

About the Action Plan Process.

In the summer of 2009 Barcombe Parish Council undertook a formal consultation with the Parish by holding a number of meetings with village groups and societies and by forming a steering group of representatives from these groups in helping to design a questionnaire. The subsequent questionnaire was then delivered to every household with the May Issue of Barcombe News to enable all individuals the opportunity to have a role in forming a modern picture of the community, its behaviours and issues, both positive and negative. This process is common practice for informing the development of a *Community Action Plan* which is a process of a community identifying its' key concerns, needs and ambitions for the future of that community and acting upon this information. 73% of Villages in Sussex have completed this *community led planning* process of forming a Community Action Plan (source Action in Rural Sussex). The information provided by consultations such as the questionnaire provide a central point of reference for local governance, such as the Parish Council, District and County Councils, fundraising and bid formation and for the community as a whole to understand collective concerns in the formation of a formal strategic planning document – which is the Action Plan.

Results of the questionnaire:

153 households and 430 individuals completed a questionnaire; this is equivalent to 30% of Village 1411 Residents (Note: Percentages are rounded up or down below a single percentage point).

1. About You

The spread of age groups represented by respondents ranged from individuals under five years of age to those in their nineties, with a fairly even gender split and an average time spent living in village being twenty five and a half years – with new residents of two weeks and the longest being ninety years equally represented.

The statistics of the survey for those who responded in the *About You* section are as follows:

How old are you?

19 (4%)	0-5
67 (16%)	5-11
17 (4%)	12-17
15 (3%)	17-25
21 (5%)	25-35
100 (23%)	35-50
85 (20%)	50-65
46 (11%)	65-75
41 (10%)	75-85
7 (1.6%)	85-older

How many Males	207(48%)
How many Females	223 (52%)

The overall average time respondents have lived in the village was **25.5 years**

Least **2 weeks**

Most **91 Years**

It appears about a third of villagers have family living in the community

132 (31%) Family Connections in Village

388 (90%) Read Barcombe News

234 (54%) Read Sussex Express

365 (85%) Have internet Access

366 (85%) Use email

133 (30%) Use Parish Council Website

2. Community Spaces and Societies

Community spaces continue to be consistently used, with footpaths, bridleways and the recreation ground, all featuring heavily in respondents use of community amenities.

Many comments relate to the congestion of the recreation ground and need for alternate recreational opportunities:

305 (71%) Regularly use recreation ground

131 (30%) Regularly use the Sports Hall

343 (80%) Regularly use footpaths and bridleways

265 (62%) Regularly use the Village Hall

231 (54%) Member of a village club or society

How would you like to see our community spaces develop?

78 households wrote comments. **45 (57%)** of the comments related to developing alternate, recreational uses for community spaces to open up areas particularly for teenagers but also for families elderly and disabled to access activities and initiatives such as a community orchard and wildlife scheme with pond and places to sit, socialise and play. Many also commented on the need to develop the bottom field to make it functional and flexible in use.

Comments and ideas included:

More than 10 comments:

Wildlife Garden and woodland walks / More space for sport / More space that is not sport / Improved use and access for youth, young children, elderly and disabled. / Pond and bench / communal benches

Less than 10 comments

More parking spaces / better paths out of the village / skateboard ramp / Not developing at all / community swimming pool /

Individual comments and ideas included

Using the school as the Village Hall and the New Village hall as the School / a communal gym / hotel on site of Roman Villa / dog bins on the rec /

3. Services and Amenities

Many Parishioners acknowledge the growing importance of local services for the 'life' and 'character' of the village, its self-sufficiency and sustainability socially, economically and environmentally. 84% of respondents use the village shops and 80% use the post office, but predictably equal numbers rely most heavily in super markets to provide most of their needs for groceries.

Services and Amenities statistics:

342 (80%)	Use a nationally recognisable supermarket to buy most food
362 (84%)	Use village shops
344 (80%)	Use post office
262 (61%)	Use local food supplier
208 (48%)	Use Village Pubs
50 (12%)	Use allotment
24 (6%)	Would like an allotment
122 (28%)	Attend a place of worship

What products and services would you like to be available in or near Barcombe?

Many comments were made regarding needs and interesting ideas for new clubs, societies, projects, products and services people would like to see develop or provided in the Parish. The most common include the following:

More than 10 responses

- Bakery
- Local produce shop, grocers and / or farmers market

Less than 10 responses

- Youth club / faculties (which is repeated in other areas of the survey)
- Better bus services (also repeated throughout other areas of the survey)
- A tea room or café
- Chemist
- Butchers
- Cinema or film club
- Cash machine or greater access to more bank accounts from the post office

Less than 5 responses

- Surgery
- Village fete and more community celebrations

Some of the individual comments or ideas included

- Adopt a Granny or Granddad
- More frequent mobile library visits

4. Transport and Highways

These questions and responses provide an interesting insight to our shifting work arrangements and travel habits as well as acknowledging concerns for the general environment and health and well being of the village in the face of speeding, the need for parking, the demand for better bus services and commuting issues.

83 respondents (19%)	Work in the parish
167 (39%)	Regularly commute
114 (27%)	Regularly work from home

111 (26%) Regularly use Public transport with **150 (35%)** saying they would use public transport if it were more frequent with **91 (21%)** of respondents claiming interest in the ideas of a car sharing scheme.

Speeding was an obvious concern of the majority of respondents with **272 (63%)** confirming that they think speeding is an issue in Barcombe (**22% say not**). Of those, **233 (54%)** Support traffic calming initiatives (**28% do not**).

How would you like to see transport and highways improved in Barcombe?

78 households provided written comments on transport and highways improvements and **42** of the comments **54%** were related to reducing speeding through the village and serious concerns for safety and well-being of villagers. The 'Rat Run' of commuters, speeding or heavy tractors and lorries all feature highly in peoples concerns.

17 households (22%) reiterated comments made earlier in the survey regarding the need for a better bus services. These comments required services to be more regular, earlier and later in the day, connecting to trains services, servicing Town Little Worth and Spithurst as well as services to Newick for the surgery and chemist and services and to Chailey so teenagers can see their school friends at weekends.

There were a range of sometimes conflicting comments and reasoning for either enforcing or removing the parking regulations on the High St and surrounding areas, with the regulations seen by some as unnecessary and problematic and others seeing them as central to traffic calming.

5. Housing and Development

250 (58%) Thought that there is a housing need in Barcombe (**15% say not**)

Of the 58% of those who answered yes - **97 (39%)** supported the notion of flats, **228 (91%)** Small family homes, **250 (100%)** Affordable Housing for local people, **252 (100%)** Supported accommodation for older people and **115 (46%)** supported the development the notion of a need for business premises.

Open comments on development and housing in Barcombe?

107 households commented on housing and development and the majority of these reiterated the statistics above with majority support being for the development of affordable housing and supported accommodation for the elderly but that this **MUST** be for local people. There were significant concerns not to destroy the character of the village with a few comments relating to greater consideration of the overall aesthetic and materials used in buildings to retain the visual amenity of the village. There were a few (comments that were opposed to any development what so ever.

A sample of comments in no particular order includes:

LOCAL housing should be for LOCAL people / development should not be on green-fields / do not destroy the village / village needs to grow but not become Ringmer / no development at all / Keep Barcombe as it is / Housing for younger people and older people / more sympathetic to village aesthetic / more ecologically sound / rentable / roadside infill between Newick, TLW and Mills / I am concerned about the loss of shops, pubs, services / more imaginative better designed / property behind pub and loss of garden amenity / there is a need for housing so young and old people can stay in the village / housing for older will free up houses for younger.

6. Environment and Lifestyle

A variety and disparate range of issues were commented on in the questionnaires, many of which were village focused rather than 'global' in their concern. Respondents demonstrated a range of stand-points and interpretations of what 'sustainability' is and means to them and the community – interweaving ideas and approaches to ecology, bio-diversity and self-sufficiency as a means to become *more sustainable*.

386 (90%) of respondents recycle, with **347 (81%)** using the Black Box scheme. Most people recycle glass, metals, some plastics and paper, with fewer finding the opportunity or infrastructure to recycle cardboard, clothes and organic waste with a few comments relating to the need to swap and / or recycle children's toys, particularly the plastic ones. **15** households commented on the need for cardboard recycling collection services or recycling centre in the village and somewhere for 'green' or compostable waste making this the single most common concern.

278 (65%) Thought Barcombe should investigate alternative fuels for the Village with 26 households currently using wood, 12 using solar, 6 using LPG and 1 using air source heat pump and under floor heating. There were a modicum of comments relating to the need to prove certain technologies with **3** comments opposed to wind as a possible solution. **239 (56%)** Supported the development of a sustainability group, with **292 (68%)** supporting further wildlife initiatives being instigated.

Here is a sample of some of the interesting ideas and comments respondents made in no particular order when asked what issues of sustainability concerned them most: Fuel supply / water supply and water quality in the river / flooding and defences / farming policy for flooding (planting trees etc and not maize on flood plain) / exploding the con of wind power / more local services / traffic and speeding / more recycling of cardboard and hard plastics /

And a sample of how respondents thought Barcombe might become more sustainable:

Improve bus services / veg and produce co-op / farmers market / local produce store / village care scheme / cycle track and paths / paths out of Village / Village Hall should be sustainable and affordable to use / hydro-electric on the river weirs / ensure old and young can stay in the village / support the shop / better bus services to other villages and towns / reopen railway line / cycle paths on river bank to Lewes / footpath on Blackberry field from Barcombe Mills / give Parish Council more funding for local needs / yes to geo-thermal and veg growing but no to wind farms / wind farm at

sewage works

7. Overall comments

These were also open and diverse but with clear messages that people like Barcombe as a village and do not want to see it change too much but also not to die, it should retain its character and community but move to meet its needs.

A sample of the overall comments made in no particular order.

Keep village a village not a small town / development should be for locals only / village needs to be kept unique not an estate / encourage communication between generations and ages / explain sustainability / more police presence / traffic calming / more village wide social events – fetes etc / don't make village too big / evolve but not too much expansion / more development means more traffic and parking issues

Comments on questionnaire:

The majority of responses were positive – with suggestions for a more frequent consultation process and assurances that the results are published. Consider that request Actioned!

What Now?

Having finished the lengthy task of compiling the results from the survey, the Parish Council is now planning a public event on **MONDAY 8TH of March**, which is a workshop to both discuss the results and form an Action Plan based on these results. This is a public event and will also be attended by invited representatives of various advisory groups or service providers who relate to key topics that emerged from the survey. Once the initial Action Plan has been drafted it will be published, along with the complete set of results from the survey and delivered to every household in April. The publication of this document will coincide with Annual meeting of Parishioners on **20th April** where the Action Plan will be formally launched and presented.