

## **MACKPLAN DROP IN EVENTS 25 JAN 2020**

On 25 Jan 2020 the MACK Plan team held 3 simultaneous drop in events for the residents of the MACK Plan area. The 3 events were timed to occur at the half way point of the Housing Needs Survey in order to allow residents to ask questions and seek guidance about the survey as well as having an opportunity to give their views on broader issues relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

These events were advertised by an A5 card delivered by hand to every house 2 weeks prior to the event with team members engaging with as many households as possible. A4 posters were also displayed in conspicuous locations throughout the MACK Plan area for the week preceding the events.

By engaging directly with the community in this way the team were able to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan with more than 50% of the 452 households that we delivered to. As well as listening to their concerns and ideas, resident input was sought during both the HNS delivery and the Drop In events on the following topics:

- Road safety issues
- Mobile coverage inside buildings
- Broadband connectivity
- Minimum garden sizes for new builds
- Optimum village demographics
- Community facilities

### **MILTON ABBOT EVENT**

Venue: Milton Abbot Village Hall  
Time: 25 Jan 2020 1 PM - 4 PM

**Overview:** All attendees were positive about the benefits that would be gained from having a neighbourhood plan. Many were unaware that there is an actual need for new houses for local people and had assumed that development was externally driven only. A worthwhile event that should help generate greater resident engagement.

### **Key Findings**

- Road safety: There was widespread opinion that traffic through the village needed to be slowed down and that even with the illuminating 30 MPH sign, most vehicles exceeded the speed limit through the village and especially the stretch of road from the village to the school. The latter was the most serious concern raised with several people suggesting that the pavement from the village to the school should be widened and that a 20 MPH limit should be in force during school opening and closing times. There was also support for traffic calming measures. The inability to pass oncoming vehicles in Higher Edgcumbe Lane and the lack of pavement was raised by several people.
- Mobile coverage inside buildings ranged from poor to non-existent with only a single resident reporting reliable coverage inside their house.
- Broadband speeds: As expected BB speeds in the village itself were not considered a significant issue. Outside the village however speeds were very low, often below 3 Mbps and intermittent. As a result, many outlying residents had no idea what the benefits of faster broadband are e.g. streaming, home working etc. One person mentioned AirBand which provides BB via radio masts and might be able to provide coverage to more isolated residents.
- Setting minimum garden sizes for new builds was supported with all agreeing that 60M<sup>2</sup> should be the minimum garden size for any new house.
- Parking was raised as an issue throughout the village.
- Optimum village demographics: There was a feeling that a healthy mix of housing was needed including affordable housing to meet the local need and housing for the younger and older generations of the village.
- Community facilities: The need for a regular bus service was the most sought after missing facility and 2 people raised the lack of a village shop. Better maintenance of public walking

tracks was also raised as was the protection of mature trees. There was support for discrete solar generation.

- Potential Sites Development: Once the need was explained there was understanding and support for the 20 houses earmarked for the village. This included for affordable homes,. There was no support for the proposed 5 house development behind Edgcumbe Terrace. Several residents suggested that developments outside the main village, potentially nearer to the school would be worthwhile. Developing the old allotments was also suggested. There was much concern that the village 'aquifer fields' and springs should not be built on.
- Residents did not want to see quick fix housing but rather good quality design and build with vernacular features.
- The most significant and widespread concern raised by residents involved developers; particularly historic 'bully boy' behaviour, developers not building what was agreed etc. The mistrust of developers was significant.

## **CHILLATON EVENT**

Venue: The Old Smithy Chillaton

Time: 25 Jan 2020 1 PM - 4 PM

**Overview:** In the main residents were supportive of the teams efforts, understood the benefits of having a Neighbourhood Plan. About 25% of those engaged had only become aware of the Neighbourhood Plan within the last 2 years.

## **Key Findings**

- Road safety: As this has been a topic of discussion within the village for many years, there was general frustration at the lack of focus by the Parish Council. Whilst speeding across the village was of concern, the hill into Chillaton from Tavistock was singled out by 50% of those engaged as being of particular concern. In addition, the lack of designated bus stops for school buses and the lack of footpaths at the limits of the village also presented daily hazards. Disappointment was also expressed in the fact that despite being a rural location, many farm vehicles (many with trailers) do not heed the speed limits.
- Mobile coverage. There is a Vodafone Sure Signal box mounted on Chillaton Garage meaning anyone living within 100 metres has good mobile phone reception. Beyond that, mobile phone signals are poor to non-existent. Those living in Week and Westcott used other providers with better availability of signals.
- Broadband Connectivity. Few residents knew their actual broadband speed, rather whether their service was adequate for their needs. As there is a broadband junction box in the village, connectivity meets the needs of all residents canvassed. Beyond that, in Westcott in particular whose fibre optics originate from the Chillaton junction box, residents have to resort to connecting to broadband via the mobile phone network at significant expense. This is particularly pertinent to families with school age children many of whom receive and submit homework over the internet.
- Garden Size. All who were asked agreed that garden space contributed to wellbeing and a sense of community. The pub car park was used as a reference area (120m<sup>2</sup>). All agreed that the car park represented a small but acceptable size of garden for any new build homes.
- Parking. Whilst the need for any new homes to have adequate off road parking was supported, the only real issue that was raised was about the lack of parking outside Burnshall Cottages. In general these are local authority housing (LiveWest) with little or no provision made for parking. Currently 11 cars park nose to tail in the single carriageway lane outside presenting a risk to pedestrians and traffic alike.
- Village demographics. This proved to be a mute subject with nobody considering there was any need to target homes for any particular section of our community. That said, no residents were aware that local families continue to register support to find affordable homes through Devon Homes Choice but all agreed that where there was a need, this should be addressed. The lack of local facilities and non-existing public transport were cited as reasons why families didn't move to Chillaton, rather than the lack of opportunity. Most considered that a natural balance is maintained over time.
- Community facilities. Whilst there was no longer support for the need of a Village Hall, many residents consider there would be community benefit from having some sort of community

space such as designated Local Green Space. Most wanted to know what was happening to the Chichester Arms and all would welcome it being open. The potential for this to provide some local community space was discussed numerously. Objections were raised by both landowners of the existing spaces identified within the JLP, neither of which meet the criteria for Local Green Spaces.

- Potential sites. This was only really discussed with a few people who were not resident during the 2017 Survey. 2 residents asked when the Call For Sites would be issued as they were considering offering additional sites (ie over and above those presented in the JLP).

## **HAMLETS EVENT**

Venue: Kelly Village Hall

Time: 25 Jan. 1pm-4pm

**Overview:** There was a steady stream of attendees who discussed the Neighbourhood plan and were very supportive of its objectives. A number of them were farmers who were aware of Class Q opportunities but also when engaged realised the need for affordable housing/ starter homes as well as employment opportunities for young people.

## **Key Findings:**

- Road Safety: Concern was raised over motorists, delivery vehicles and farm vehicles travelling too fast in the narrow lanes leading to the hamlets. Two specific areas were highlighted. At Fellowdownhead the exit from the Bradstone/Kelly road as well as the road down to Greystone Bridge which many motorists use as a short cut. The second area was Meadwell with motorists coming from the Borough Cross direction speeding through the hamlet.
- Broadband: As expected almost everyone in the hamlets complained of poor broadband speeds. With speeds ranging from 2.5mbps to 4.0mbps. The only exception to this was one resident who is getting service from the new Airband mast of over 20mbps. It remains to be seen how many other rural homes will be able to receive coverage from this welcome new operator.
- Mobile Coverage: Two people were able to gain mobile coverage within their homes, with the help of extra booster facilities. The majority of residents do not have good mobile coverage either inside or close to their homes.
- Demographics: When engaged on the subject people recognised the need to retain and attract young families into the village. They also recognised the need for a mix of affordable housing as well as starter homes for these families.
- Community Facilities: The village halls were regarded as an essential local facility and as expected there were major concerns about the lack of any public transport and access to GP surgeries, NHS dentists etc. These are of particular concern to older people and lead to worries about how long they will be able to stay within the area if they can no longer drive.
- Potential sites: Most people were of the view that significant development outside of Class Q barn conversions were not appropriate for the hamlet areas given the lack of facilities and concerns about water supplies from springs etc. A previous planning application in Meadwell for a number of houses was mentioned by several residents who were concerned that this might be re-applied for.
- Holiday homes: The number of holiday facilities are on the increase in the area in the form of barn conversions/shepherd's huts/Yurts/B&B's etc. Whilst it was recognised that this provided additional income for farms and others, concerns were expressed by some about the traffic increase in narrow lanes and the pressure on facilities such as water supplies etc.