



Avon Dassett Parish Plan Update

May 2023

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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Executive Summary

Since the refresh of Avon Dassett's Parish Plan which was adopted in May 2022, the Parish Council have been working to implement some of the actions. However, the plan belongs to the whole village, and nearly all residents contributed to the questionnaire which led to the action plan. It is therefore important that all residents have a say in which actions to prioritise, and the annual parish assembly on 30 May 2023 is designed to support that objective.

The Parish Plan identified 31 separate projects. Of those 15 have been started and 16 are in progress (12 of these need volunteers to take a lead).

As there have been many new residents joining the village since the questionnaire was circulated in October 2021, this update first gives a reminder of the questionnaire results, it then summarises the actions the parish council (and others) have taken this year and explains the project planning/business case process, it highlights possible next steps and ends with an overview of the action plan, colour coded (red, amber, green) to demonstrate progress.

1.2 The Parish Plan Process



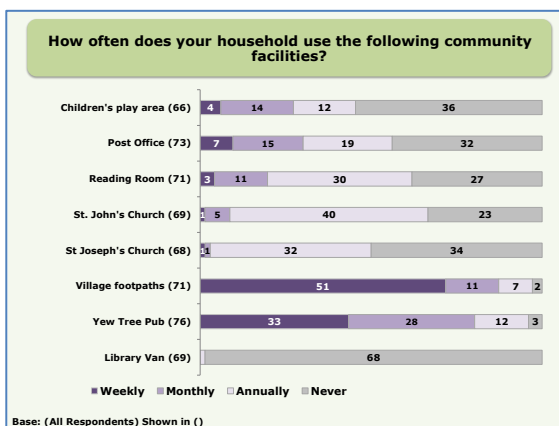
2.0 The Questionnaire Results

2.1 Your Household

- 78 out of the 93 households in the village returned the questionnaire (84%)
- The population of the households answering the survey totalled 178 people.
- 49% of this population was over the age of 55 years.
- 17% of the population was 18 years or younger.
- 87% of those completing the questionnaire have lived in the parish for more than five years.

2.2 Community

- The most common ways of accessing community information were via the Compton Chronicle and word of mouth.
- 88% thought broadband was very good or OK.
- 37% thought mobile phone reception was poor.
- Village footpaths and the Yew Tree Pub were the most used community facilities, with 72% and 43% respondents respectively saying that they used them weekly.
- The biggest issues with The Reading Room and St John's Church were lack of toilet/kitchen facilities, and utilities such as heating and electricity.
- Most popular future uses for these buildings were for social events and as shop/post office/tea room.
- The most popular other facilities which would be welcome would be a dog walking field, allotments and a shop.
- Over half of respondents (57%) said that they would use a village shop weekly. More people said that they would use it for staples plus newsagent items than any other product categories.
- The Dasset country show and Soapbox Derby were the most popular events attended in the past and potentially in the future.



A local footpath heading towards the village

2.3 Housing

- Most people (62%) owned their properties outright.
- 48 out of 78 (62%) respondents answered the question about housing need priorities following the Housing Needs Survey of 2019.
- Of these, more people thought that 2 x Housing Association/private rental 2-bedroom bungalows should be the priority in terms of housing need.



Hill View

2.4 Business

- 58 people (32%) were classed as employed full time, and 51 (28%) were retired.
- 40 respondents said that at least one person in the household worked from home, while 31 said that no-one did.
- People were employed across a diverse range of sectors.
- The largest problems for people were mobile phone coverage (88%) and broadband (28%)
- There was not much interest in a business hub or hot-desking facility within the village, with 69% saying that they would never use it.

2.5 Traffic and Transport

- 24 households (31%) had 3 or more cars.
- The majority of cars were kept on residents' property
- An overwhelming majority did not use bus transport or UBUS.
- A more reliable, more frequent service would encourage more to use public transport.
- Only 13% felt that a car-sharing scheme would be useful.
- Just under half were planning to buy an electric car in the next three years. Charging them at home was the most popular option (97%) with public sites second (65%).
- Vehicles parked dangerously was the biggest parking concern (58% respondents).
- 65% felt more off-road parking should be provided within the village.
- 69% felt that speeding was an issue.
- Reducing the speed limit to 20mph was the most popular traffic improvement measure, with 64% choosing this.
- While respondents generally felt safe to walk/run on the village roads, horse-riding and cycling were felt to be more dangerous.



2.6 Crime

- Over 97% of respondents felt safe at home and walking during the day; slightly fewer felt safe walking at night (74%). This pattern held for the other members of the household.
- 62% were interested in property marking.
- 78% were aware of the neighbourhood watch group; just under 50% would be prepared to join.

2.7 Environment

- While most houses had mains electricity (82%), half of all properties (51%) used oil and 40% used LPG. Under 5% properties each had solar-heated water, solar-generated electricity or air/ground source heat pumps.
- 84% would like to see renewable energy schemes for dwellings promoted.
- 80% would consider changes to their energy sources.
- 67% would support commercial renewable energy schemes within the parish.

2.8 Local Government

- More people felt acquainted with the work of Avon Dassett Parish Council than with Warwickshire County or Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
- Over half of respondents (53%) said that they never attended parish council meetings.
- The Compton Chronicle and word of mouth were the two most popular ways of finding out about parish council activities.

2.9 Young People

- 78% of respondents felt that there were not adequate local facilities for young people.
- 55% said that they took part in village activities and used the playground.
- Only 1 person used public transport – to get to Leamington – with other people saying that they would use it if it were better.



2.10 Summing Up

- The three most mentioned best things about living in Avon Dassett were: the village community and friendly people; its location in the countryside and access to country walks; and the Yew Tree pub.
- The three most common issues were: traffic-related issues including speeding, volume of traffic and heavy good vehicles coming through the village; worries about development and the changing nature of the village or lack of infrastructure; and lack of access to services due to its isolated location and lack of public transport.

3.0 Achievements

3.1 Develop Community Facilities

- Playground: grant applications submitted for three pieces of adult equipment (rower, slalom skier, arm and pedal bicycle) - £6k and a children's country trail - £9k
- St John's Church: power installed and money raised from sale of steps partly covers this expense.
- Footpaths: Yew Tree Walking group working with Fenny Compton footpaths group to improve.
- Reading Room: interior repainted, new windows installed, broadband provided, kitchen and washroom upgraded (partly financed from precept with the balance taken from reserves).



Adult Rower Outdoor Gym Equipment and Children's Country Trail

3.2 Improve Communications

- Parish Council mailing list updated and village WhatsApp group promoted.
- Revised welcome pack developed for new residents.

3.3 Support Housing Need

- Parish council issued call for land in *Compton Chronicle*.
- In discussion with one landowner.

3.4 Traffic and Transport

- Trained volunteers for community speed watch scheme and a camera has been secured on loan from Warwickshire Police.
- Considered installation of safety mirror (rejected by Highways).
- Approved project to install gates at entrances to village.
- Working with local county councillor to scope speed reduction between B4100 and village entrance.
- Publicised UBUS.



3.5 Increased Participation in Parish Council

- Equipment being purchased to 'live stream' parish council meetings.
- Protocols established for live streaming and recording meetings.
- May 2023 election had 8 candidates demonstrating interest.

3.6 Established Parish Council Projects Group

- An informal group open to all Councillors. Its objective is to consider new projects and put well considered proposals to the Parish Council in a standard format. The Projects Group has no decision making power, but its work reduces the amount of time required to consider projects at Parish Council meetings.
- All projects must have a Business Case and should be considered by the Projects Group before being presented to the Parish Council to ensure that all projects receive the same level of scrutiny and consideration. There is a standard format for Business Cases.
- The Projects Group meets approximately monthly. The Parish Plan has given the Projects Group a focus on priorities and timing and is being used as the primary reference source for progress meetings. If any resident has a project which they wish to either lead or have considered then the first point of contact should be the Clerk.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 Develop Community Facilities

- Footpaths: volunteers needed to progress.
- St John's Church: further work on lighting and installation of toilets needs funding from the Churches Conservation Trust. At present, there is major work going on in the bell tower.
- War memorial: estimates received to re-pave area around the memorial and pre-grant application submitted.
- Upgrade nature area as Pete Wallace memorial area: business case submitted.
- Dog walking field, community garden, allotments, cycleways and bridlepaths need volunteers to progress.

4.2 Village Hall

- Reassess use of Reading Room now improvements have been carried out.
- Consider redevelopment of other sites (St John's/St Joseph's) or new facility.
- Produce feasibility report.



4.3 Village Shop

- Needs volunteers to produce a requirements assessment, a feasibility report and a business case.

4.4 Village Events

- Needs volunteers to co-ordinate village group and produce a requirements assessment, a feasibility report and a business case.

4.5 Encourage Local Businesses

- Needs volunteers to compile and host a business directory

4.6 Traffic and Parking

- Community speed watch needs leadership and more volunteers (has not yet operated).
- Village gates need volunteers to install.
- Volunteers needed to review parking arrangements in village and scope possible sites for extra off-road parking.

4.7 Crime Prevention

- Possible refresh of Neighbourhood Watch group.
- CCTV for village being scoped out and business case being prepared.
- Arrange for property marking and crime prevention connected with local events.

4.8 Improve the Environment

- Electric vehicle charging project being scoped but will be dependent on grant income. Volunteers needed to support.
- Renewable energy scheme needs project leader and volunteer to assess and prepare a feasibility report and business case.

4.9 Communications

- Village groups to be advised of sources of information accessed by village residents and encouraged to publicise on all.
- Mobile phone coverage questionnaire to be distributed and analysed.

4.10 Young People

- Survey of young residents to establish needs and possible creation of youth group.

5.0 The Avon Dassett Parish Action Plan

Key: Not yet started In progress Completed

Category	Comments	Proposed Action	Partners	Priority	Time
Communication	Survey revealed residents obtain information in a variety of ways and different media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 'communication checklist' for groups and events in the village • Encourage all groups to use multiple forms of communication for inclusivity • Renew mailing lists/WhatsApp contacts annually • Investigate best providers for mobile phone reception in village and publish report • Publicise OFCOM's suggestions on ways to improve reception and ways to switch providers 	PC/Village groups	High	Short
	Some were unaware of village WhatsApp group or mailing lists		PC/Village groups	High	Short
	3 residents do not have internet or mobile phones		PC/Community Benefits Society	High	Short
	41% reported poor mobile phone coverage		PC	Medium	Medium
			PC	Medium	Medium
Community Facilities	51% use footpaths at least once a week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve footpaths, replace stiles with gates • Improve facilities at St Johns (access, toilet, kitchen, lighting, heating, projector) • Improve space in Reading Room by opening up into one room 	Footpath group in conjunction with WCC	High	Medium
	St John's Church is rarely used because of poor facilities		PC/Churches Conservation Trust/Action with Communities in Rural England	High	Medium
	Reading Room is rarely used because of size		PC/ Action with Communities in Rural England	High	Medium

Community Facilities	49% of village are over 55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form working group to look at provision of facilities for over 55s 	PC/Village residents	High	Medium
	40% support dog walking field 31% support allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact local landowners to discuss sites for dog walking field, allotments, wild area, community garden 	PC/Village residents	High	Medium
	10% support improved bridleways/cycle paths A significant proportion of those who cycle or ride on village roads feel unsafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form working group to consider ways to improve bridleways/cycle paths 	PC/village residents in conjunction with British Horse Society, SDC, WCC	Medium	Medium
Village Shop	57% would use shop weekly The most popular products were emergency staple items and newsagent products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form working group to create business plan for village shop 	PC/Community Benefit Society	Medium	Medium
Village Events	Existing village events are well supported There is enthusiasm to increase the number of events and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form village social group to co-ordinate activities Have village-wide publicity/marketing of events 	PC/village residents	High	Medium
			PC/village groups	High	Short
Housing	Only 7 households that responded to the questionnaire rent properties in the parish (the remainder are owner occupied) 73% of those who responded to the question supported 2 units of social housing in the village Over half of the respondents did not want any new houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore with local landowners (including those who may wish to give up some of their garden) possibility of plots for small scale social housing Any future housing will be expected to include sustainable drainage to reduce flood risk and comply with planning policies 	PC/WRCC/local landowners/village residents	High	Medium

Business	Over 50 people in the village work from home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up working from home support group Compile business directory (updated annually) to encourage residents to support local businesses 	PC/village residents working from home	High	Short
	There are a large number of different businesses in the village		PC/village businesses	High	Short
Traffic and Transport	A significant number (31%) of households have 3 or more cars 80% have concerns about parking in the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possibility of increasing communal parking Publicise UBUS regularly Form group to establish electric vehicle charging points and explore community transport options Apply for reduction in speed limit Improve signage and delineate entrance to village to encourage drivers to slow down 	PC/WCC/local landowners	High	Medium
	97% do not use local bus services and many were unaware of UBUS		PC	High	Short
	47% may move to electric vehicles in the next 5 years		PC/village residents/WCC	High	Medium
	69% think speeding is an issue in the village		PC/WCC/Speedwatch group	High	Medium
	64% would like the speed limit reduced to 20 mph		PC/WCC	High	Short
Crime	Over half of the village would like increased crime prevention measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the police to provide more crime prevention measures Publicise Neighbourhood Watch Group and renew membership annually 	PC/Police	High	Short
	A fifth of the village are unaware of the Neighbourhood Watch Group Half are willing to join the Neighbourhood Watch Group		PC/Neighbourhood Watch Group	High	Short

Environment	84% would like the parish council to promote renewable energy schemes and 80% are willing to change energy source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise existing renewable energy schemes and grants 	PC in conjunction with SDC/WCC	High	Medium
	67% support a commercial renewable energy scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form working group to consider sites/types of commercial renewable energy schemes 	PC in conjunction with SDC/WCC	High	Medium
Parish Council	Only 4% attend parish council meetings frequently 25 out of 33 responses made suggestions to improve communication of parish council decisions and encourage inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possibility of live streaming parish council meetings Give personal invites to annual meetings Publicise parish council activities and encourage public to get involved 	PC in conjunction with SDC	High	Short
			PC	High	Short
			PC	High	Short
Youth Provision	78% of young people think facilities in the village are inadequate Just over half use existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form working group including young people to improve village facilities for youth 	PC/young village residents/ Action with Communities in Rural England	High	Medium

