work of the Village Vision Core Group and members of the community who have expressed an interest in becoming involved, it is hoped that all projects will be actioned within an agreed timeframe.

It may have come to your notice that during the past 12 months, the time it has taken to prepare the Parish Plan, some of the ideas have already been initiated, and the Parish Council has been particularly keen to progress those matters which form part of its general remit.

The Parish Council comprises 13 elected councillors who are all volunteers and one paid part-time Clerk. The Parish Council alone does not have the resources or the powers to implement the whole Parish Plan but will be working in partnership with the Village Vision Core Group. However, the Parish Council does have considerable influence and local expertise and, working in partnership with the community and local authorities, we believe that the Parish Plan will make a positive contribution to the well-being of our community and help guide its future development.

Libby Hart
Chairman
Weedon Bec Parish Council

GENERAL INFORMATION

The parish of Weedon Bec lies in the valley of the east-flowing River Nene, and covers 815.7 hectares (approx) of land. Weedon Bec is made up of three settlements; Lower Weedon on the south side of the River Nene, Upper Weedon lies on a hillside to the southwest and Road Weedon is north of the River and located at the intersection of the Roman Road of Watling Street (A5) and the A45.

The solid geology of Weedon comprises Lias Clay, the drift geology consists of Glacial Sand and Gravels, (information obtained from Northamptonshire Archaeology/NCC)

Weedon Bec is a large village and parish in the district of Daventry, Northamptonshire, England. The Grand Union Canal passes through the village, as does the West Coast Main Line railway.

The Bec part of the name is derived from the Abbey of Bec-Hellouin, in Normandy, France, which owned most of the village until the dissolution of the monasteries, when King Henry VIII gave it to Eton College

OS reference grid	SP629596	Populations	
Parish	Weedon Bec	Year	Residents
District	Daventry district	1831	1,439
Shire county	Northamptonshire	1854	2,195
Region	East Midlands	1876	C2,000
Sovereign state	United Kingdom	1891	1,978 (inc 506 in barracks, arms depot and hospital)
Post town	Northampton	1901	1,868 (including 340 military & 40 others in barracks)
Postcode District	NN7 4	1903	1,868 (including 400 in barracks) 1,855 in ecclesiastical parish
Dialling Code	01327	1911	1,593 in civil parish (including 153 military and others in barracks)
Police	Northamptonshire	2001	2,485 (1,248 males and 1,237 females)
Fire	Northamptonshire	Want more shops? In the mid 1800s the village boasted a cabinet maker, an upholsterer, a dealer in chain, glass and earthenware, a grocer and tea dealer, ironmonger, linen and woollen drapers, a painter, plumber and glazier, a cooper, perfumer and hairdresser, tailor, a tallow chandler, and a surgeon. Plenty of ideas there then!	
Ambulance	East Midlands		
UK Parliament	Daventry		
European Parliament	East Midlands		



St. Werburgh, descended from a distinguished line of churchwomen, was abbess at Weedon early in the 7th century, some two to three centuries before monks from Bec in Normandy established their monastery here.

Tradition has it that despite her beauty and sweet nature, she eschewed marriage and chose to dedicate her life to God. In time, under royal patronage – the King of Mercia was her uncle Aethelred – she founded a religious house near here “among the swamps of the Nene” (Mee,1945), along with others elsewhere in the kingdom.

Tradition also has it that there she performed her miracle of the wild geese when she forbade them ever to settle in the parish again following their ravaging of villagers’ crops. Having happened so long ago versions of this tale vary, but even so, to this day, locals like to believe that geese still only fly over here and never settle in the fields.

In 699-700 Werburgh died at Trentham in Nottinghamshire. In time, her body, apparently still intact after some years’ interment, was moved to the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul in Chester – later to become its Cathedral. When attackers on the city unexpectedly retreated, it was believed that Werburgh was responsible and her shrine became a place of pilgrimage. She later attained sainthood and became the city’s Patron Saint. Unofficially, she is also Weedon Bec’s!

HOW WE GOT HERE

FUTURE NEEDS DAY (13 October 2007)...

...couldn't have turned out better! While a jolly Town Crier made announcements at strategic points around the village inviting people to attend, the bells of St. Peter & St Paul's Church pealed forth in celebration.



Opinions were noted, an ideas wall was built, people were shown over a working fire engine, looked



inside an old fire engine, chatted to police officers, watched a video of village views, looked at research carried out by local school children,

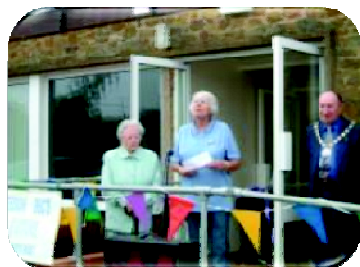
at the Brownies' route maps and the Cubs' decorated shields. There was a historical time line; people signed up for a Walk 'n' Talk through Everdon Stubbs at bluebell time; they accepted freebies of pencils, eco-friendly bags and light bulbs; stickers, and tea and snacks. They made footprint pledges, and they petted



snakes and tarantulas and other creepy crawlies.



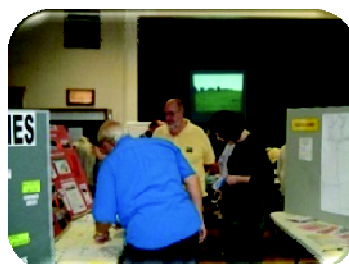
Local centagenarian Mrs. Cynthia Thwaite then planted a commemorative tree before graciously declaring the exhibition open.



At the end of the day, some 400+ residents had visited the Village Hall to see displays on subjects ranging from housing, traffic and parking, to the Church, the Depot, and the environment – what a huge subject that was! - and all points in between. In fact, anything that was community-based, the exhibition tried to cover



In all, the Village Hall was a'bustle from mid morning till late afternoon, resulting in many opinions gained, much inter-group discussion



(people talked and talked!) and hopefully, a lot of residents more aware than before of their village and its environs.

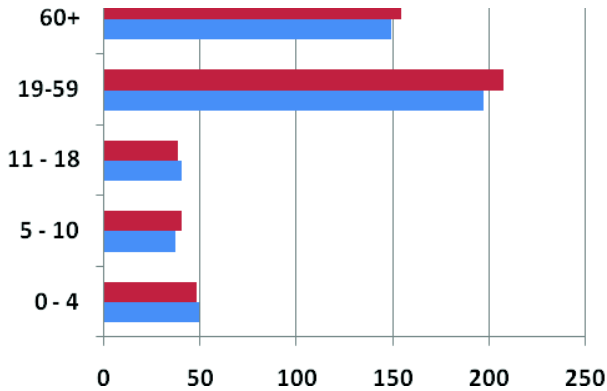
PERSONAL DETAILS

Question 1: Responses made to the questionnaire

Responses to the appraisal were anonymous but postcodes were requested in order to relate responses to definite areas – an example of this might be where speeding or the provision of particular services is an issue. The following table gives the responses per postcode and gives an indication of representation.

Postcode	Returns	Number of Properties delivered to	% Returned	General Location	Postcode	Returns	Number of Properties delivered to	% Returned	General Location
NN7 4ED	2	9	22%	Billing School Place	NN7 4RJ/ 4RL/4RN/4RW	69	129	53%	New Croft
NN7 4PN/ 4PW	4	16	25%	Bridge Street	NN7 4QS	9	31	29%	New Street
NN7 4SW	4	11	36%	Brookside	NN7 4RQ	2	24	8%	Oak Street
NN7 4QE	2	4	50%	Buswell Close	NN7 4RH	1	12	8%	Oaklands
NN7 4TF	4	19	21%	Campbell Close	NN7 4TN	1	3	33%	Orchard Close
NN7 4TG	12	31	38%	Cavalry Fields	NN7 4RE	0	10	0%	Princes Close
NN7 4PL	27	59	46%	Church Street	NN7 4QF	0	4	0%	Priory Court
NN7 4QX	19	31	61%	Croft Way	NN7 4RA	31	79	39%	Queen Street
NN7 4PG	3	19	16%	Crosse Close	NN7 4QZ	7	15	47%	Queens Park
NN7 4RF	4	13	30%	Dukelands	NN7 4PD	1	15	6%	Regency Close
NN7 4NZ	3	26	11%	Equestrian Way	NN7 4RR	5	36	14%	Riverside Court
NN7 4PJ	8	37	22%	Eton Close	NN7 4RT	6	51	12%	Riverside Drive
NN11 3BQ	1	7	14%	Weedon Lodge, Everdon	NN7 4QR/4PL	0	4	0%	St Anne's
NN7 4RP	0	2	0%	Farthingstone Road	NN7 4QL	16	28	57%	St Mary's Way
NN7 4TH	11	40	28%	Fusilier Way	NN7 4QJ	15	35	43%	St Peter's Way
NN7 4PA	2	31	6%	Gloucester Close	NN7 4QP	6	24	25%	South Street
NN7 4PB	8	54	15%	Harman's Way	NN7 4PQ	4	21	19%	The Greys
NN7 4QD	3	52	5%	High Street	NN7 4RG	2	7	28%	Tithe Road
NN7 4TJ	4	15	26%	Holm Close	NN7 4PX	0	1	0%	Watling Street
NN7 4PR	3	4	75%	Home Farm Close	NN7 4SR	0	7	0%	Weedon Road, Dodford
NN7 4QY	4	19	21%	Kings Park	NN7 4QU	35	72	49%	West Street
NN7 4PH	2	24	8%	Lancers Way	NN7 4QW	4	10	40%	West Way
NN7 4PU	1	3	33%	Little Priel Road	NN7 4PE	0	3	0%	Windsor Close
NN7 4QN	5	19	26%	Manor Road	NN7 4PF	4	25	16%	York Ride
NN7 4RS	7	14	50%	Martyn's Way	Village wide	0	19	0%	Businesses
NN7 4QH	7	18	39%	Neneside		31	0		No post codes recorded
					Totals	399	1242	32%	

Question 2: How many people are there in your household in each of the following age categories?



Question 3: If there are children in your home, where do they go to school/college, etc?

Children not attending Weedon Bec Primary School variously attend:

Dodford Nursery
 Flore Nurseries
 Leapfrog Day Nursery
 Piglets
 Weedon Bec Pre-School

Flore Primary School
 Harpole Primary School
 Pattishall Primary School

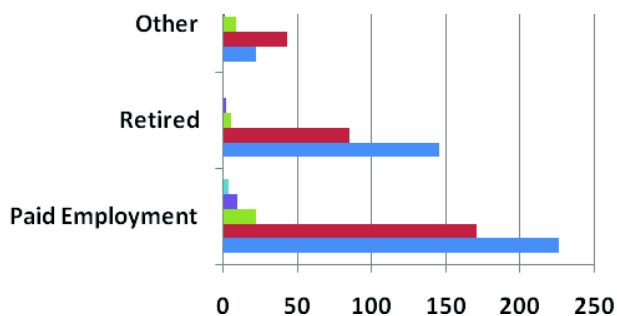
Campion
 Danetre
 Grange Junior
 Northampton High School
 Northampton School for Girls

Daventry College
 Mereway Community College
 Moulton College
 Warwickshire College

Schools/colleges in:
 Brackley
 Leamington Spa
 Milton Keynes
 Rugby
 Syresham
 Wellingborough

Bradford University
 Nottingham Law School
 St Edward's, Oxford

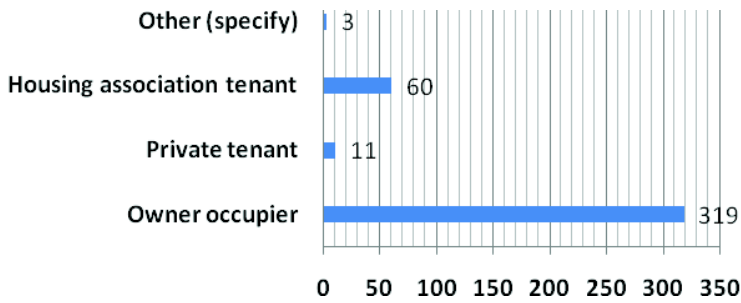
Question 4: Tick the box that most closely describes what the adults in your household do.



'Other' includes:
 Housewives
 University students
 Self-employed
 Retired
 Sick/disabled/on benefit
 Between jobs
 Own business
 Unemployed/jobseekers' allowance

HOUSING

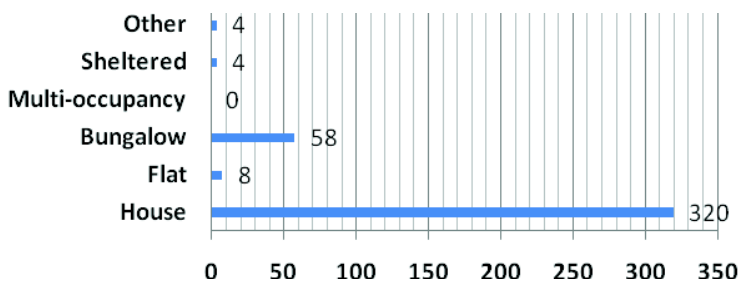
Question 5: What is the best option that describes your housing situation?



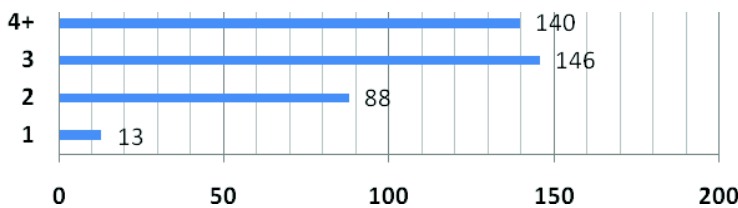
Comments included:

- Tied house goes with the job
- Business
- Flat comes with the job

Question 6: Please select the type of housing that best describes your household accommodation



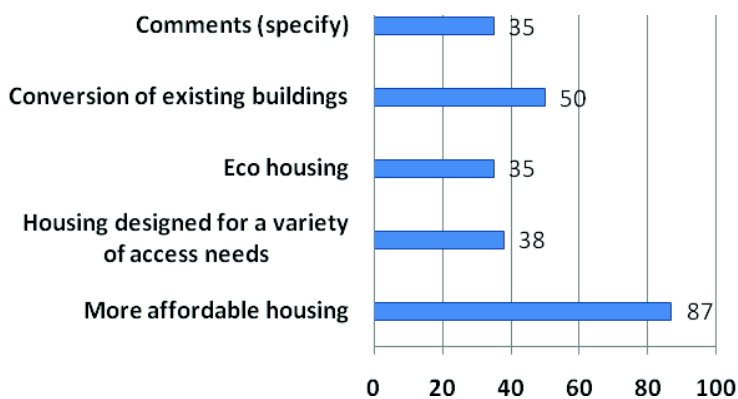
Question 7: How many bedrooms?



Question 8: Do you perceive there to be a housing shortage in Weedon Bec?

Yes 98
No 261

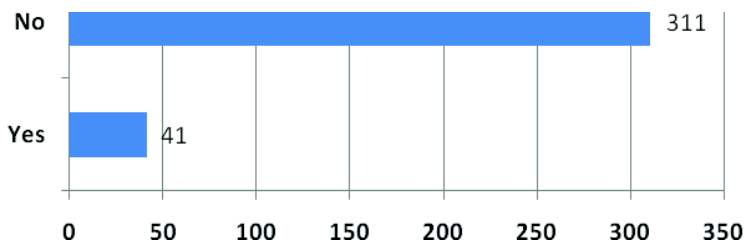
If yes, what do we need more of?



Comments included:

- No more housing: it is a village
- More properties for single/young people required
- Convert the Depot to housing
- Affordable extensions required
- Affordable housing in village only to be available to local people
- More council housing required

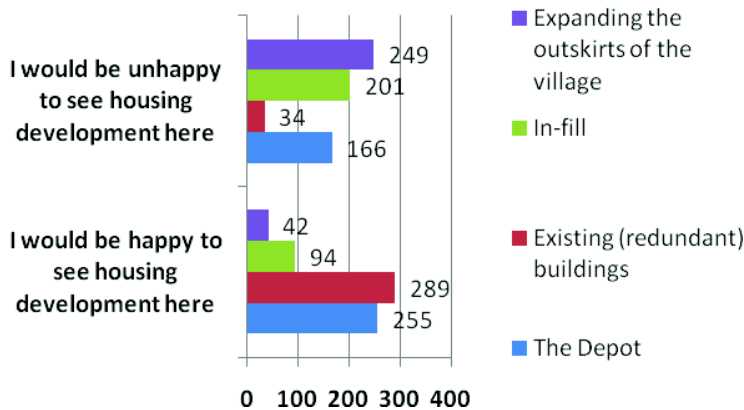
Question 9: Do you know anyone who has had to leave Weedon Bec due to a lack of suitable housing?



Comments included:

- We are currently looking to leave as we cannot find a larger house that suits our needs
- Couldn't find property to lease, now in housing association property as a result of becoming a one-parent family
- People have left because of the price of housing in the village – too expensive

Question 10: What do you think of new housing development in Weedon Bec?



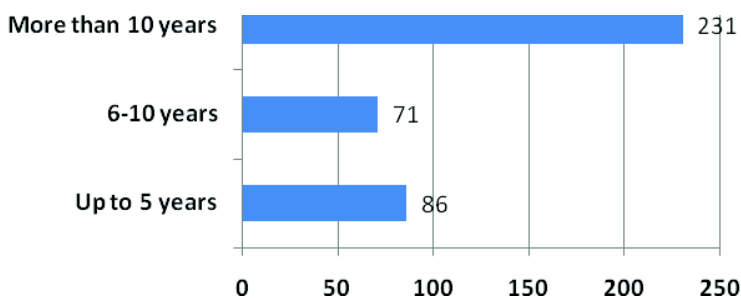
Comments included:

- No further development is required
- Happy only if conversions retain character of buildings ie not made into flats or split up
- New housing subject to it being in character
- Weedon is a big enough village as it is. If it gets any bigger it will start to feel like a town, it will be more difficult to see the doctor and it will lose its ambience
- Want to live in a village and all the new housing is quickly making Weedon just feel like a suburb

Comments on Depot

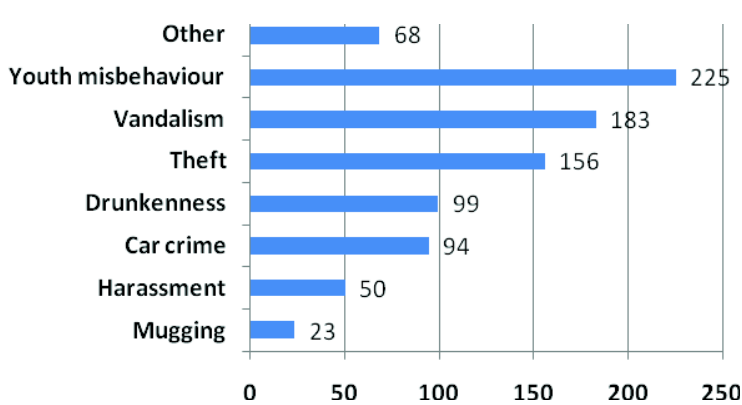
- If the depot is developed appropriately there should not be any need for further development for a long time to come.
- Depot – Only some buildings to housing
- The Depot is a listed historic building and should be restored as a national museum
- Limited housing in the depot
- Use brownfield and return Depot to practical use. Shopping village
- The depot is a unique feature and of national interest. New residential units within the depot must be limited and part of a mixed usage scheme, primarily recreational, with retail and residential as secondary usages. The depot has great potential

Question 11: How long have you lived in Weedon Bec?



SAFETY & SECURITY

Question 12: Are you especially worried about any of the following in Weedon Bec?

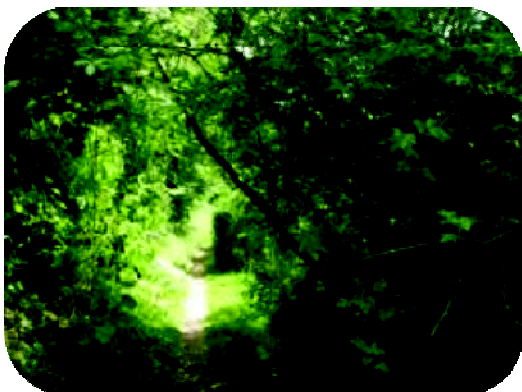
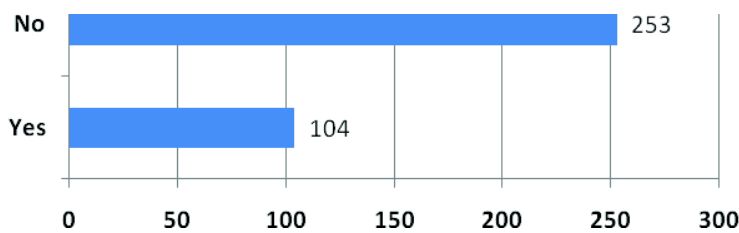


'Other' includes:

- Street drinking/bad language/rows/disrespect
- One Stop (staff/customers' safety)
- Speeding
- Inconsiderate parking/lack of parking space (village centre/surgery)
- Policing (perceived lack of reducing crime and even increased crime)
- Improved youth behaviour since PCSO



Question 13: Are there any particular areas in Weedon Bec where you feel unsafe?



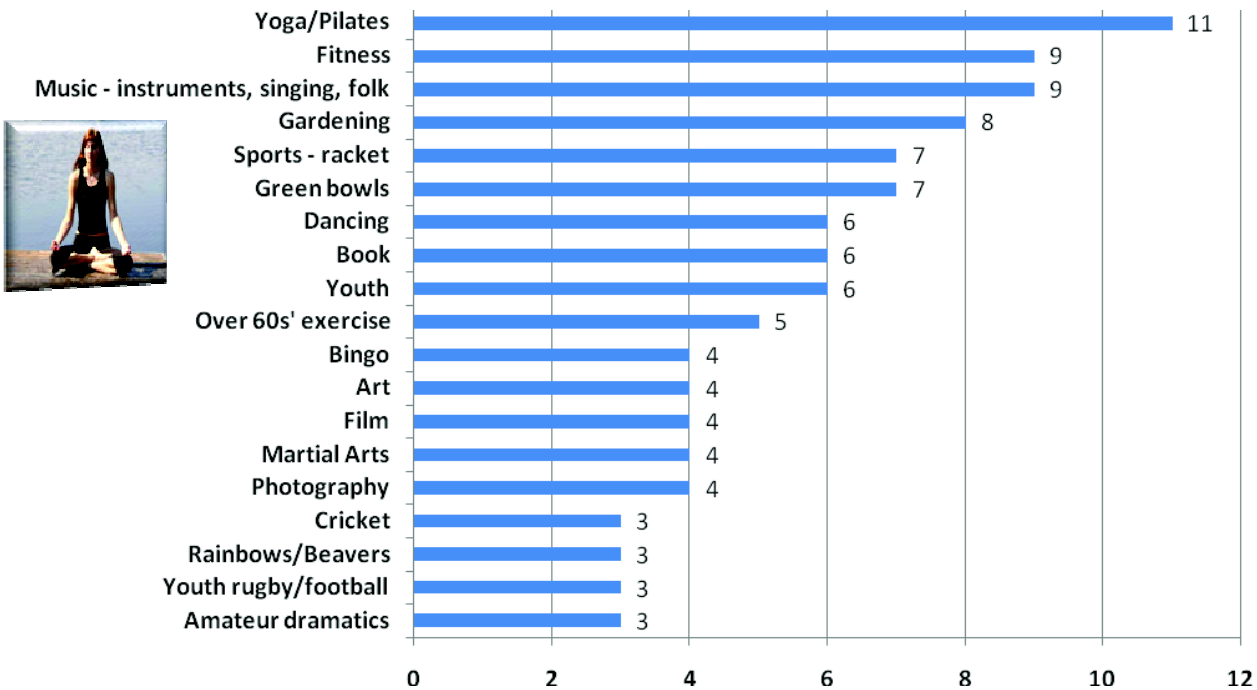
Comments included:

One Stop shop (evenings/intimidating)
 Under bridges/cemetery/High Street/Cavalry Fields
 Puddlebank/Whettles/shortcuts/Depot-Harman's Way

Suggested solutions: more policing/more lighting/One Stop 8pm closing/CCTV/alcohol ban/clear undergrowth/trim trees

ACTIVITIES

Question 14: What new clubs, activities, social events would you attend if they were available?



Other suggestions were:

Craft	Wine tasting	Rambling	Orchestra
Writing	Mah-jong	Golf	Badminton
Lunch Club for elderly	Age Concern	Walking	Open gardens
Dog walking/training	Concerts	Bridge	Summer Adventure
Singing	Choir	Flower Arranging	

Comments included:

- I think it would be nice if there were social events or clubs that mixed all ages of the community together – producing more of a familial community rather than just groups of people separated by their age group
- Anything for young, professional women with no kids!
- A drama group for younger children. A lot of villages have dramatic groups, why not Weedon? It would be nice to have more social activities for the younger people in Weedon as they really are not catered for
- Large social events that involve the whole village
- Gentle exercise/activity classes for elderly and disabled residents and those recovering from operations etc. Possibly in conjunction with Dr's – short organised walks, etc.

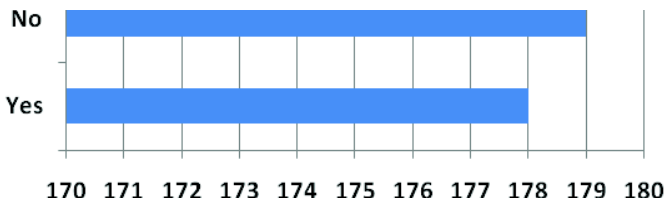
Question 15: Would you help set up/run a new club/activity/social event if there were sufficient interest?

There was sufficient interest shown in attending clubs if they were set up. These included: Green bowling, Fitness club ie walking/cycling, Youth Club/summer schools, Bridge, Gardening, Cinema, Photography, Music, Bingo, and traditional based activities.

18 people offered to help set up and run a club.



Question 16: Do you and/or your family use the playground/open areas in Weedon Bec?



Question 17: What facilities would you like to see added to the children's play areas/open spaces around the village?

Croft Way

- Seating in and outside the children's play area
- More, modern play equipment
- Skateboard ramp, roller blade area
- Football posts/pitch for kids
- Footpath around the sides for walking
- Den
- Basketball hoops
- Bandstand
- Tennis courts
- Bike park
- Swimming pool
- More landscaping
- More waste bins
- Picnic benches

Regency Close

- OK as it is
- More play equipment
- Tarmac over

Jubilee Field

- Modern play equipment
- More seating
- Sports pavilion
- Larger parking area
- Bandstand
- More bins
- Cricket nets/strip
- Better landscaping
- Bowling green
- Bowls club
- Tennis courts
- Running track
- Paddling pool
- Youth shelter
- Picnic area

Lancers Way

- No change
- Seating

Cavalry Fields

- More play equipment
- OK as it is
- Seating
- Expansion
- Rubber flooring

Equestrian Way

- No action it is OK as it is
- High netting for ball games
- Landscaping
- Seating
- Play equipment
- Skateboard ramp

General comments on all areas

- Dog mess is a big problem, more bins
- It would be nice to have more picnic benches around
- What about play equipment for older kids?

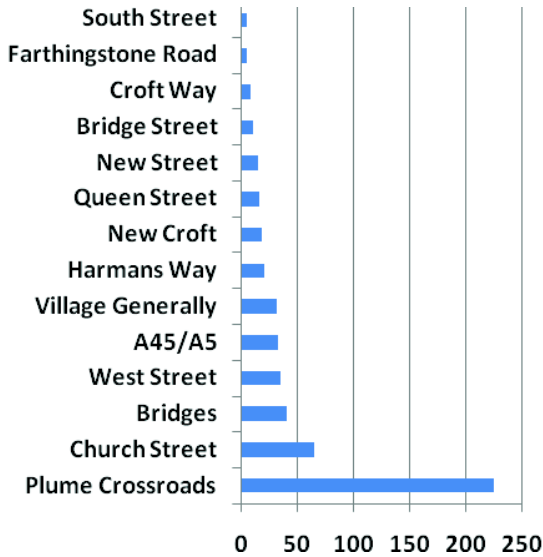


TRANSPORT & TRAFFIC

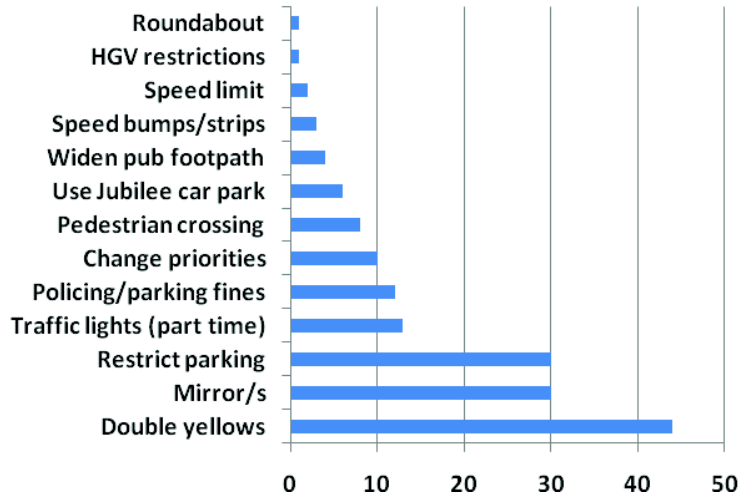
Question 18: As a pedestrian or road user, do you think there are any danger spots in or around the village?

Yes 349 (92.3%) No 29 (7.7%)

If yes, where and what measures would you recommend?



Measures suggested for Plume Crossroads

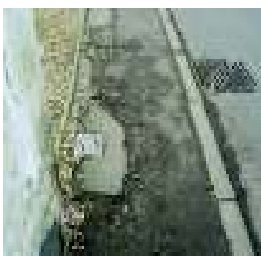
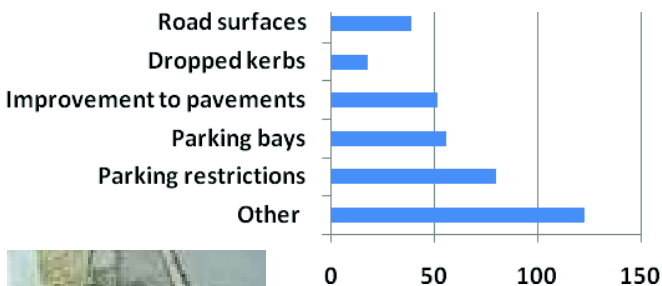


Measures suggested for other areas include:

Church Street	Bridges
Footpath between bridges	Lighting
Mirror on rail bridge near church	Reduce speed limit
	Prioritise traffic
West Street	Village generally
Speed bumps	One way system
20mph speed limit	No parking on pavements
Parking on one side	Reduced speeds



Question 19: If you had the chance of one improvement to your street, which of these would you choose?

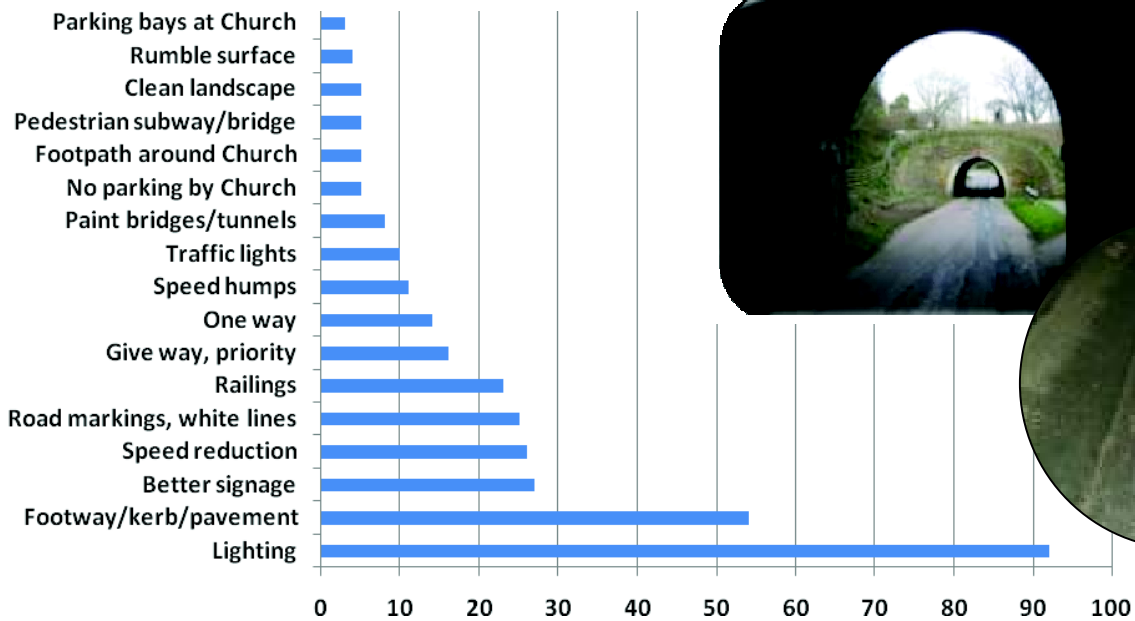


Comments included:

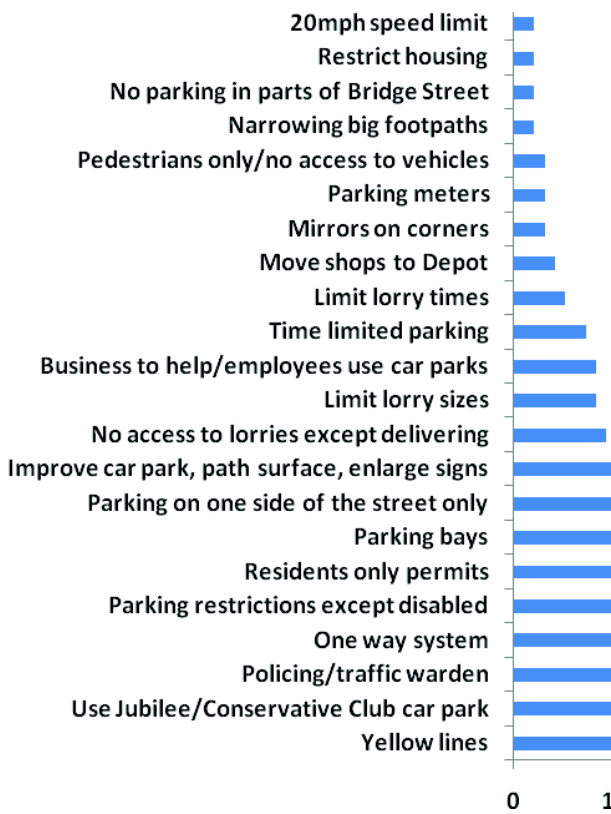
- Parking problems common around most of Weedon Bec
- Road re-surfacing at Cavalry Hill Industrial Estate (mentioned by many at Cavalry Hill)
- Speed restrictions should be put in place all over village

'Others' include: Better street lighting, filling in of potholes, cars parked on pavements, one way restrictions in certain areas of the village, people with driveways should be made to use them, speed humps and more use of cameras, new street signs, build a new road from Cavalry Fields to the village, better – more visible road markings, parking permits for residents in some streets in the village.

Question 20: What improvements could realistically be undertaken to make the areas under the Canal/Rail bridges more pedestrian friendly?



Questions 21: What could realistically be done to reduce congestion in the Village Centre? Tell us your views.



Comments included:

- Designated parking bays outside One-Stop to maximise number of spaces. Limit parking from Post Office to Deli to 30 mins between 9am and 5pm. To re-enforce use of Jubilee Fields parking area would need resurfacing – gets muddy quickly.
- Enforce existing law regarding parking close to junctions and on pavements. Double yellow lines – this would not affect Blue Badge holders who have certain privileges
- Congestion is an excellent way of slowing down traffic, reminding people they can walk to the shop and that they should have smaller cars. Long may it continue as it stops people using the village as a 'rat run'
- One way system in place

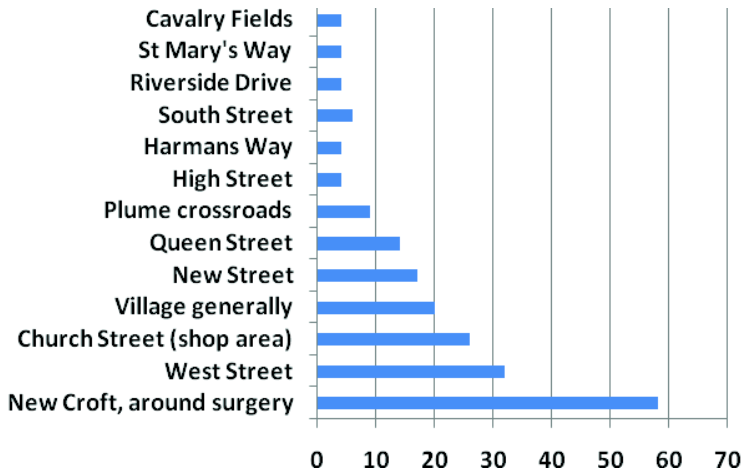


Question 22: Do you experience issues with parking or congestion anywhere else in the village?

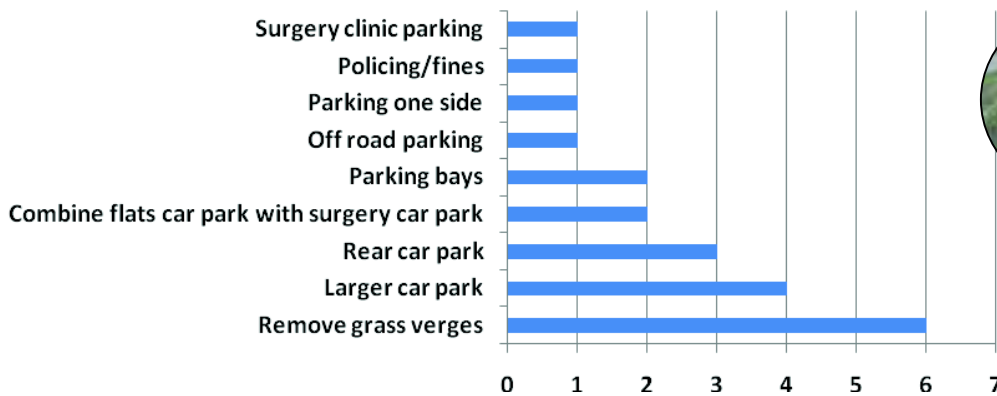
Yes 187 57%

No 141 43%

If yes, please say where and give your comments on improving the situation



Improvements suggested for New Croft



Suggestions for other areas included:

Church Street

- Parking permits
- Disabled parking
- Smaller delivery vehicles

New Street

- More parking spaces
- Parking on one side only
- Parking permits

West Street

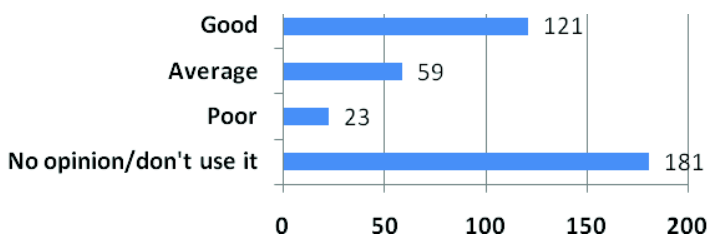
- Parking one side only
- Yellow lines
- Residents' permits
- More off-road parking

Village generally

- Use car park more
- One-way system
- Policing
- Residents permits

Other streets (generally the same comments): residents' parking permits, parking on one side only, use driveways if properties have them, no parking on the pavements

Question 23: What do you think of the bus service?

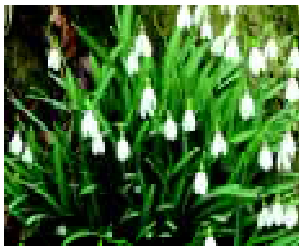
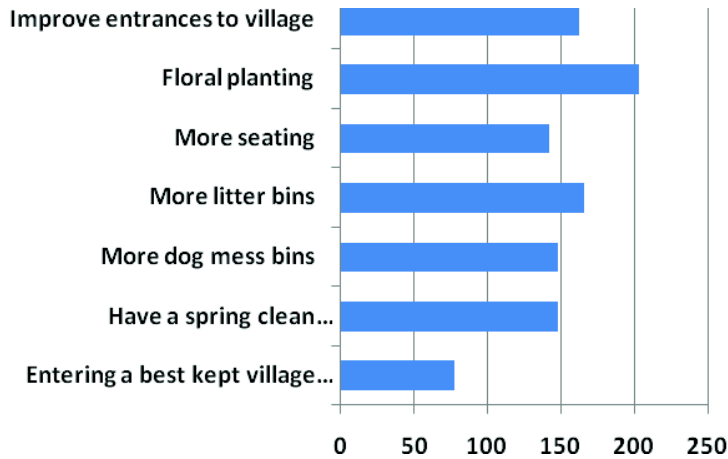


Comments included:

- 23% would like Bus No. D3 route to be more frequent
- 13% requested a bus to Towcester, Milton Keynes and beyond
- An eighth suggested the route to include West Street and Cavalry Fields

ENVIRONMENT

Question 24: How best could Weedon Bec be improved?

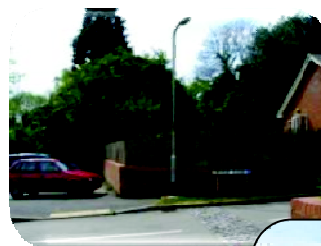
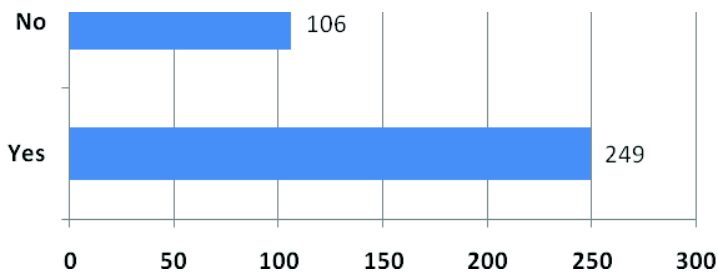


A wish list included:
 Heritage trail around village;
 plastic or metal seats instead of wooden ones; River walk;
 directional signs for the Church;
 recycling points; bus shelters at all stops.

Comments included:

- More colour required to enhance appearance particularly on entering the village; more floral planting
- Dog mess on footpaths is still a problem – more warning signs at eye level
- Improve entrances to village by floral displays especially around the village sign and key areas like the village parking
- More litter bins and an anti-litter campaign enforced by the police
- The village needs all of above plus more enforcement on dog fouling and litter. Repair damaged roads, pavements and verges
- The appearance of the village is being ruined by allowing parking on the grass verges. It looks untidy when vehicles are parked and a total mess when vehicles leave and the mess is apparent
- Improve entrance off A5 opposite The Crossroads – signage, possible flowers or plants on triangle of grass also, entrance opposite Clarke's Garage, a historic sign?
- "Somehow change the apathy of the people who are prepared to live in such an untidy, dirty, place."

Question 25: Do you feel the street lighting in the village is adequate? If no, which area do you feel is not adequately covered? Please explain

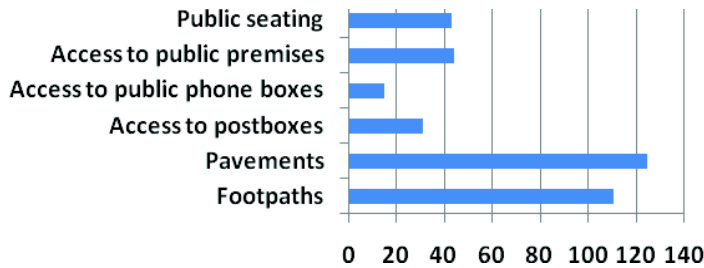


Specific areas identified: amount of responses per street

Under the bridges in both Bridge and Church Street – 37
 Bridge Street from bridges to flats – 8
 St Peters, Queen St (nr farm), New St, Harmans Way – 5
 Church St, Croft Way, Ellands Lane – 3
 Cavalry Fields, St Peters Way, Jubilee Fields, South St, Martyns Way alley to Manor Road – 2
 18 people said street lighting was all right as it was.

New Croft – 15
 Cavalry Fields, Church Street, West Street – 6
 Whettles, High Street, Queen St (generally) – 4
 Eton Close, Priel Road, West Street – 1

Question 26: Are there any particular problems for people in Weedon Bec with access issues eg disabled, elderly or children in pushchairs?



Comments include:

- Many shops are not easy for the disabled or elderly to get into
- Need footpaths under railway bridges
- Whettles not accessible to invalid scooters and multi-pushchairs, nor is Puddle Bank which is only accessible to larger pushchairs/Invalid scooters via Church Yard at a pinch. Some too narrow for larger invalid scooters and child carriers:

- Pavements are frequently obstructed by parked cars and vans. There is usually no need for them to be parked on the pavement as the road is plenty wide enough to allow a car past. But they park half up on the pavement and do not leave enough room to push a pram past. Always end up walking in the road at some point when walking to the shop



Footpath comments

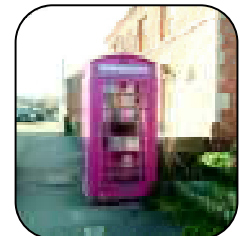
Too many cars parked on pavements - 52
 Plume corner – Footpath narrow – 18
 Puddlebank – Access difficult for mobility scooters/pushchairs – 10
 Behind Wharf House – Uneven or steep – 4
 Under bridges – No footpath – 4
 Better dropped kerbs needed for mobility scooters – 1
 A footpath wanted between Cavalry Fields and village – 1

Post Box comments

Not enough around the village – 7
 Would like a post box – Cavalry Fields – 6
 Would like a post box – New Croft 4
 Too high for disabled – 4
 Would like a post box – Riverside Drive – 3
 Would like a post box – Manor Road

Phone Box comments

Keep the red box – 3
 Do we need them – 2
 No coin operated ones – 2



Access problems

Church Street including Post Office, pharmacy, deli, dentist etc – 31
 Canal/Puddlebank/Whettles for pushchairs and mobility scooters – 5
 United Reformed Church – 1

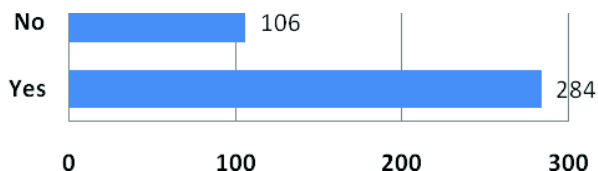
Seating comments

More seats generally – 18
 More seats Cavalry Fields/Croft Way playing field – 4 each
 Adequate seating – 4

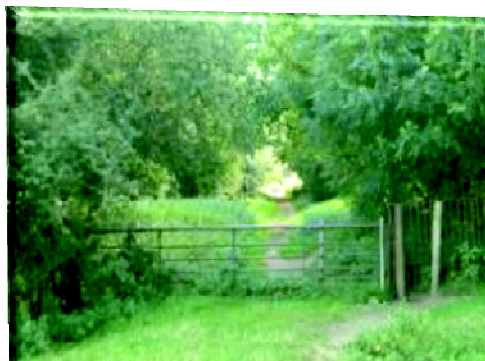
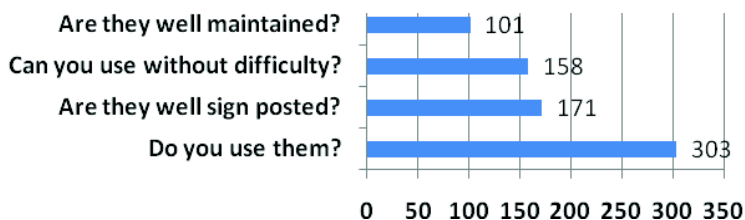
General comments

More dog/litter bins required – 25
 Bus stop access New Street – not for disabled – 1
 Need disabled parking around shops – 5

Question 27: Are you in favour of a pocket park (a small wild nature site in the village). (Answers to this question will be forwarded to the Parish Council.)



Question 28: In relation to public footpaths, canal paths, pathways and bridleways around Weedon Bec?



Comments include:

- Towpath needs to be resurfaced to enable use by walkers, cyclists etc; not good at all especially in wet weather
- Puddlebank overgrown and extremely narrow due to soil slippage from canal bank. Footpath behind "The Wharf" leading to Barneys Bridge from Church Street inaccessible
- I cannot access a canal path unless I go to the A5 ramp, but then cannot get back into the village
- Would like to see maps about the village showing the various pathways/bridleways
- On the whole things are fine – dog fouling is very annoying (and I have dogs) – improved sign-posting would be great
- In relation to the Parish Council maintained footpaths/pathways they have regular maintenance and on the whole are easily accessible: However the footpaths/bridleways which are the responsibility of the landowners and Northamptonshire County Council not so well looked after or accessible. Field accesses are too narrow for some people/dogs to get through and not accessible to a buggy for a child; stiles are too high to step up on/jump off or covered in bramble/nettles so not useable; the 3 metre (10 foot) side strip agreed with Northamptonshire County Council, to prevent walking through centre of crops, are not maintained and, in fact, walking the fields can be so difficult it isn't worth the effort. With Lover's Lane there is so much mess and 'fly tipping' at times it is not safe for humans to walk, never mind dog walking
- Suggest a survey of paths be carried out to indicate where each is heading, ie Puddlebank (from Church Street to Bridge Street) behind the Church



Problems identified on specific footpaths include:

Puddlebank

Not well maintained – 49
 Not child friendly/pushchair friendly – 8
 Cannot use without difficulty – 14
 Narrow in places – 2
 Dog mess problems – 15
 Footpath unstable – 3
 Footpath dangerous when wet – 9

Lover's Lane

Dog mess – 12
 Stiles not dog friendly – 6
 Flytipping problems – 9

Grand Union Canal

Not well maintained – 23
 Well looked after – 5
 Not child/pushchair friendly – 2
 Cannot use without difficulty – 21
 Narrow in places – 6
 Steps steep or slippery – 3
 Steps overgrown – 10
 Dog mess problems – 6
 Footpath needs resurfacing – 2
 Footpath dangerous when wet – 9

Footpath behind Wharf House

Not well maintained – 17
 Access not pushchair or wheelchair friendly – 4

Whettles

Well maintained – 12
 Dog mess – 19
 Flytipping – 2

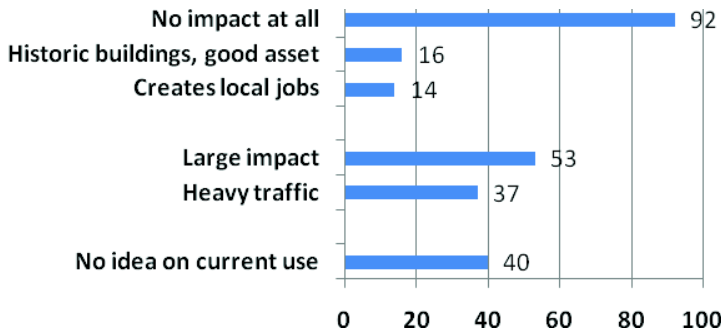
Footpaths generally

Cannot use without difficulty – 46
 Leaflets should be made available showing routes – 9
 More signs required – 3
 Signs from canal to village centre – 2



FACILITIES & SERVICES

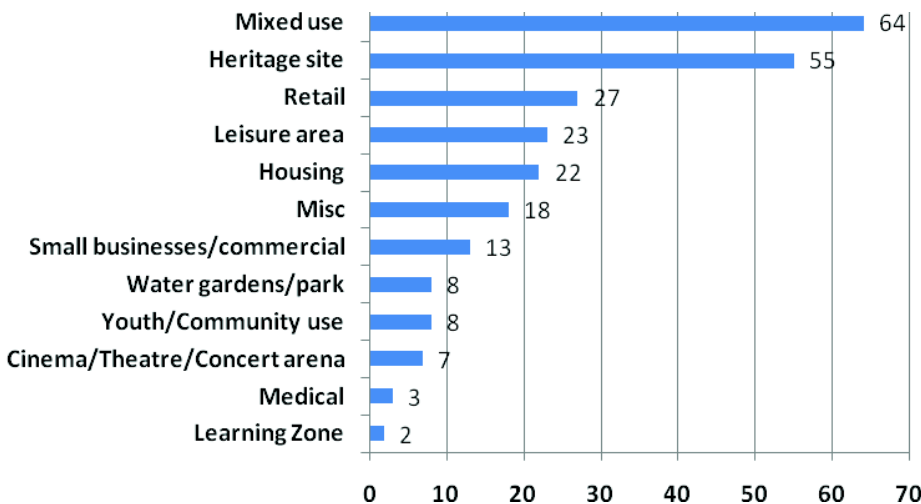
Question 29: How does the current use of the Depot impact upon the community?



Comments include:

- Not in any way whatsoever but it should be developed for the good of the village
- It doesn't. How do you get to see and appreciate the very fine buildings and its historical significance? This could be a major attraction if opened up and used in part as a museum or heritage centre combined with a more national attraction of appropriate scale
- Badly. The surrounding wall needs repair, it's dangerous. The canal arm is a disgrace, full of rubbish which should be cleaned regularly
- Too many huge lorries coming through the housing estate starting before 6.00am. The roads are not wide enough. Need to open the route from the A45.
- What a shameful waste of what could be a fantastic development
- Currently an eyesore. Those of the village who live in Cavalry Fields were promised its development as part of their house sales

Please describe any uses for the Depot that you feel could benefit the community, and which the owners could incorporate into any future renovation/development plans.



Mixed use includes:

Art and craft exhibition areas, library, small businesses, housing, restaurants, pubs, shops, cafes, etc.

Miscellaneous use includes:

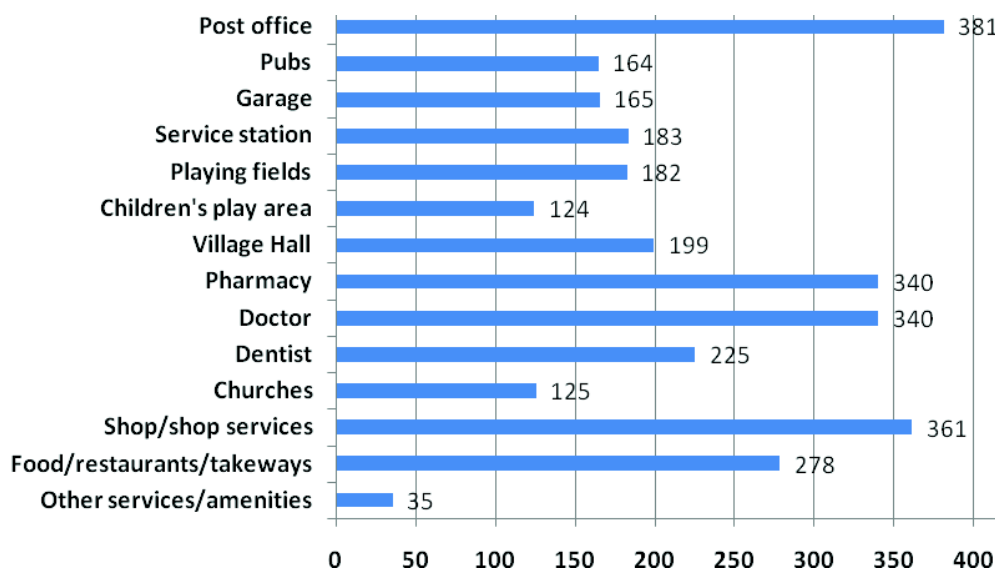
Walkway from Cavalry Fields
An alternative access road
Large area for parking
Cleaning the canal
Car boot sales
Re-establish equestrian link



Comments include:

- Re-establish link with canal and use as marina instead of trying to do this in Daventry (it would be cheaper here). Small industrial use only, no large lorries. Cafes and restaurants with a craft centre
- Mix of things: shops, housing, community, exhibition areas, restaurants, etc. It's big enough to do all these.
- Retail park like Bicester!
- "The site could be transformed into a fantastic retail park incorporating secure shops, restaurants, factory outlets, museum, historical events related to the camp history, water features in the canal and lots lots more creating employment and wealth for the village
- Public amenities such as sports hall, bistros, cafes, quality shops. Depot museum
- Exhibition hall for arts groups/theatre groups/cinema

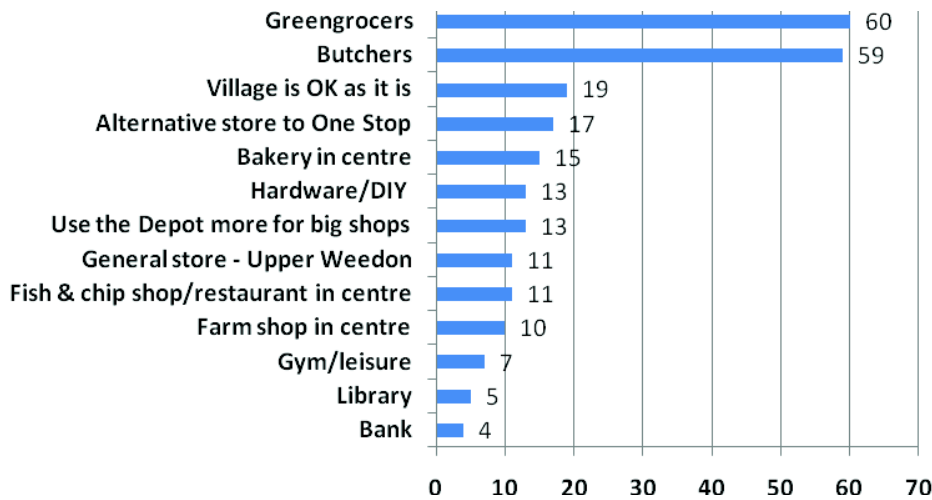
Question 30: Which facilities do you use?



If relevant, what would make you use them more:

<p>Post Office</p> <p>More flexible, ie use of debit card to pay for all items together Difficult access for pushchairs Better parking facilities Open at more convenient times for people who work Currency without ordering</p>	<p>Children's Play Areas</p> <p>Clean, modern equipment Somewhere to ride a tricycle on flat ground No dog mess Play equipment suitable for younger children General upkeep of areas</p>	<p>Shops/Shop services</p> <p>Prices Improved customer service Individuality, specialisation, niche marketing Have their deliveries made at appropriate times Increased quality of foods and providence, ie local Parking</p>
<p>Food/Restaurants/Takeaway</p> <p>Weekend hours, ie Sunday breakfasts Deli good, would welcome the return of the vegetable shop Home delivery service Better parking More in the centre of village rather than on the main road</p>	<p>Churches</p> <p>More family-friendly services For the Church and Chapel to be open every day for devotion, not available due to theft and vandalism Art exhibitions, concerts, choirs, etc.</p>	<p>Surgery</p> <p>Saturday morning opening 1-2 pm closing is crazy for people who work, this is the only time some people can get there Better parking</p>
<p>Pubs</p> <p>Lower prices Weedon lacks a quiet popular pub which serves food Nicer interior to village centre pubs</p>	<p>Village Hall</p> <p>Yoga/pilates class More events going on for the whole community More family-type entertainment More licences – so more events could be held</p>	<p>Pharmacy</p> <p>Saturday morning opening 1-2 pm closing is crazy for people who work, this is the only time some people can get there</p>
<p>Playing Fields</p> <p>Better park facilities Skateboard ramp, more basketball hoops Extra seating</p>	<p>Garage/Service station</p> <p>Lower fuel prices Car wash, not jet wash Facilities to cross the A5</p>	<p>Dentist</p> <p>Better access for the infirm/disabled</p>
Other services/amenities		
<p>Seating at bus stops for the elderly Having a police surgery at the Village Hall</p>	<p>A public toilet in the village centre would be of great benefit</p>	<p>A post box in New Croft probably somewhere near the surgery</p>

Question 31: What additional shops/facilities/services would you like to see in the village (and where, if relevant)?



Other ideas included:

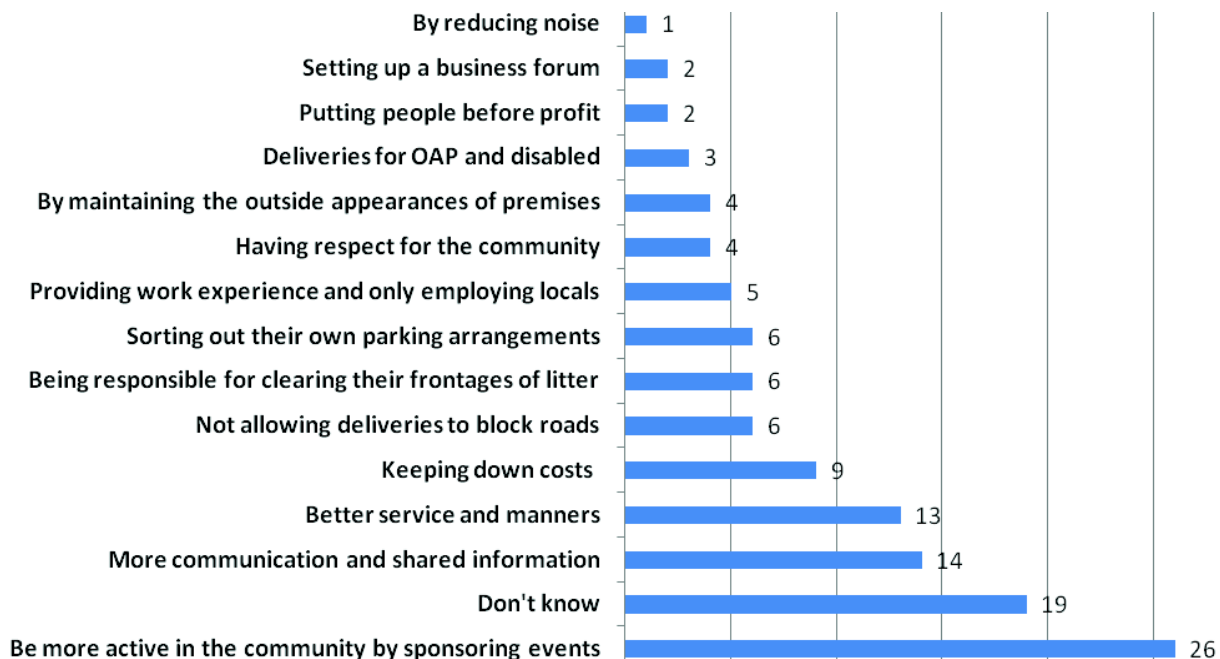
Newsagents, vets, regeneration of Depot, pet shop, open the train station, charity shop, fishmongers, pizza parlour, ice cream parlour, wholesale health shop, pub in Upper Weedon, canal shop, sports shop, laundrette, Wilkinsons, mini M&S food hall, Police house, bookies, fishing shop, taxi, frozen foods, youth club, hairdressers, dry cleaners, Starbucks.



Comments include:

- Additional shops in the village centre would exacerbate the congestion. For a village we do well for facilities and services
- Village stores in Upper & Lower Weedon. Having only one means outrageous prices. There used to be 20 shops in Lower Weedon alone
- Butcher's, greengrocer's, etc. Have to catch the bus to Daventry for fresh meat or get a lift to Nether Heyford
- A good greengrocer's. A general store for Upper Weedon. Weedon is expanding and we need more shops, butcher's, newsagent's, etc

Question 32: How can a good relationship between local businesses and the community be maintained?



Comments include:

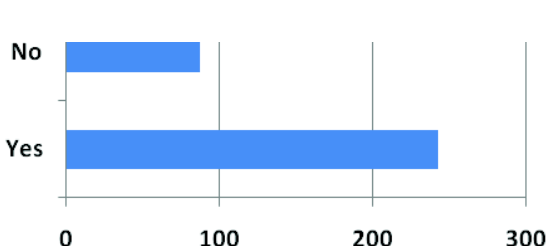
- Waste bins cleared quickly when empty. Considerate parking for deliveries and by customers. Building work should not cause a nuisance and mess of the public paths and roads near to them
- Employ village people. Treat people politely!
- Open, honest communication and having a respect for residents' quality of life

COMMUNITY

Question 33: Weedon Bec could seek to be twinned with another similar-sized village somewhere else in Europe. This would create a link between the two locations and lead to partnership activities such as cultural visits. Would you be interested in becoming part of a Twinning Steering Group?

15 people were interested in this idea.

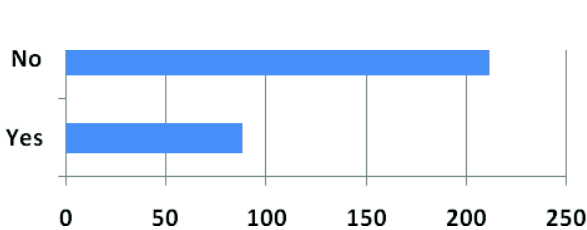
Question 34: Do you think a Weedon Bec Village Handbook, covering local services/facilities and amenities, would be useful?



Those who thought it a good idea suggested:

- Map/details
- Surgery hours
- Schools' information
- Sports
- Village website updates
- Parish/District and County Council contacts
- Contacts for local businesses/societies/clubs
- Opening times for shops
- Bus timetables
- Emergency contact numbers
- Church services

Question 35: Is enough made of the heritage of the village?

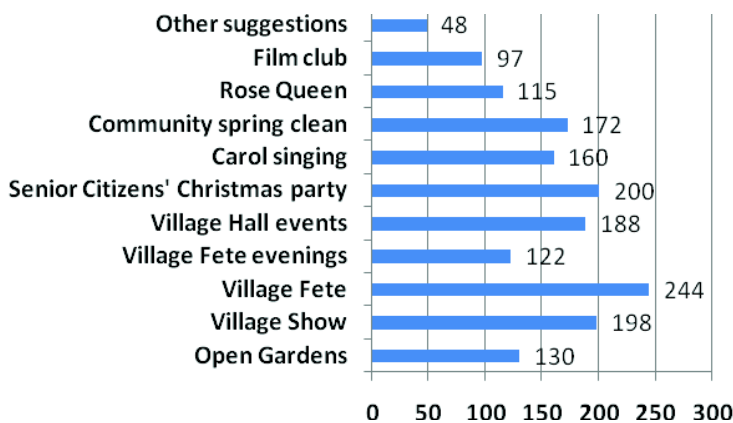


What could be done to improve it?

- Develop the Depot/Open days
- Establish fire/local history museums/visitor centre
- Encourage youngsters' involvement/celebrate St Werburgh
- More History Society exhibitions
- Signage/map/boards/walks
- More local support



Question 36: Would you like to have or continue to have any of the following community events/activities?



Comments:

- Open Gardens: Works well in other villages: cream teas, plant stalls etc!
- Village Show: A nice piece of Englishness, can create a lot of local interest
- Village Fete: A good community event very well attended and extremely enjoyable
- Village Fete evenings: Good fundraising event; very impressed last time I went
- Senior Citizens' Christmas party: definitely a must; a well-attended annual event
- Carol singing: yes if organised well, would be lovely to hear

- Community spring-clean: Good idea but would there be any volunteers? Could be a good event, with a barbecue on the field for all volunteers – bring your own, etc.
- Rose Queen: Keeps traditions alive, lots of the young girls would love this
- Film Club: What a good idea although would depend on the film
- Other suggestions: photography club, bowls club, bingo nights, dog club, an annual arts festival, food & drink festival, farmers' market, historic themed event like VE day, village carnival

VISION

Question 37: What would you like to see in Weedon Bec in 5-10 years' time?

Development of Depot
Well-maintained village
Revived community spirit
Parking/congestion issues solved
No further development
Safer environment
More sports facilities
More shops
Rail link re-established
Facilities for youngsters (all ages)
Still be a village
Surgery/dentist/Post Office/bus service retained



Other 'wishes' included: best use of land with limited housing/affordable housing for locals/a thriving school & senior citizens' club/smarter business premises on High Street/One Stop shop front conforming with surrounding properties/a residents' co-operative/independent traders/a 'beat bobby'/ facilities for young people of all ages & their using the parks more/a public toilet/no graffiti.

Overall, there is strong support for the Depot's development, a safe, well-kept village – one residents can be proud of – and a revived community spirit involving community activities of all sorts, accessible to people of all ages and abilities, all working together and enjoying each others' company – and flowers everywhere!

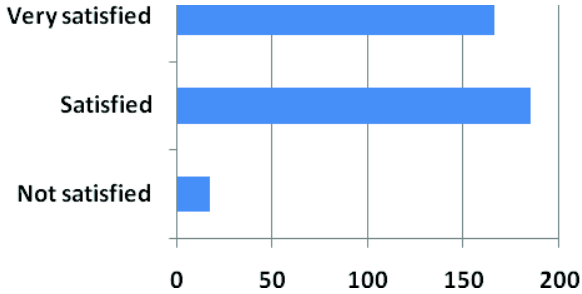
Question 38: What one thing would make a positive difference to the village?

Sorting out the parking issues once and for all
More community spirit, people more united, people working together taking pride in village
Depot up and running
More of a police presence
Cleaner, tidier village
More floral planting in public areas and smarter entrances to the village
Protect the village status, resist development, make village a conservation area
Youth facilities, including a meeting place
Sorting out the traffic flow around the village
More shops to choose from
Railway station
By-pass
Sports facilities (tennis, athletics, cricket, football) including pavilion
Enforcement of dog fouling laws
Improved roads and footpaths
Combined health complex with longer open hours
Community Centre
Improvement of public transport
Village constable



Other comments included: More public information, adoption of sewers/drains and roads, make more of canal, better flood defences, more support to local school and Village Hall, return to red phone boxes, another access road from the A5, more made of High Street area, better sign-posting around village, people should be more caring of the elderly, parents need to be more in control of their children, speed restriction on A5, more support from high authorities, remove wire fencing and replace with wooden, rename Jubilee Field to Village Green, sensible closing times from public houses, banning bonfires in the summer, more street parties.

Question 39: How satisfied are you living in Weedon Bec?



Question 40: Would you like to be involved in the work of Village Vision?

47 people responded although 73 left remarks.

As the questionnaire was anonymous only those giving details may be contacted. Others who are interested are asked to contact the Village Vision Secretary, Sue Halkett on 01327 341057.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

31 Young people answered

What do you do in Weedon Bec?

- Cubs/Scouts/Brownies/Youth Forum
- Play football or basketball
- Use parks and playing fields
- Ride bike, walk around village, visit friends
- Fishing
- Nothing

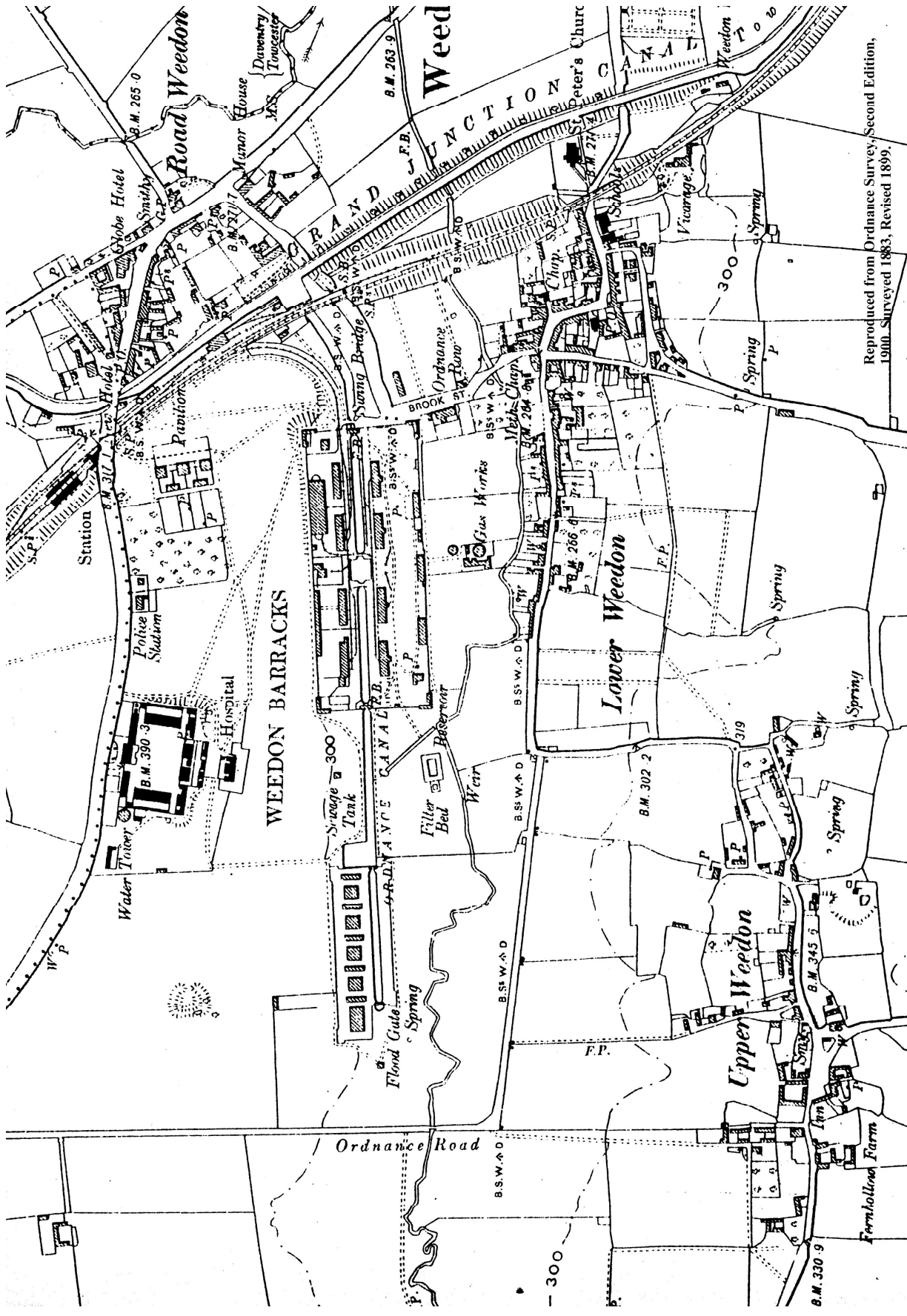
What else would you like to be able to do?

- Have a meeting place
- More sports facilities
- Rainbows
- Dance classes/drama/music/discos (15-18s)
- Have more equipment on playing fields/glass-free areas

If you were in charge, what would you change?

- Young people not to be judged by few trouble-makers
- Improved sports facilities
- Bus to Towcester
- Weedon Bec cycle path





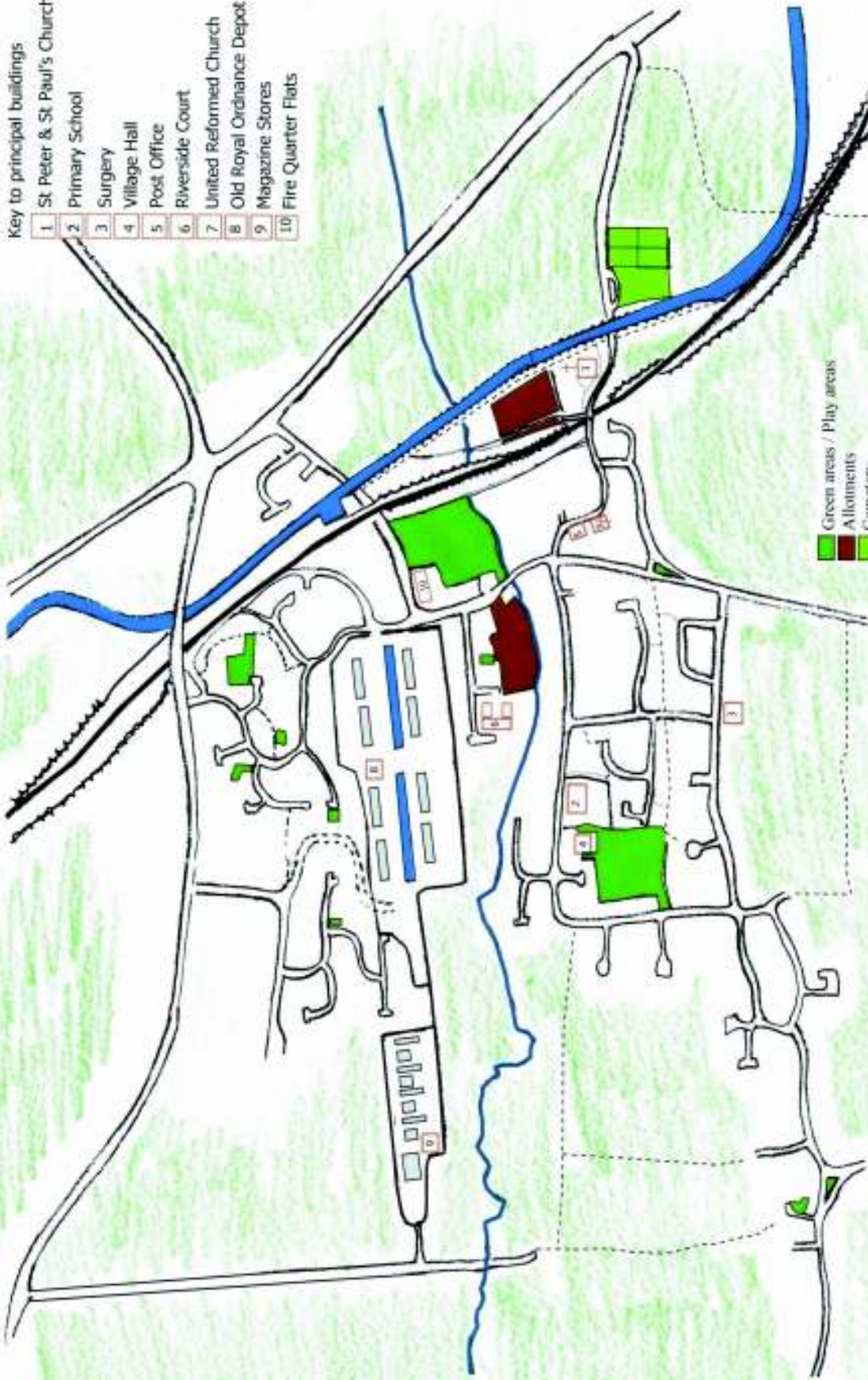
Reproduced from Ordnance Survey, Second Edition, 1900. Surveyed 1883, Revised 1899.

WEEDON BEC 1901

WEEDON BEC

Key to principal buildings

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 1 | St Peter & St Paul's Church |
| 2 | Primary School |
| 3 | Surgery |
| 4 | Village Hall |
| 5 | Post Office |
| 6 | Riverside Court |
| 7 | United Reformed Church |
| 8 | Old Royal Ordnance Depot |
| 9 | Magazine Stores |
| 10 | Fire Quarter Flats |



- Green areas / Play areas
- Allotments
- Cemetery
- - - Footpaths (including Rights of Way)

WEEDON BEC 2009

A SHORT HISTORY OF WEEDON BEC & THE ROYAL ORDNANCE DEPOT

The Name

Visitors to Weedon Bec are often confused by the number of Weedons that they encounter. Weedon Bec is the name of the whole parish, within which there are two ancient settlements, Upper Weedon and Lower Weedon. Until about 1930 these were separated by up to half a mile of open fields. The part of the village lying along the main roads, A5 and A45, is known as Road Weedon and developed later. This was probably in response to traffic along the Old Stratford to Dunchurch Turnpike created by an Act of Parliament in 1706; the first such road in Northamptonshire.

The name Weedon comes from two Anglo-Saxon words: *Weoh*, meaning a Shrine or Holy Place, and *Dun*, meaning Hill. There are only two other Weedons in England. Lois Weedon is about eight miles south, and Weedon, Buckinghamshire, about twenty-eight miles south-east. In the case of Weedon Bec, the earliest known written occurrence of the name is found in an Anglo-Saxon Charter dated 944 A.D.

The second part of the name, Bec, is the name of a village in Normandy, where there was an important Abbey. Some years after the Norman Conquest, the manor of Weedon was given to the Abbey of Bec, and the Abbey became Lord of the Manor. Thus, the village became known as Weedon Bec. At one time, it became fashionable to add a 'k' to Bec, this still occasionally happens. There were a number of other Abbeys and Priors in France drawing rents from English Manors. In 1414, King Henry V ordered that the 'Alien Priors', as they were called, be taken over, and the income transferred to the Crown. Henry was not very well disposed towards the French, you may remember.

In about 1472, the manor was granted to the newly formed Eton College, who remained Lords of the Manor until changes in the law relating to leasehold property in the 1920s.

The Ordnance Depot

Between the older villages and Road Weedon, stand the early nineteenth century Stores Buildings of the former Royal Ordnance Depot. Surrounded by a high brick wall, the eight original Stores are arranged in two lines on each side of a branch of the canal. The cut between the main channel and the Depot has now been filled, but the line can still be made out.

The Grand Junction Canal reached Weedon in 1796, the year in which Napoleon defeated Austria. After several years of war, in 1802 the Treaty of Amiens brought a short period of peace. However, war again broke out in 1803 and there was great fear that England would be invaded before the other nations of Europe could come to her aid. Napoleon's plans for an invasion were no secret.

The English government made considerable additions to the Army and Militia, and large bodies of volunteers were raised. It was realised that the storage of military supplies near to the coast was no longer prudent, and plans were made to set up a depot for the storage of arms and ammunition near to the centre of the country. A site in Weedon Bec was chosen, due to the proximity of the canal and Turnpike, and in 1803, an Act of Parliament provided for the acquisition of 53 acres of land. The government later extended their estate to about 150 acres.

The military branch canal entered the Depot under a portcullis, set in a building known as the East Lodge, forming part of the surrounding wall, and still standing. At the west end there is a similar Lodge and the canal originally extended beyond to serve the Magazine, used in the early years to store gunpowder, delivered by canal boat. The magazine storage buildings, each separated from the other by a building filled with earth, can still be seen from the high ground within the Trading Estate off the Daventry Road (A 45). From here can also be seen a ninth Storehouse standing isolated to the West of the main enclosure. Intended to relieve pressure on the existing Clothing Depot at Pimlico, brought about by the South Africa War, it was completed in 1900, just as that War ended.

The Barracks

The Trading Estate stands upon the site of another of the former military establishments of Weedon, The Barracks. Built at the same time as the Depot, this comprised a group of buildings arranged about a Barrack Square. Some of these had stables on the ground floor, for the purpose of the Barracks was to house a Troop of Artillery and in those days, guns needed horses to pull them. Between the two World Wars, the Barracks became the Army School of Equitation, and an extensive indoor riding school and further stables were constructed. The Barracks was demolished during the winter of 1955-6.

The Pavilion

The other Government buildings in Weedon have given rise to one of the local legends. Constructed to house the Storekeeper and other principal officers of the Depot, these were three well-proportioned white brick buildings with connecting garden walls, presenting an imposing frontage to the east resembling a single structure. This gave rise to the name, The Pavilion. Two of the buildings were divided into two dwellings, so that provision was made for five officials in all. These were civilian appointments of the Board of Ordnance.

At some time, it became popularly understood that these buildings were intended to house the King in the event of Napoleonic invasion. There is ample evidence that this story is a myth. They were later used for the Officers' Mess of the Riding School. During the Second World War, together with the Barracks, they formed part of the Royal Army Ordnance Depot, when all parts of the military estate, together with a number of other buildings in surrounding parts of the county were dedicated to the provision of weapons to the Army in all theatres of war. The Pavilion buildings were demolished in the 1970s, to be replaced by Regents Park housing estate.

The Royal Army Ordnance Corps moved out of Weedon Depot on February 16, 1965. Following a period of use by the Ministry of Supply, the surviving Depot Storehouses passed into private hands in the 1980s and are currently occupied by a number of small companies for stores and workshops. These buildings and the perimeter wall are Listed Grade II*.

In late 1995, the Depot was purchased by Cavalry Centre Limited, who applied for planning permission to change the use to an integrated heritage, tourist and commercial centre. Following a Public Inquiry, permission was granted in May 2000.



Society publications

Weedon Royal Ordnance Depot Revisited (1996)
contains a reprint of the history of the Ordnance Depot written
in 1965 by John King.
£4.00

A Postcard from Weedon Bec
Julia Johns, July 2004
£5.00

Available from Weedon Post Office or by post from:
WBHS, c/o 2 Little Priel Road, Weedon Bec, Northampton, NN7 4PU
(postage at current cost; cheques payee Weedon Bec History Society)

A recent publication *Captain Pilkington's Project*, Beryl Williams recording in detail the construction of the Royal Depot is now out of print but obtainable to read in the Northamptonshire Libraries

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FORMER ROYAL ORDNANCE DEPOT – WEEDON BEC

Adrian Lee, Development Manager for Gladedale (the Depot's owner), explains the current situation concerning its development...

Firstly I'd like to thank you for being given the opportunity of updating you on the current position regarding our intentions for Weedon Depot. Whilst the personalities within Gladedale who are responsible for the future development of the Depot, have changed, our ambition for the site remains positive.

You'll be aware that planning permission for a scheme at the Depot was secured in May 2000 and whilst there is little physical evidence of any progress in the implementation of the consent, a great deal of work has been undertaken in the background to progress with discharging the conditions set out as part of the approval. The heritage measuring and recording exercise has been completed along with the Conservation Plan for the Depot, a substantial document, which has now been adopted.



The Current Position

We have now moved into 2009 and a justifiable question would be 'in the nine years since consent was granted, why haven't we completed the development we have approval for?'

Weedon Depot is a very complicated property. Its status as a group of 'Listed' buildings means that any proposals for its use, renovation, or redevelopment must be sensitive to the existing structure and appearance of the buildings, and also their setting. A great deal of money will be required to restore the buildings and to look after them in the future. Many of the structures on site, such as the perimeter walls, the canal walls and the bastions, will require restoration and regular maintenance in the future but these buildings will not produce any income or create any value. The storehouse buildings that form the rest of the Depot will also require significant amounts of money for restoration and long-term maintenance.



As a result there will be an extra burden upon the buildings that can produce an income. They will have to support not only their own restoration and long-term management, but will also have to produce the money to cover the costs of the structures mentioned above that can not generate income or value. It has become apparent that full implementation of the existing consent will not produce enough income to cover the costs associated with the approved level of development or reach the 'critical mass' required to support the sustainability of the site, particularly in today's current economic climate.

For these reasons various studies have been undertaken to establish if it would be feasible to increase the quantum and vary the type of development at the Depot, a major factor in the delays that you are currently witnessing. This would involve a level of new build on the site which, amongst other issues, instantly has heritage implications. The use must be in keeping with the nature of the buildings. The ideal use is shopping, leisure, cafes and restaurants, and cultural uses such as museums ('Fireworld' remains our number one attraction) and galleries. Such uses, however involve dealing with a considerable volume of visitors and their vehicles. Due to the aspirations of Daventry Council and Northampton to enhance their retail offer it is considered appropriate that any retail uses located at the Weedon Depot should not directly compete with these centres.



Up-to-date traffic studies on the existing highways network have therefore become critical to informing the likelihood of producing a viable scheme. Whilst we are satisfied that this will be possible, we need to spend time going through the necessary steps to ensure we have a sound planning position for any revised application. You'll be well aware of the development schemes that are currently undergoing scrutiny at appeal for residential expansion around the edge of Daventry and the likely impact these will have on the highways network. This additional development needs to be factored into any new assessments on access to the Depot. It should be noted that the scheme we currently have consent for looks to re-route the traffic away from Harmans Way. It's understood that there is concern over traffic movements through the estate and we do intend that any scheme for the Depot re-routes lorries down Cavalry Hill away from the estate.



What Happens Next?

We will complete the necessary studies mentioned above with a view towards delivering a scheme that is viable, sustainable and of great merit to the community at Weedon Bec. I would ask that you remain patient giving understanding to the complex issues that need to be resolved in securing a long-term future for the Depot. We will endeavour to do our best to keep you informed of progress as we move through the year ahead.



WEEDON BEC PRIMARY SCHOOL



There has been a school at Weedon since 1712 when Nathaniel Billing left provision for the education of 20 boys in his will. The present school was opened in 1975 and serves the villages of Weedon and Church and Upper Stowe.

The single-storey building offers the pupils bright classrooms, a library, hall and a recently upgraded ICT suite. The hall is large and is used for assembly, PE and lunch. Breakfast club and afterschool club are available for parents wishing to utilise extended school facilities and hot school meals are available at lunchtime. The school has established good links with the pre-school and nursery in the village and facilitates 'Rising 5' sessions for pupils to attend prior to

them starting school. The school has an active Friends of Weedon Bec School Association (FOWSA) who, through their fundraising, provide curriculum enrichment activities, additional equipment and resources for the pupils.

Our aim is to provide all children with a broad and balanced education that recognises and fully extends their individual skills and abilities. We believe that basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology are essential foundations for learning throughout life.

We aim to help every child to reach their full potential by:

- Providing a happy and safe environment in which pupils' particular abilities and strength will be recognised and developed
- Encouraging a respect for themselves, each other and the world around them
- Encouraging a greater independence in the learning process
- Developing children's own ideas, creativity and establishing pleasure in the process
- Establishing a real partnership between home/school and the wider community that the school serves

We have an active School Council who has helped the school to achieve the Healthy School Award and the Bronze Eco Award. They decide the charities the school will support each year: the Children with Leukaemia appeal was presented with a cheque for £1,888 and this year we are supporting the Marie Curie daffodil appeal and have raised £1,000. They also helped to develop the school playground and chose new playground equipment.



Our Junior Road Safety Officers work with the local police regarding road safety and our Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to do the 'Bikeability Award.' Our children enjoy being part of the community: when it is Harvest festival the Year Six pupils deliver bags of food to the older members of the village and at Christmas time the afternoon performance of our Christmas production is followed by afternoon tea for the older members of the village. The choir also enjoy singing carols at Riverside Court.

Children, parents, teachers and governors work together and show a responsible and respectful attitude to each other and for their environment. We trust that the school will be a rewarding and enriching experience for all our children, where high standards of work and behaviour are expected and both individual and collective success is acknowledged and celebrated.

If you would like more information on our school please look on our website:

www.weedonbec.northants.sch.uk

Mrs Jenny Pittam

Head teacher

WHERE TO FROM HERE?



To those not in the know Weedon Bec is just a certain stretch of the A45 en route to Daventry. To those *in* the know there is far more than that. The real village lies well off the A5 to the south, hidden from view. From whichever approach is used – and there are several – one will discover an interesting mix of house styles, several good sized dedicated green spaces/playing fields, pleasant views and – a river runs through it! And importantly, despite losing its butcher and its greengrocer's several years ago, there are still many services available, mostly around the village centre.

Witness both vehicular and pedestrian traffic around Church Street at most times of the day and the popularity of these services is obvious. Here are the Post Office (and dry-cleaning agency), the dentist, the store and the hairdresser and a café. And a pub on the corner! Farther round, going out of the village, is the picture framer. Not a bad for a village these days. There is a doctors' surgery in Upper Weedon and a chemist/pharmacy by the village crossroad. In Road Weedon (that A45 stretch) are, at the time of writing, retail outlets catering for antique collectors, fashionistas and small children, and brides and grooms and their guests as well as a beauty salon, two pubs, two hotels and several take-aways. Again, not bad for a village.

So, with all these services within reachable distance of most people, is Weedon Bec a good place to live? It would seem so. Those who answered the questionnaire deemed themselves either satisfied or even well satisfied, surely a good reference for the village?

Sure, there are niggles. Mention parking (see earlier) and faces will darken. Unfortunately, this is a village, with scant room for manoeuvre – literally. Some residents would like more shops, especially 'up top' in Upper Weedon where there are none. Other wants and wishes have been detailed throughout this publication but mention the beautiful countryside and relative quietness of Weedon Bec's location, yet handy proximity to main roads and motorways, and there will be smiles and agreement. In truth, whether it's services and/or surroundings, this rural 'sprawl' of a village has much to recommend it.

The residents of Cavalry Hill might not agree. Rather like a distant relative of the village, this estate, built in the late 1990s, is isolated off the A45 beyond an industrial estate whose approach road provides sole vehicular access from the A45. The only real pedestrian link with the village is a (mostly) unused, unmaintained, unsavoury footpath. But some residents chose to live on the estate because of its quiet off-road location but with no amenities of its own, apart from a small play area, other residents, unsurprisingly, don't feel part of the village and have little allegiance to it.

Which is sad. Village life, *this* village life, for those willing to track it down, has much to offer other than 'just' its excellent professional and retail services. But, to bang the drum one last time: there is much more that can be done for residents of all ages. It could be fun; it could be interesting. It could be both. Come and join us, wherever you live.

And hopefully, in time, there will be more. Whether Daventry District Council files this Parish Plan under any one of its many strategies such as the Sustenance Community Strategy, Local Area Agreements of the nicely-named Power of Well Being or merely under 'Weedon Bec', it will provide both a portrait of the parish at this moment and a residents' directive to improve and add to that which the village has already. For some years now, traditional community providers have been able to extend their remit by forging partnerships with other agencies and thus provide more joined-up amenities. Obviously, local government practicalities and public expectations have to find common ground, but even allowing for the current poor economic climate some improvements and new innovations could occur, given time, under the principles of the Local Government Act 2000. This Act allows local authorities "to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of their area..." with some councils extending the spirit of the Act and including cultural and health strategies as well.

Fingers crossed!

Refs: Parish Plans: The Countryside Agency
Practical Use of The Well-Being Power 2008: HM Government Publication