

Four Marks Community Plan



Oak Green Parade Four Marks

Dedication

This plan is dedicated to the memory of Anne Storey, who for many years was both a Councillor and an advocate for looking after our environment and nature in the village of Four Marks.

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Executive Summary	Pages 4 - 5
A brief history of Four Marks	Pages 6 - 10
Business and Economy	Pages 11-12
Communications / Welcome Pack	Pages 13 -14
Healthcare	Pages 15 -16
Housing	Pages 17 - 20
Transport	Pages 21 - 26
Safety and Crime	Pages 27 - 28
Leisure and Environment	Pages 29 - 32
School and Community	Pages 33 - 36
Young People	Pages 37 - 40
Summary of Young Persons	Pages 41
Appendix	Pages 42 - 45
Acknowledgements	Page 46
Volunteers Required	Page 47
Rear Cover Design	Page 48

Introduction

Each village is recommended by Government committees and by the Rural Affairs Department to prepare a Community Plan based on the views of all local residents. As a result a number of volunteers from the community produced a questionnaire to discover the views of the whole village of Four Marks. This community plan has been written and published based upon those results both in hard copy and in electronic format.

The questionnaire was posted out in March 2010 and sent to every household in the village. The document contained sufficient room for each family member to answer each question and an additional set of questions was provided for residents aged between 10 to 21 years of age.

1522 questionnaires were sent by post to the village households and by September 2010, 586 were returned giving a response rate of 39%, which the committee feel is an excellent result for a large village community. Furthermore 1132 individuals took the time to complete the relevant sections within the questionnaires providing a considerable cross section of views which would be reflected in the community plan.

The data capture of the returned forms was then processed by East Hampshire District Council, who on behalf of the village captured the relevant information. This was then put into a draft analysis report from which a final Community Plan could be drafted.

The Community Plan is designed to make the local area a better place to live and will involve residents engaging with other agencies and organisations in order to achieve this. It is not only the responsibility of the Parish Council but that of the individual through proper consultation to reflect those views and it is through this document it is hoped that this may be achieved. The community is constantly evolving and therefore regular reviews will be undertaken to update the plan.

Executive Summary of the Questionnaires

53% of the respondents were female

40% of the respondents were aged over 60 years

62% use local newspapers and other publications to find out what is happening in the village

73% would have found a welcome pack useful when they moved into the village

77% have not used the village website

70% would use a dentist in the village

27% said they use the bus occasionally

26% stated they had difficulties using public transport to and from Four Marks

47% stated they use a bicycle for leisure

50% plus think there are major danger spots on the roads in the village

56% said the road surfaces in the village need improvement

26% moved to the village for a particular dwelling

90% plus of all homes are owner occupied

56 % of all respondents said that no additional housing is needed in the village

87% said they have relevant onsite parking

72% said there is adequate public green space where they live

64% do not attend a place of worship or faith groups within the village

96% consider that Four Marks is a very / fairly safe place to live in during the daytime

90% consider that Four Marks is a very / fairly safe place to live after dark

91% feel safe or fairly safe walking on the roads / lanes of the village in daylight

Four Marks Community Plan

67% feel safe or fairly safe walking on the roads / lanes of the village after dark

61% state they would support a neighbourhood watch scheme if there was one

81% stated that they had heard of street watch

70% plus would like to see a greater police presence in the village

10% have been a victim of crime in the last two years

62% would like to see more village community projects

57% said they do attend village events

90% think the people of Four Marks are friendly

90% plus use the food shops in the village

88% use the village chemist

34% would like a country / family run pub with meeting rooms

29% would like a swimming pool

70% think the village has sufficient public open space

44% think the village needs bridleways

55% think the village needs more wildlife corridors

52% think residents need to find out more about environmental issues

54% think that the village could improve its carbon footprint

50% of the respondents are employed or self-employed

31% of the respondents are retired

A brief history of Four Marks

According to Bartholomew's Gazetteer the village of Four Marks is the only one named as such in the UK. First mentioned in a document circa 1550 albeit spelt differently Four Marks was referred to as "Fowrem'kes and derives its name from "a vacant piece of land" on the Manor of Alresford adjoining the tithing's of Medstead, Ropley, Farringdon and Chawton.

Four Marks was created in 1932 from parts of the six parishes of Medstead, Ropley, Chawton, East Tisted, Newton Vallence and Farringdon. It covers 1,499 acres and is one of the smallest parishes in East Hampshire. Due to excessive building in the recent past it is also one of the most densely populated. Its boundary to the north is the Watercress Railway line and as part of the central down land it is also the highest settlement in the district with views stretching to Hindhead, Winchester and Butser. The name appears on Ordnance Survey maps of 1897.

In bygone days:

Discoveries of a flint axe head and flint arrow head show signs of Stone Age activity in the area. A pure gold armillary and a bowl barrow construction outside of the settlement have been found. These indicate a Bronze Age settlement just outside the Parish. A Celtic track way passed through the village and evidence of Celtic farming has been found at Headmore Lane. The Pilgrim's Way, from Winchester to Canterbury, passes through the village, along Brislands Lane and Blackberry Lane. In the past few years the St Swithun's Way has been inaugurated through the southern part of the village to the east. This goes from Winchester to Farnham.

Because of its elevated height, Four Marks was chosen by the Admiralty as the location for one of its chain of Semaphore Stations on the uncompleted second line to Plymouth. This was important as a method of communication between the Admiralty in London and the ships at Portsmouth and Plymouth during and after the Napoleonic Wars. Four Marks was also chosen by the Ordnance Survey as a site for a triangulation point at Telegraph Lane. At 220metres above sea level, Four Marks took part in a chain of beacons to commemorate the anniversary of the Armada and HM the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 and her Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

The former London and Southampton Railway was a very busy line with passengers and freight. The line was opened in 1868 and the local station was named 'Medstead' and was closed in 1973. The line had previously been used during the war to transport soldiers from Winchester to Waterloo. Travelling from Ropley to Alton, using the line became known as 'Going over the Alps', due to its steep gradient. This stretch of line is still used today to test the abilities of new locomotives. During the Second World War American troops passing through, were popular with local children for the sweets and gum thrown from the carriages. When the Heritage Line opened in 1983, the station name was changed to 'Medstead & Four Marks' and the railway is now known as the Watercress Line. The line now only runs from Alresford to Alton as a popular tourist attraction.



A steam locomotive entering Medstead and Four Marks Station

Another major community activity happened in 1970 when local people formed a society to reclaim Swelling Hill Pond, which has been in existence since at least the mid-19th Century and had become silted up. The restored pond occupies a secluded spot on high ground and provides a tranquil habitat for its abundant wildlife, walkers and the Angling Society. Unfortunately the pond is again suffering from silting and needs more restoration.



Swelling Hill Pond

Present Day:

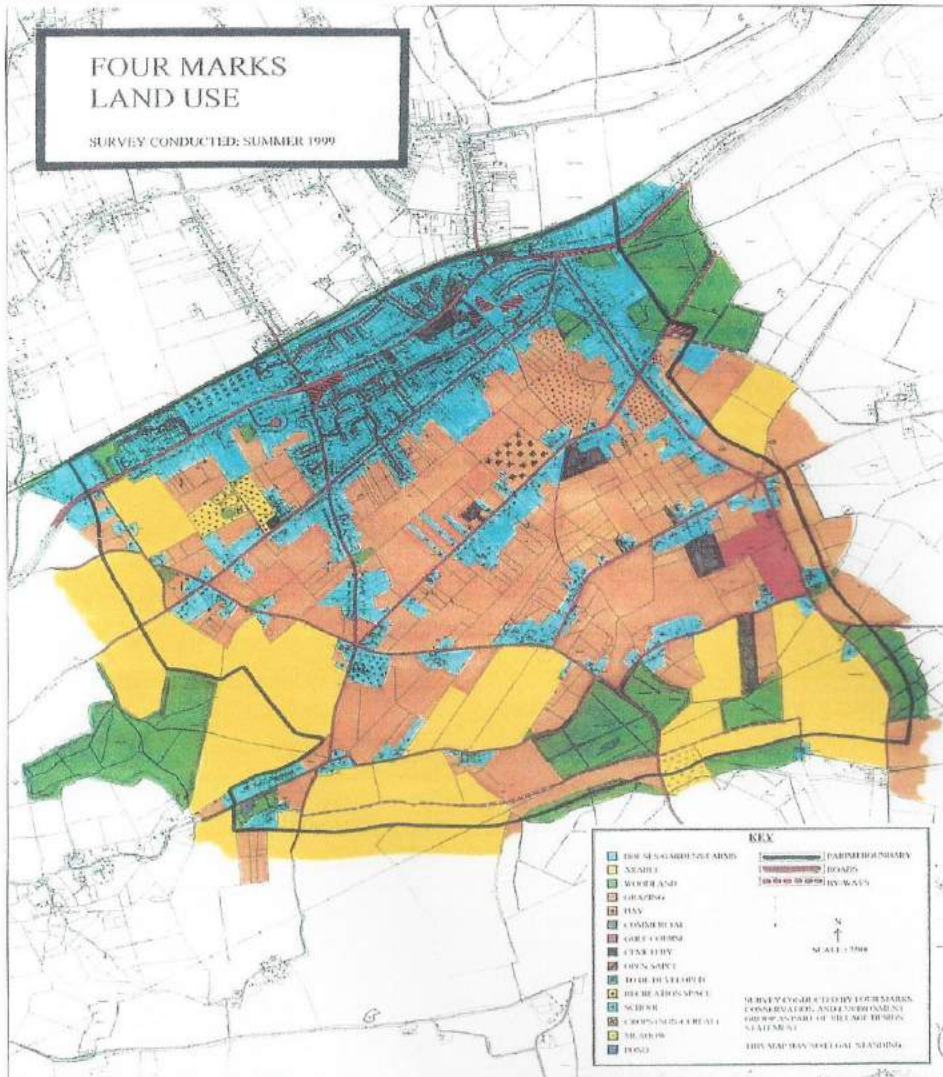
Four Marks retains much of its leafy character and agriculture continues in both the central area and the southern fringes of the parish. The small hedged enclosures, which are typical of the area form an important wild life habitat, deer, badgers, dormice and foxes are to be found, with a very wide variety of birds and flora.

Three churches are present in the village, The Church of the Good Shepherd, Lymington Bottom, The Gospel Hall in Winchester Road and The Jubilee Church which meets normally at the primary school. All have increasing memberships and are an important part of community life.

The Village Hall is very busy with many social clubs and associated bookings. It is a great asset to the village, having started out as the Institute in 1913. Over the years it has grown and now has three rooms for hire and good parking, but could do with modernisation.

Sports are played at the Recreation Ground, Uplands Lane, including football, cricket, archery, bowls and tennis, with a nine hole golf course situated in Headmore Lane. The Scout and Guide Hut is also located on the recreation ground. In 2000 the Bernard Benian' Millennium Pavilion was opened, provided by the Parish Council. There is also a new children's playground, a BMX track with aerial runway and a burial ground. Shoppers are catered for locally, mainly along the A31, which divides the village. The shops are mainly small but include a petrol station with shop, a small Supermarket, Pharmacy, Bakery, Off Licence, Cycle shop and a Tool Hire company. There is also an Indian Restaurant and take away, Chinese take away, Fish & Chip shop, Barbers and Hair Stylists, Florists, Optician's and close by a Public house. In the nearby area of Lymington Bottom Road there are a Butchers, a Greengrocer, a Coffee shop, a Saddler and Equine supplier, Computer shops, a Building and Garden supplier, and Garden equipment engineers.

The village also has some small industrial units located in Willis Lane, providing a variety of services, including car repairs, servicing and MOT testing. There is also a garden centre and garden nursery within the village. Four Marks has a multi-award winning micro-brewery in Station Approach. There are numerous small industrial units located within the Parish.



The above map shows the use of the land in the Parish of Four Marks in 1999 and can be compared with an aerial photograph on page 10

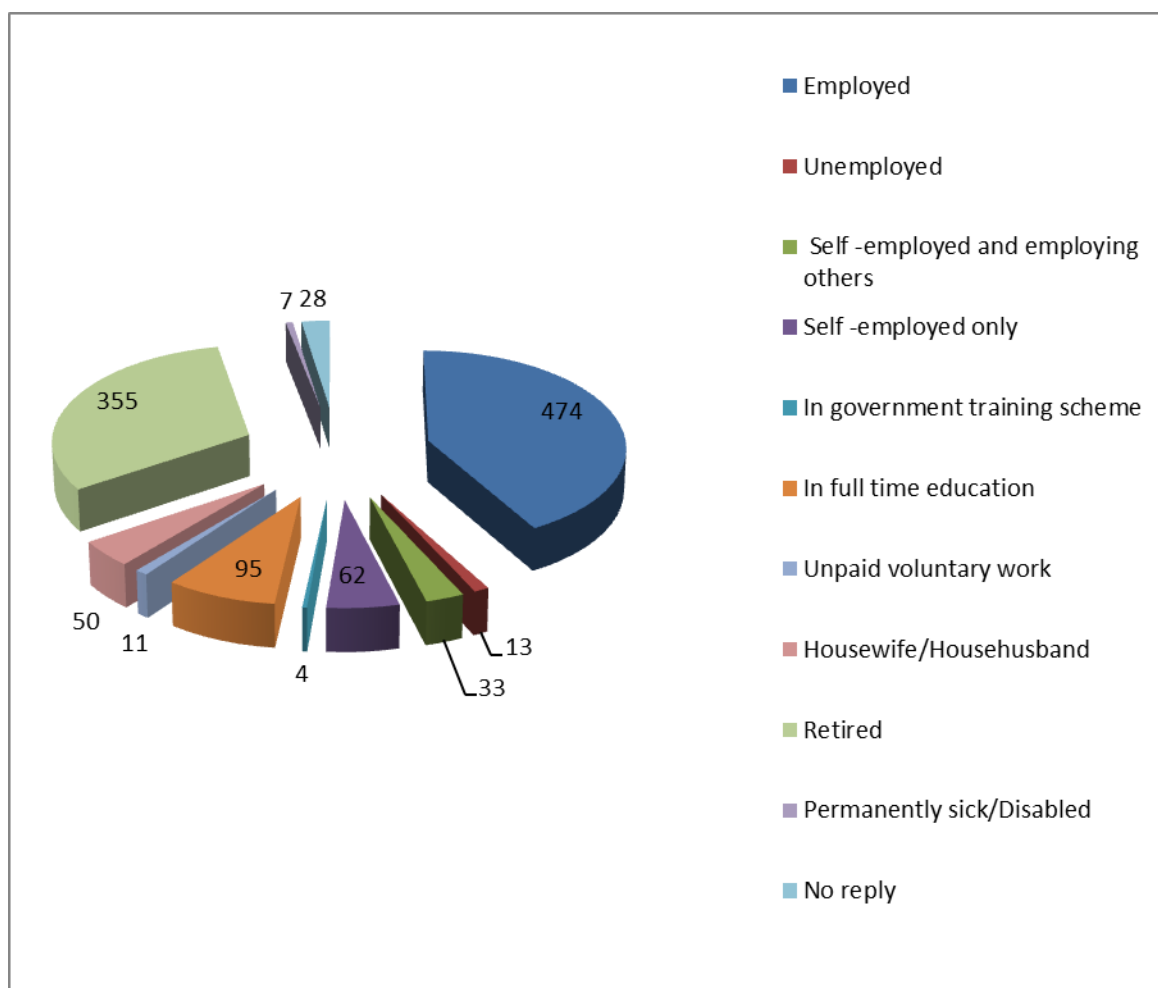


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An aerial view of the Parish of Four Marks showing the neighbouring boundaries with the parishes of Medstead, Chawton, Farringdon, Newton Valance, East Tisted, and Ropley,

Business and Economy

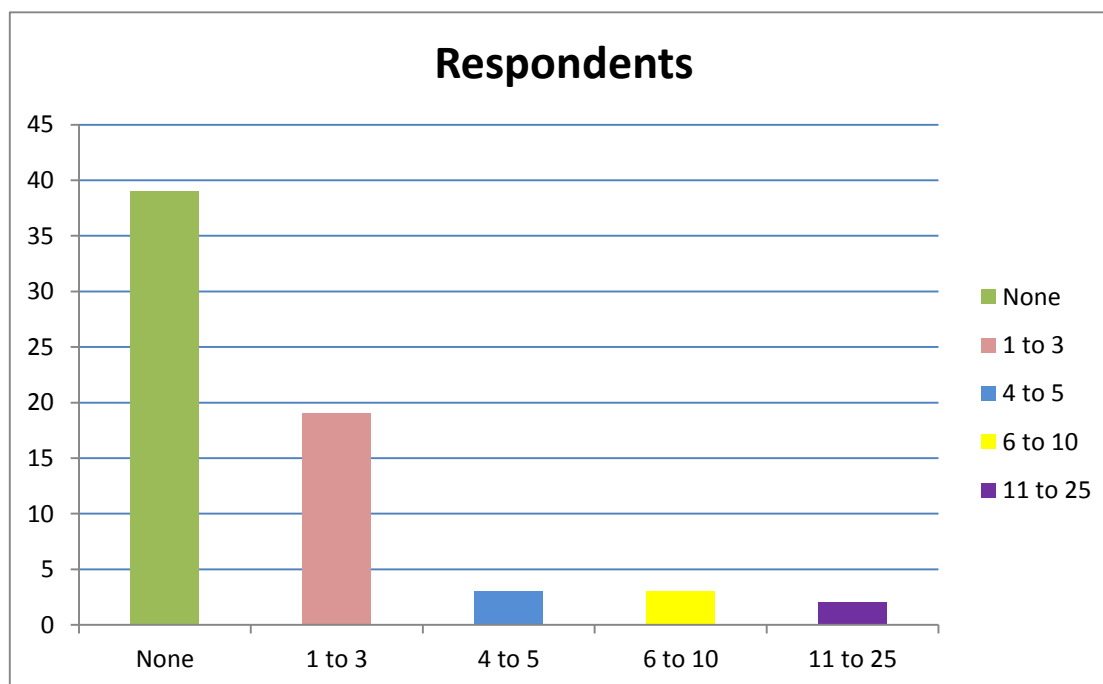
The village population is made up of two major groups. Over 50% of the respondents were in employment, whilst over 31% of the remaining group were retired. A full representation of employment was covered by the village respondents.



The chart shows the demographic of the respondents

The majority of workers do not work at home and therefore have to travel to their place of employment; only 14.9% worked from home on a full time basis.

Of the respondents who run a business in the village 59% do not employ any other personnel.



This chart shows the number of respondents who run businesses within the village and employ staff.

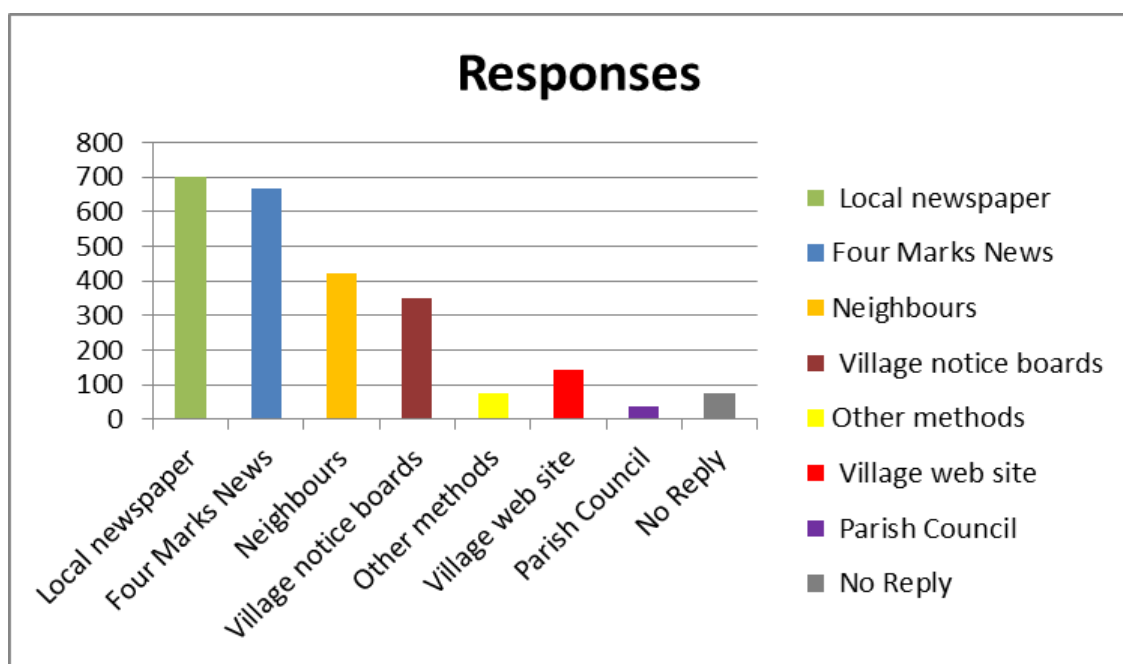
The questionnaire asked what businesses should be encouraged in and around Four Marks. The majority would like to see a Post Office back in the village along with enterprises that would serve the local community and few mentioned a better public house. The village was felt to be in a good location if you owned your own business but one disadvantage was broadband/internet access which was considered to be too slow and another was the lack of a Post Office.

Lack of post office facilities within Four Marks is an inconvenience not only to business but to local residents. There is a real business case to reintroduce a Post Office back into the village and this should be part of a suggested action plan that all the majority of villagers would support.

Work is needed on improving the broadband infrastructure within the village to improve local business so that they can compete on an equal footing with other businesses and provide a better service for the residents.

Communications

Over half the respondents (53%) completing the survey were female and 40% were over the age of 60 years. The survey took responses from age groups ranging from the under 10's to the over 80's. The majority of respondents use local newspapers to find out what is happening in the village.

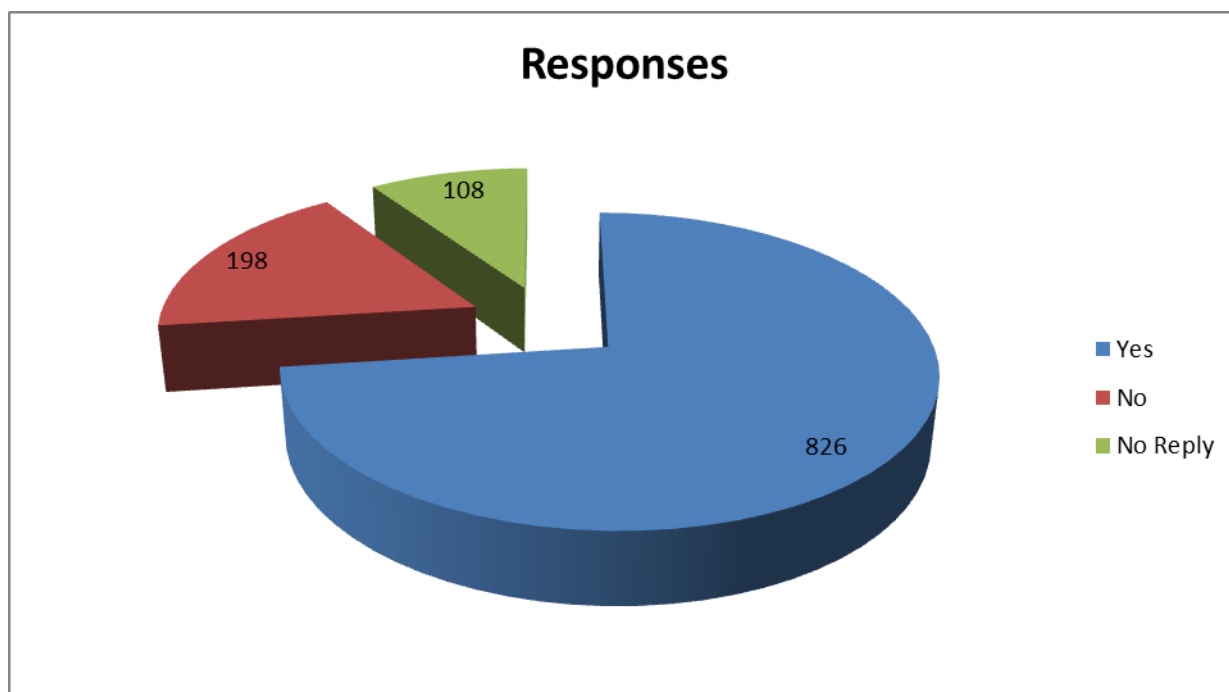


This chart shows the responses to the question. “What resources do you use to find out what is happening in the village?”

Over two thirds of the respondents felt there was no need for any more notice boards to be placed in and around the village. Of those who responded that they would like more village notice boards; the garden centre and school became the most popularly suggested locations along with one on the new baseline building site when it was completed.

The majority of the village respondents had not used the village website as a form of communication due to its lack of content. Of those who had used the site a third found that it needed more information and disappointingly found it poor to use along with out of date data.

Welcome Pack

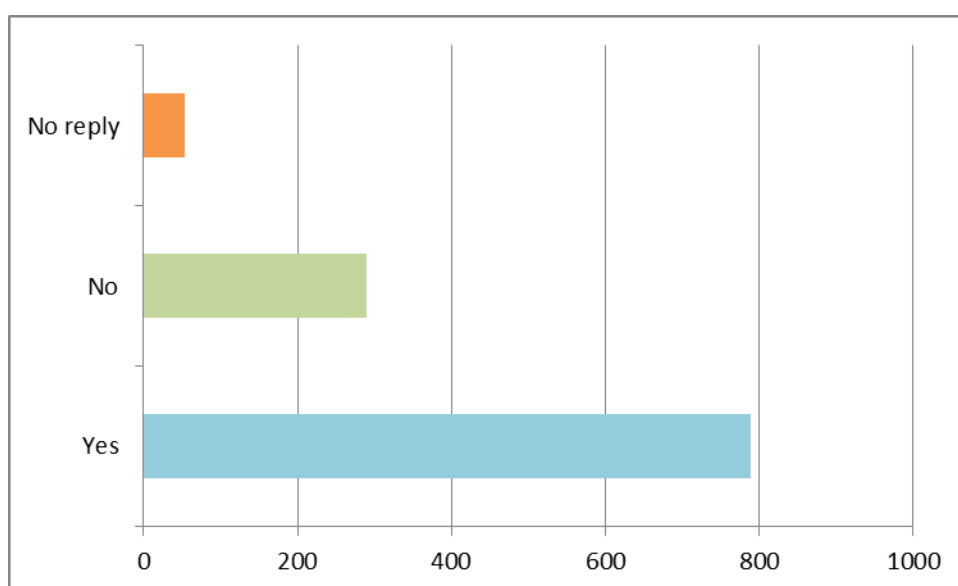


This chart shows the responses to the question: "Would you have found a welcome pack useful when you first moved to the village?"

It was felt that "Welcome Packs" would introduce the village to new residents. Whilst many developers do produce a pack with some relevant information for new build properties; there is nothing available for older properties sold on the open market. It would be a welcoming feature if an information pack could be produced providing the relevant information that a new resident may require. Currently some estate agents and the local church produce a limited welcome pack but there was a feeling that modern technology could be better used to improve this feature.

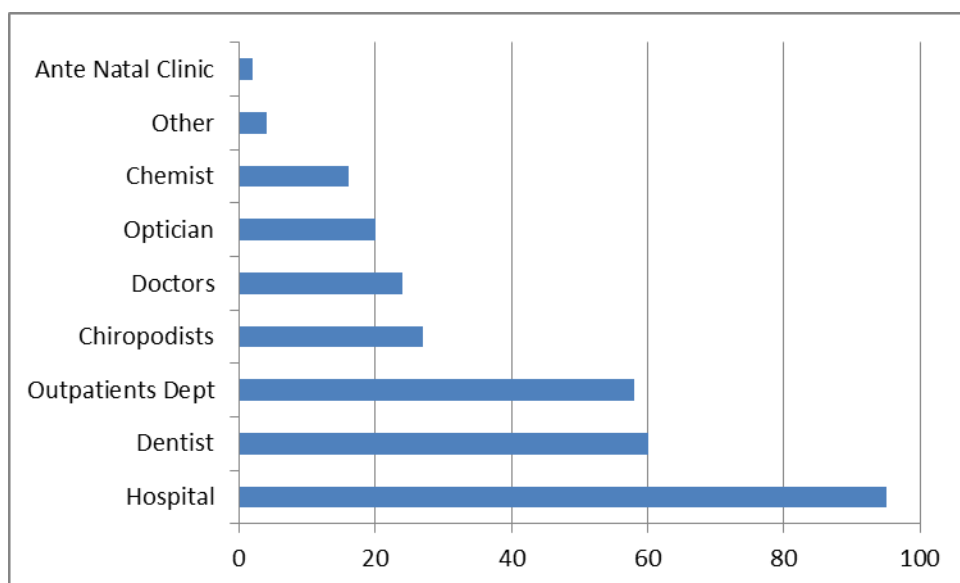
Healthcare

The vast majority of the respondents (77%) used the two Doctors surgeries within the village and immediate proximity, whilst 19% travel to use doctors in Alton or Chawton Park. The village hosts an Optician's, Chemist and Registered Chiropodist/Podiatrist. The majority of respondents (70%) would like to use a dental practice within the village. The survey highlighted difficulty by the respondents in getting to any form of medical services outside the village namely hospital and outpatient clinics. The lack of direct bus services and the high cost of travelling by bus were considered partly to blame. Poor parking facilities at both Winchester and Basingstoke hospitals along with high car parking charges were also a cause of concern.

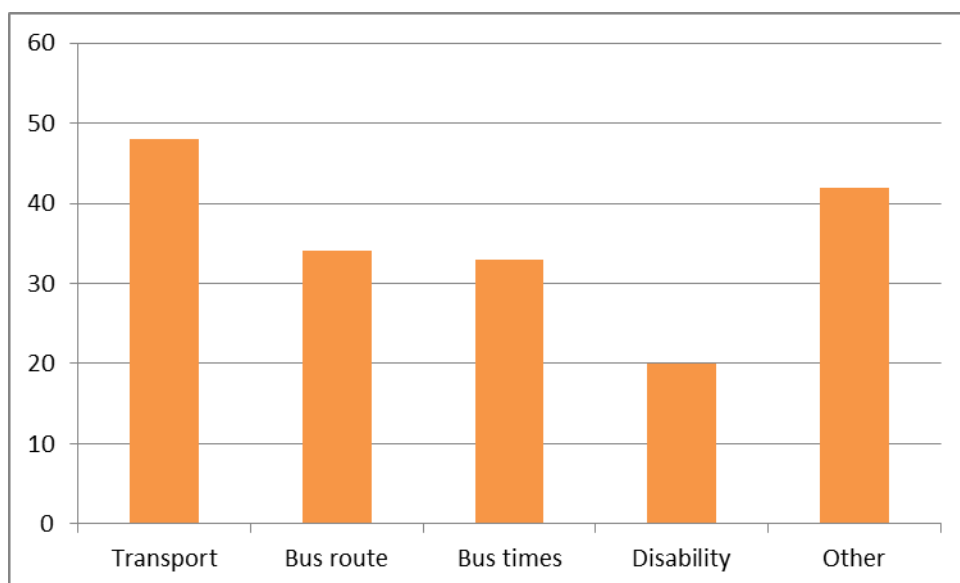


This chart shows the responses to the question: “Would you use a dentist in the village?”

The majority of the respondents would like to see and would use a dental practice in the village. At the time this survey was undertaken there was no practice within the village area. However since the completion of the questionnaire a private dental practice has been opened in Medstead Parish.



The responses to the question: “Do you have difficulty getting to any of the following?”



The responses to the question: “Please explain your reason for your difficulty”

It should be noted that over 70% of those who responded, as having difficulty getting to hospital, were aged 60 or over and accessing health facilities is clearly an issue for older residents. There is a local care organisation, which does provide transport for the disabled and the elderly at an affordable non-profit making rate, but it is very dependent upon volunteers as drivers.

Housing

The village has a very mixed type of housing from the original colonial bungalows to modern estate type of houses and flats. There has been a steady increase in the amount of building since the 1960's. The introduction of mains drainage to the village precluded the increase in the number of new house builds that have occurred. Many houses and other properties in the village are still not connected to mains drainage due to the extremely high cost of connection.



An older style colonial bungalow

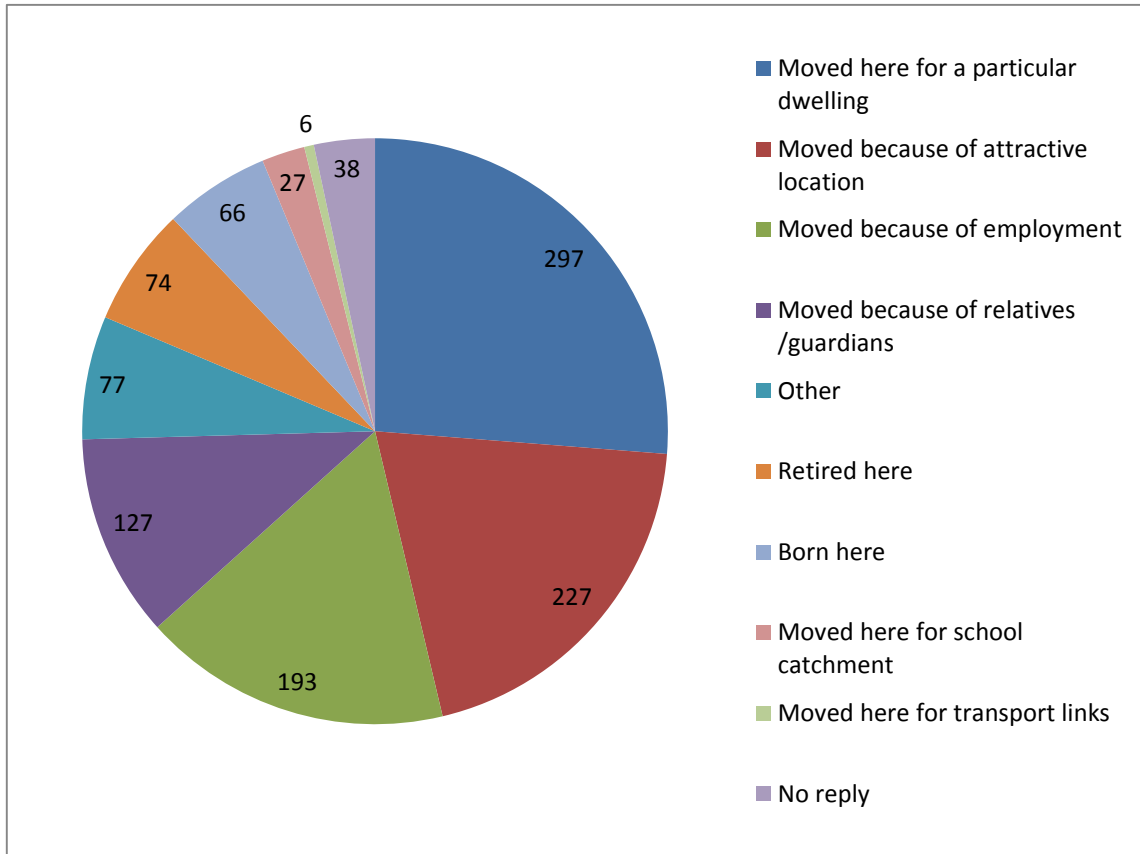
The majority of people moved to Four Marks because of a particular dwelling or because of the attractiveness of the location. The vast majority, nearly 70% of those who replied, stated that they have lived in the village for over 5 years and 90% are owner occupiers.



Newer style dwellings in the village

Four Marks Community Plan

Over 10% of the respondents were born and still live in the village. 74 out of 650 respondents have retired to the village and 127 of the 650 moved to the village because of relatives in the area. 53% of the respondents have moved into the village within the last 15 years which shows that the village is ever increasing in size and at a considerable rate. Over 92% of the respondents thought the village did not need any more housing.



This chart shows the reasons given by the responders for moving to Four Marks



A cold and frosty morning in Four Marks

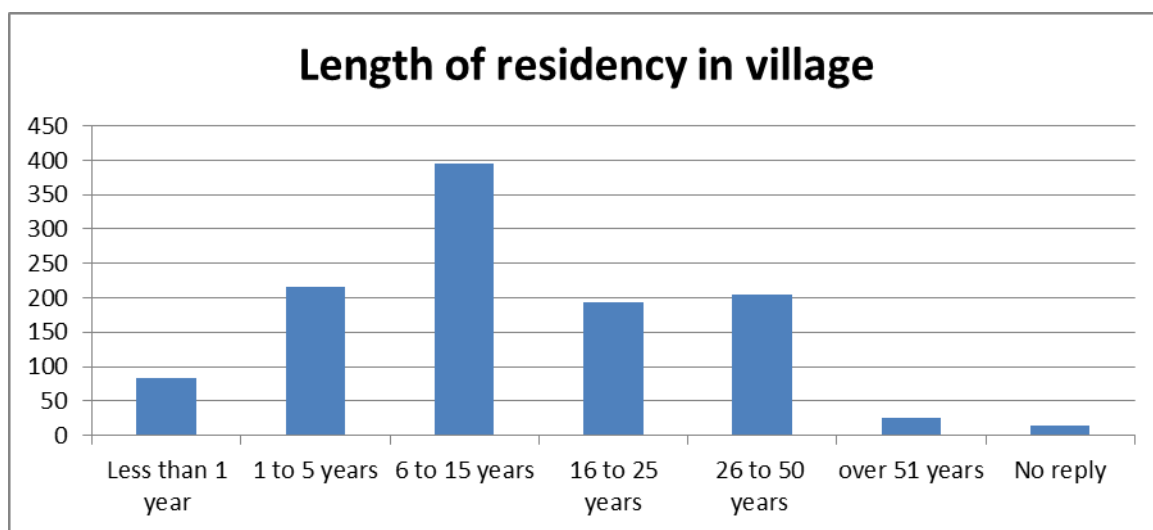
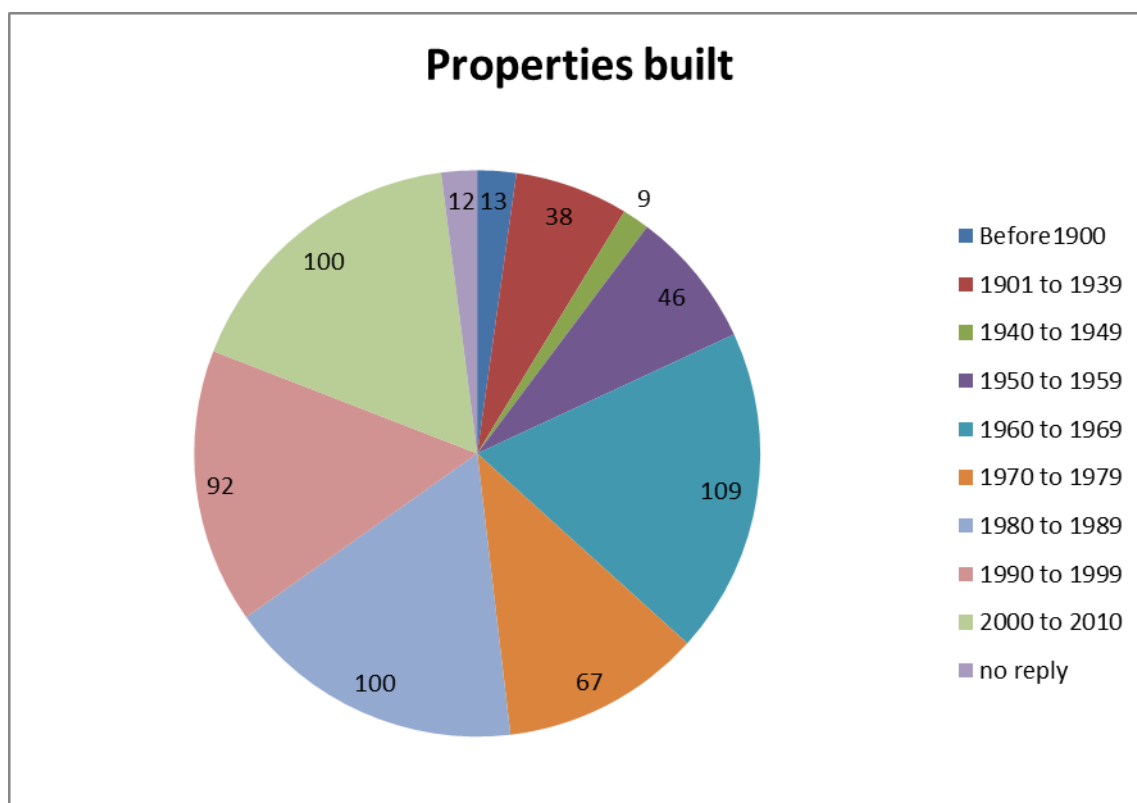


Chart showing length of residency of respondents living in Four Marks

Two main factors that have caused the most concern in this survey were the traffic and the prospect of further development. It is clear that current residents feel that the village is already at its highest capacity and further development would put an undue strain on its already stretched sustainability. In short the majority of residents do not wish to see any further development. The next chart shows the growth of the number of houses in the village over the last century and the increase in number towards the end and the start of the new century.



Modern properties in Four Marks



This chart shows the building development in Four Marks since 1900.

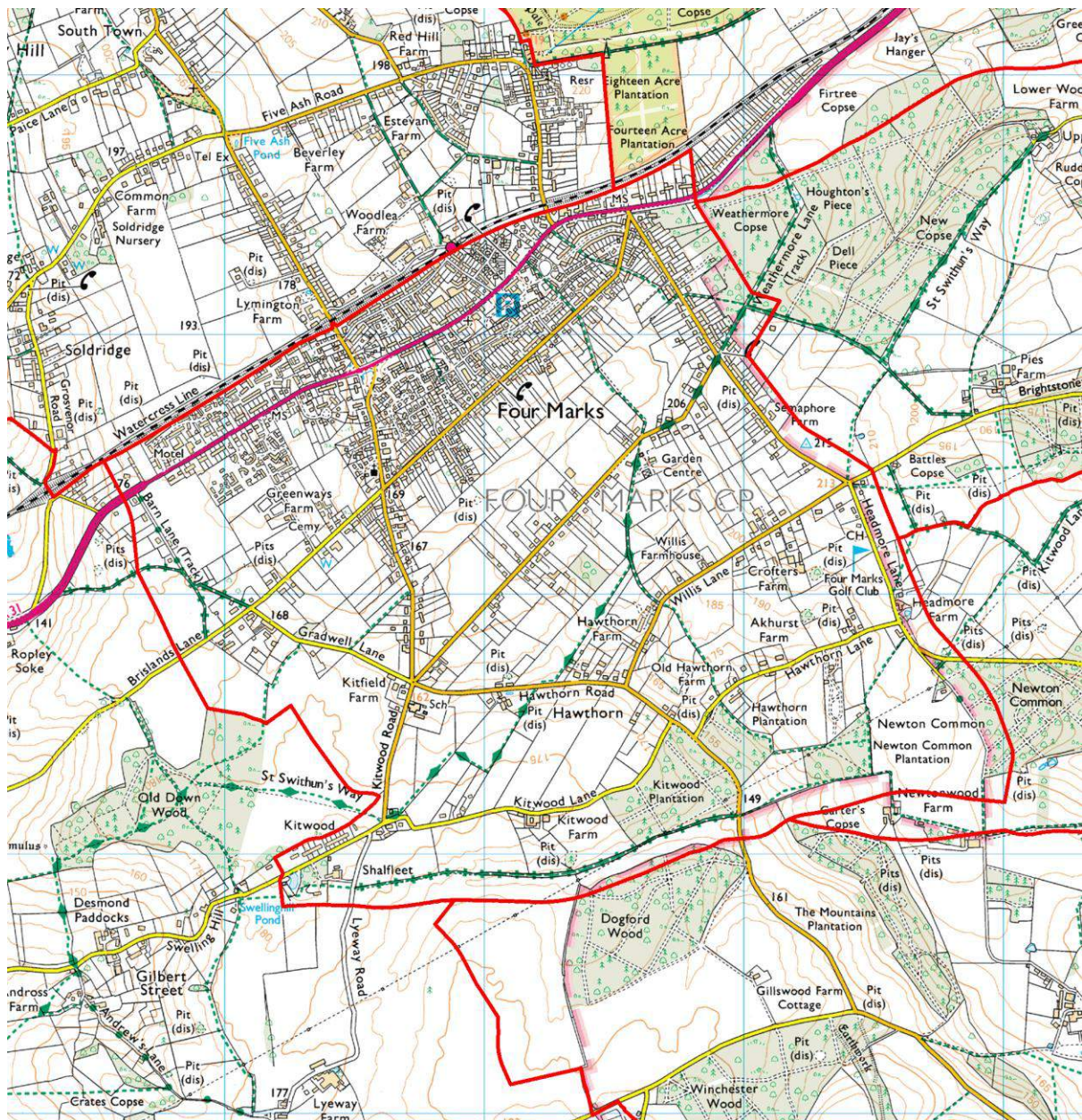
The baseline development site is already being developed with over 170 properties and many of the villagers fear that the reserve site will also be developed within the next five years. Add this to the increase in number of windfall development by building in the gardens of other dwellings over three hundred properties are likely to be built in the village during the period 2010 to 2020. This would be a minimum of 200% increase over the previous decade.

From the questionnaire villagers wish to protect, preserve and enhance the built environment in the Parish in order to retain its rural character. They would like to control its future development and the use of both land and buildings for the benefit of parishioners. 20% of the respondents wanted affordable housing for local use.

From the questionnaire villagers have concerns over the current infrastructure. Further development would lead to the detriment of the current green open spaces. 80% of the respondents felt that was adequate at the moment. The fringe lanes of Four Marks are surrounded by the South Downs National Park and any further development would change their sylvan character which the majority of residents seek to protect. How can we show what can be done to carry out residents wishes and bely their concerns?

Transport

The purpose of this section of the plan is to draw attention to the concerns of the villagers in relation to the current roads, and associated transport functions that affect the everyday living conditions within Four Marks. It should be noted that the survey was commenced at the same time as the commencement of the building of the Barratt's site at the western end of the village.



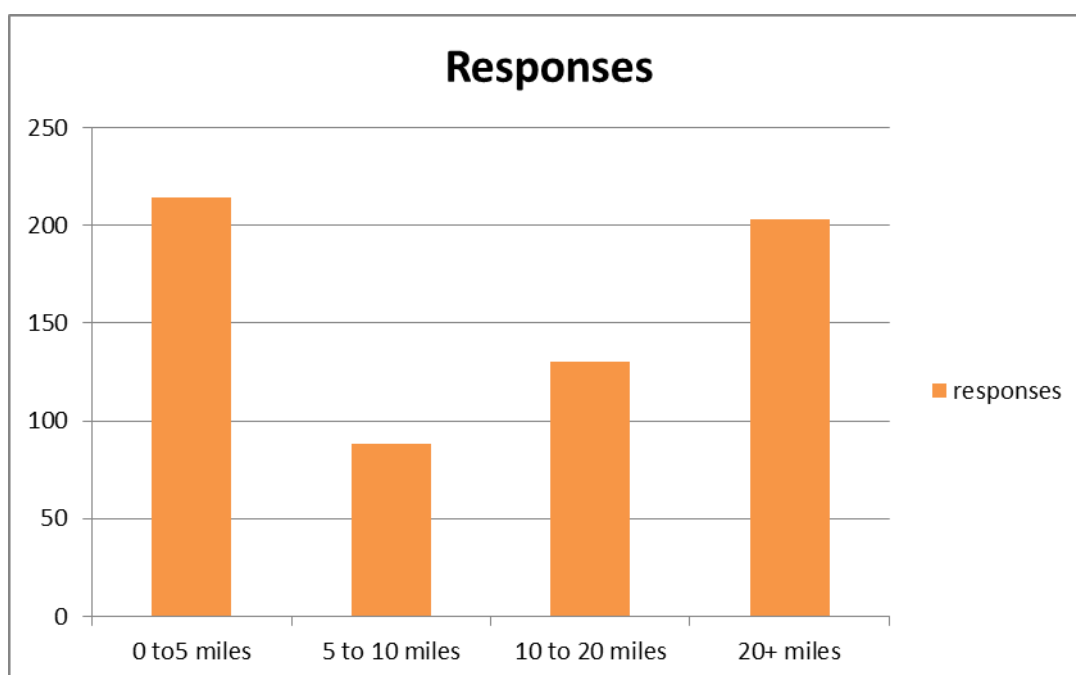
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Map of the village and road lay out

There is no doubt, as a result of this village survey, that there is a perceived problem with the current road and traffic situation, which would only be made worse by additional houses being built in the village. The results of the survey are summarised on the next page together with some proposals to try and meet those concerns.

Four Marks, which lies on the A31, is a ribbon development situated 4 miles south west of Alton and 12 miles north east of Winchester. It is on an elevated chalk ridge 220 metres above sea level and as such the village does at times have its own micro climate. This makes it, along with the neighbouring village of Medstead the highest settlement in East Hampshire. The A31 is a major trunk road cutting through the heart of the village and all other roads are tributaries off the A31 and it is in these side roads that the majority of the population live.

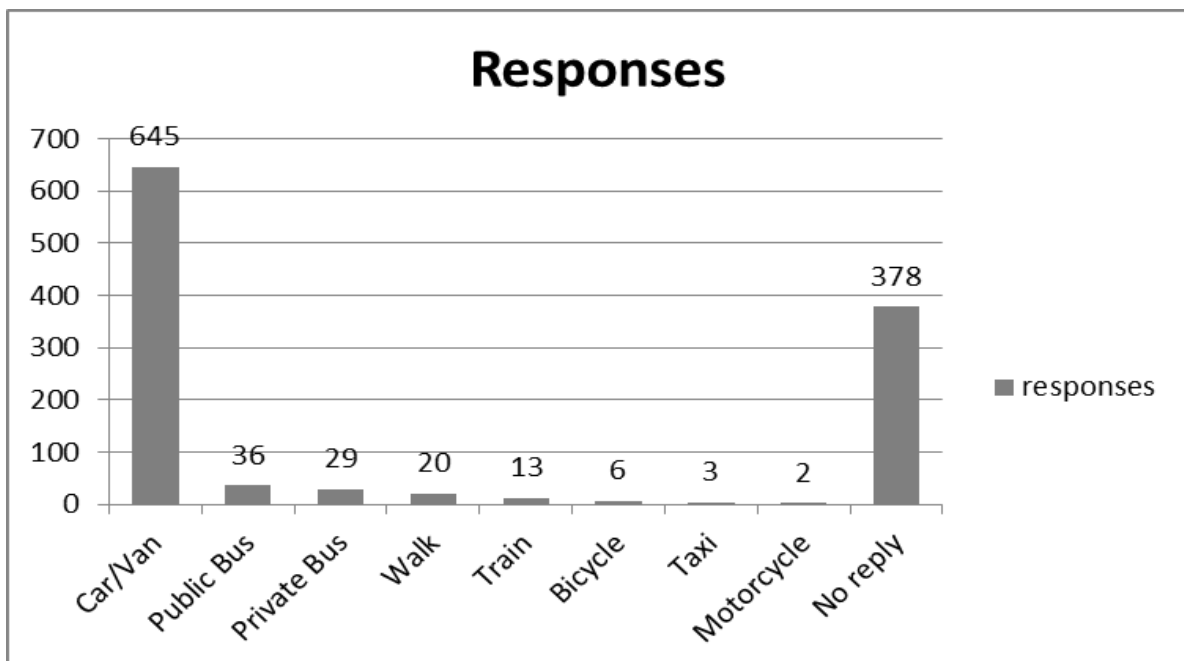
1041 motorised vehicles were identified as being used as a form of transport by the 586 households who completed the survey. This equates to 1.77 per household. 57% of all respondents use a car or van as their main form of transport to travel to work, school or training.



Distance in miles travelled by the respondents to and from work each day.

66% of those surveyed did not use the public bus service provided. Of those who did, 21% used it for leisure and 19% to go shopping. 5% of the respondents use the bus service to go to and from work and only 4% use it for school. Over a quarter of those surveyed had experienced difficulties getting to and from the village. Bus timetables, poor service, high cost, poor train connections and inaccurate information were reasons given for the problems. 35% stated they had no problems. Of those who did use the bus the vast majority felt safe using them.

47% of the respondents use a bicycle only for leisure whereas 36% stated they never used a bike. Over 50% would be encouraged to use a bicycle more if there were dedicated cycle lanes and lower speed limits within the village.



This chart shows modes of transport used to travel to work each day.

Two major danger spots were identified by the survey, one being the A31 at its junction with Telegraph Lane and the other on the A31 outside the shops.



A31 Winchester Road at its junction with Telegraph Lane identified in the survey as a danger spot



A31 outside the village shops is also identified as danger spot in the survey

Over a third of the respondents felt that the general standard of road surface in the area where they live was poor and over 56% felt that the road surfaces within the whole village needed improving. Speed reduction was identified by over a third as an area that also needed improving. A quarter of the respondents felt that some footpaths could be improved whilst the vast majority seemed satisfied.

Four Marks Community Plan

The village will need to ensure that any new builds meet with the demographic of 1.77 cars per household and therefore provide suitable off road parking with each new development. The Parish Council should have more influence over EHDC planners when discussing new developments and planning applications.



A typical village road after a snowfall.



A31 Winchester Road Four Marks at its junction with Lymington Bottom and Lymington Bottom Road.

It was the Lymington Bottom junction that speed and accidents were a problem prior to this layout change. However there are still concerns for pedestrians trying to cross the road at this location.

The bus service should be made more affordable and the timetable changed to reflect better links with the rail system and other bus services at Alton.

Representations should be made to the bus and rail companies in order to better synchronise their time tables. Cheaper fares may entice better use of the public transport system. No late night buses operate and parental transport and taxis are the only option at present.

There is a need to access and improve safety onto the A31 from the identified danger hotspots. This could be achieved by the Parish Council and/or local pressure groups lobbying local politicians and public bodies such as highway authorities. There is a need to seek reduction in the speed limit and road improvements in the identified and relevant areas



The A31 Winchester Road



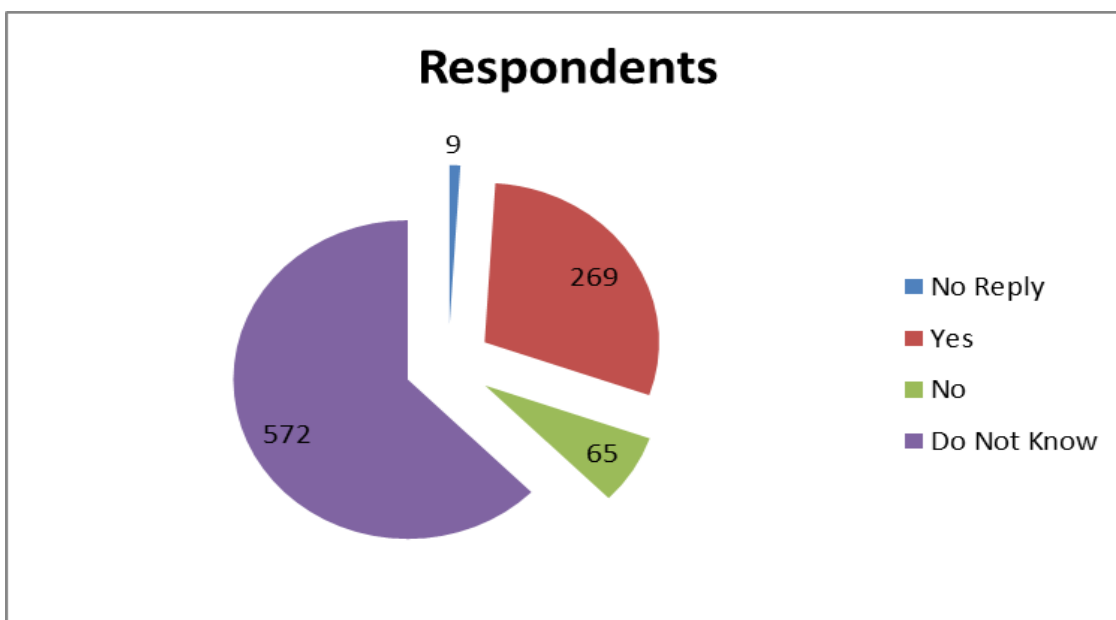
Lymington Bottom at its junction with Brislands Lane highlighted as an area with regular flooding problems.

Safety and Crime

Four Marks is considered by the respondents to the questionnaire to be very/fairly safe place to live (96%) in the daytime and this only drops a little when it is dark (90%). The majority of respondents feel safe walking along the roads and lanes in the daytime and over two thirds feel safe/fairly safe after the hours of darkness.

When asked to identify areas the respondents would avoid during the daytime nearly 90% said that there were none in the village. Only 5% identified areas such as quiet rural locations and the skate board park they would generally avoid. During the hours of darkness the recreation ground, outside the village shops and unlit sites were added to the list of avoidance areas. The reason given is the number of youths loitering around in these areas especially at night. There is a lack of facilities for non-religious young people and/or organisations in the community and this could be a cause

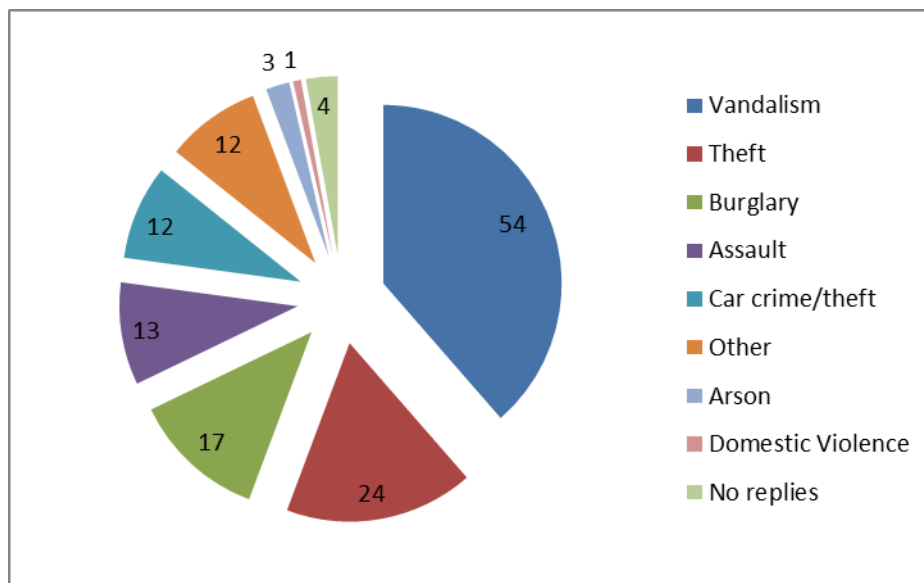
61% of respondents would support a neighbourhood watch scheme if there was one in their area. 94 people stated that they belonged to a scheme already. The vast majority of respondents had heard of Street Watch, only 14% stated that they had not, but whilst nearly 30% thought they were effective the majority were undecided.



Is Street Watch effective? This chart shows the respondents view!

The survey showed that 209 of the 1132 respondents would join the street watch group if asked so there would appear to be support for the scheme within the village.

Only 114 respondents (10%) had been a victim of crime in the last two years, the majority of which had been vandalism.



This chart shows the breakdown of those crimes reported

Although the village has one Police Constable and Police Community Support Officer assigned to it, the officers have a number of other villages in their area of responsibility. If you are required to call the police then Hampshire Police recommend you telephone the number 999 in an emergency or the number 101 for other less urgent matters.

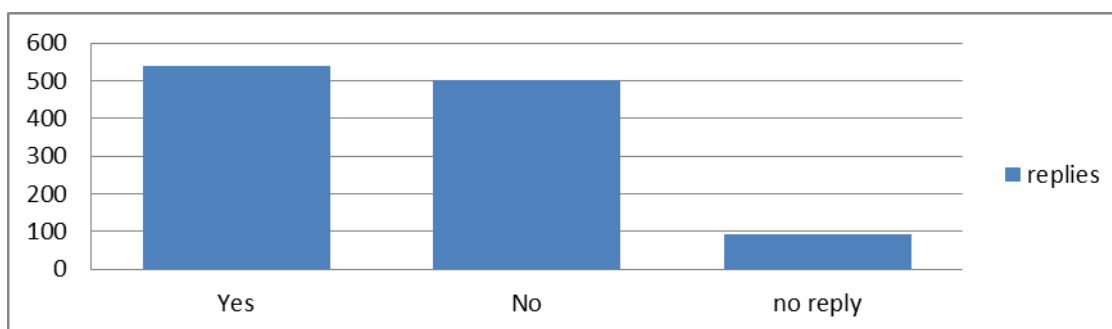
The speed of traffic through the village especially on the A31 is a contentious matter and although regular enforcement is carried out by the camera partnership team from Hampshire Police; the residents still advise that speeding traffic is an issue.



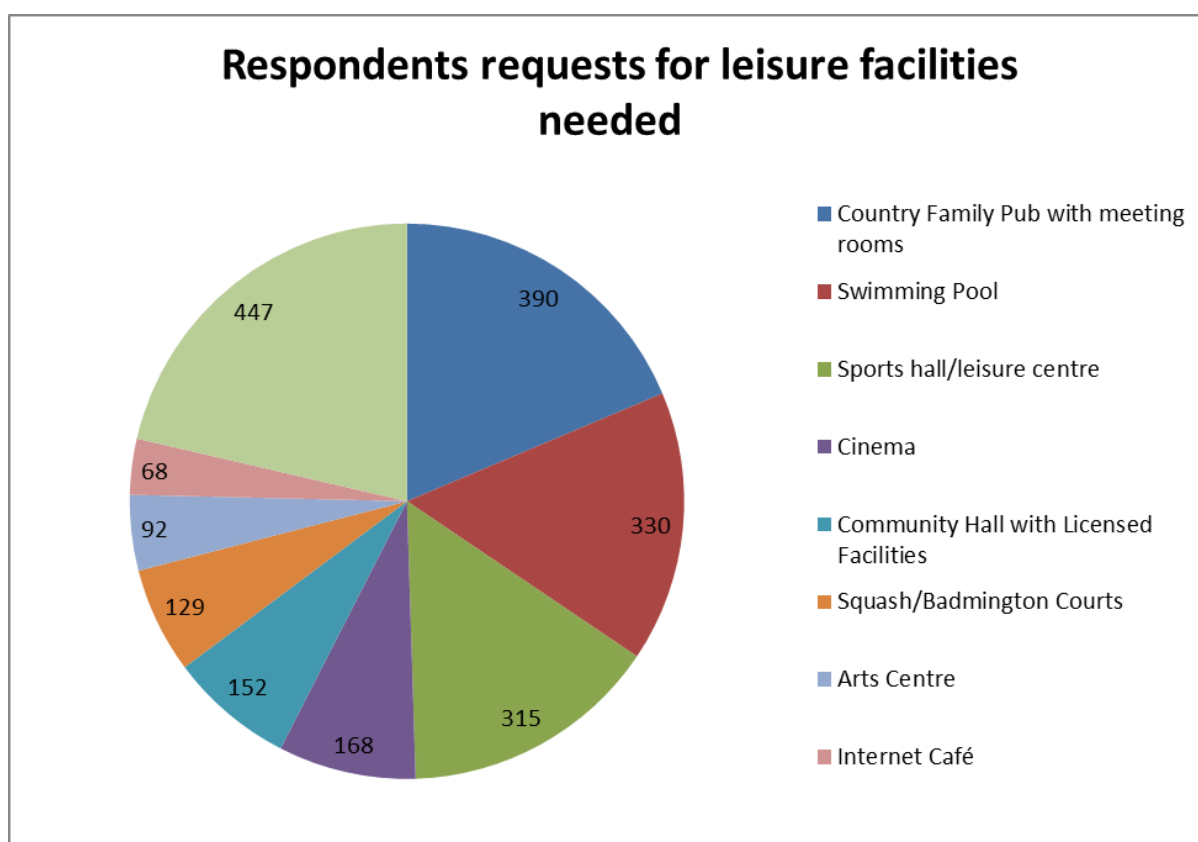
Telegraph Lane a regular site for speeding traffic.

Leisure and Environment

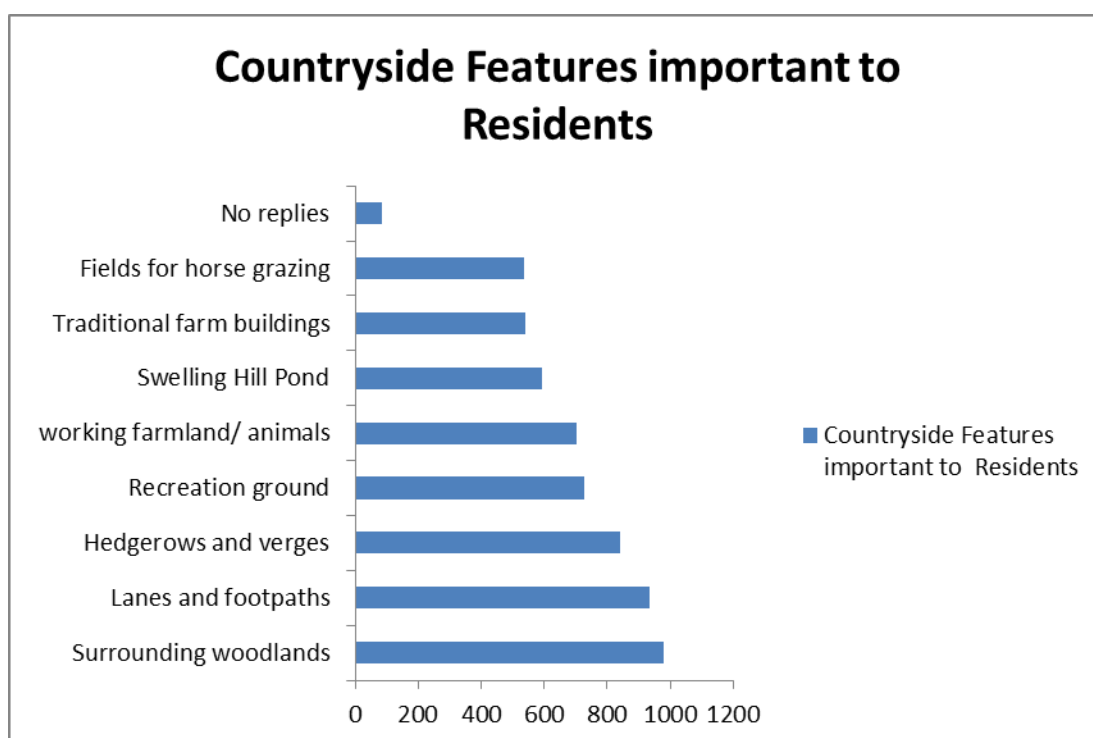
The village hall which has three meeting rooms, a stage and amenities for food and drink, is used by many people and groups. It is in the centre of the village with access to all. There is a nursery at the hall which is used during school term times.



60% of all respondents said they are able to access the sporting facilities that they need. When asked about what leisure facilities were needed in the village, the three most popular requests were a good pub with meeting rooms, a swimming pool and a sports hall/leisure centre facility.



Over 55% of the respondents use the village footpaths on a daily or weekly basis and the majority found them to be in a good state of repair. Of those who were not satisfied; overgrown hedges / encroaching verges, uneven surfaces and a general lack of maintenance were given as reasons. The vast majority felt the village had enough public open space whilst only 18% felt there was not and mentioned no play grounds and kick about areas close by their residence as reasons.

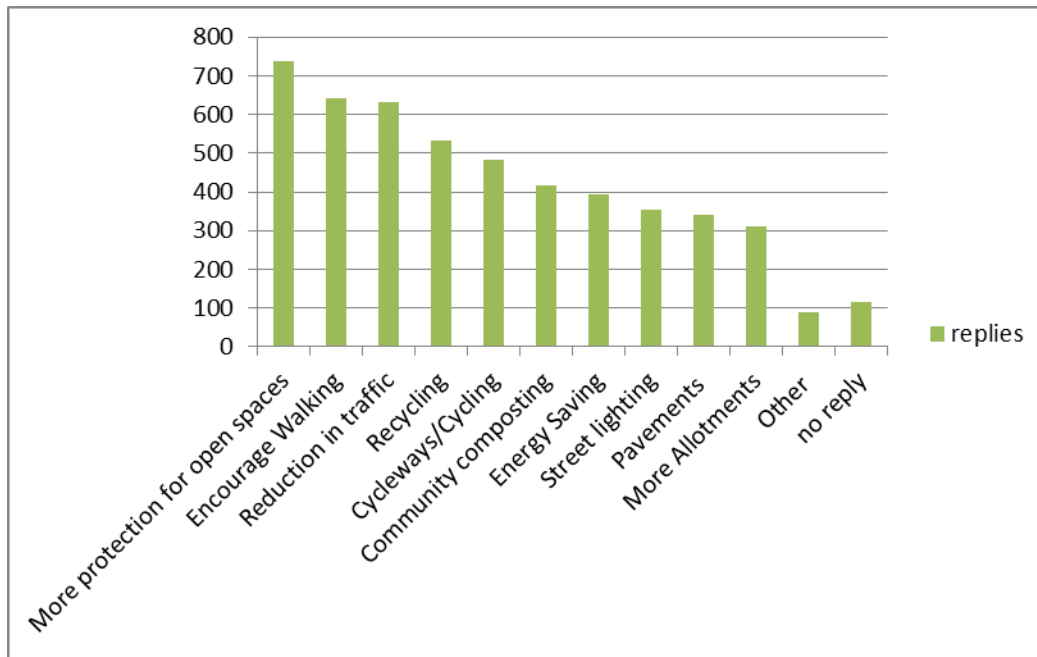


The best countryside feature in and around the village was the surrounding woodland. A majority of respondents felt that there was a continuing need for bridleways in the village and for more wildlife corridors to be created. There was a need to find out more about the environmental issues that affect the community. 54% of the respondents felt the village could improve its carbon footprint and be more environmentally friendly.

The majority of respondents (65%) think that more protection of the green spaces should be made to help protect and enhance the village environment. More walking should be encouraged and 56% felt that traffic should be reduced. Other suggestions included the stopping of new developments, community owned wind turbines and a reduction / stricter enforcement of the speed limits in and around the village



The rare Violet Helleborine [*Epipactis Purpurata*] in flower. This protected species is found to be growing in the lanes around Four Marks



This chart shows the response to the question: “Which of these do you think should be done help protect and enhance our village environment?”

Four Marks Community Plan

Four Marks is situated in a rural setting with woods and fields surrounding the parish. The village has an eclectic variety of wildlife. This includes badgers, birds, deer, dormice, bats and the rare yellow collared mice. There is a diverse assortment of plant life in verges, including rare orchids, which can be found in Alton Lane, Blackberry Lane and Telegraph Lane. They have now been identified and protected. One of the major objectives of the plan would be to identify and detail all the wildlife of the village with a view to protecting it for the future.

It should be noted that Four Marks has its own micro-climate because of its height above sea level. The temperature of the village is generally 2 degrees colder than the nearby town of Alton. As a result the village suffers from misty and frosty conditions generally in winter and is usually one of the first regions in Hampshire to receive snow in winter.

The land is generally of a clay cap over chalk and much of the land has large flint stones in it, which does cause some annoyance to local farmers and gardeners alike.

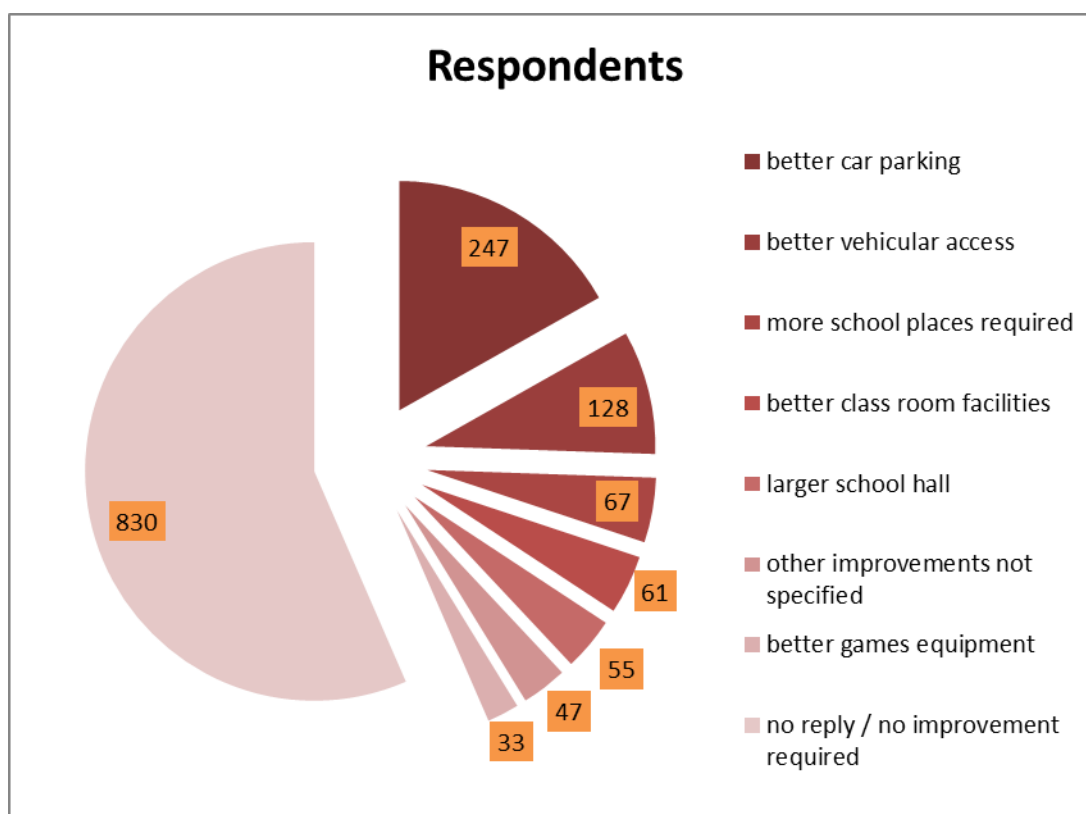


A picture of a wildlife meadow in Four Marks including butterflies.

School and Community

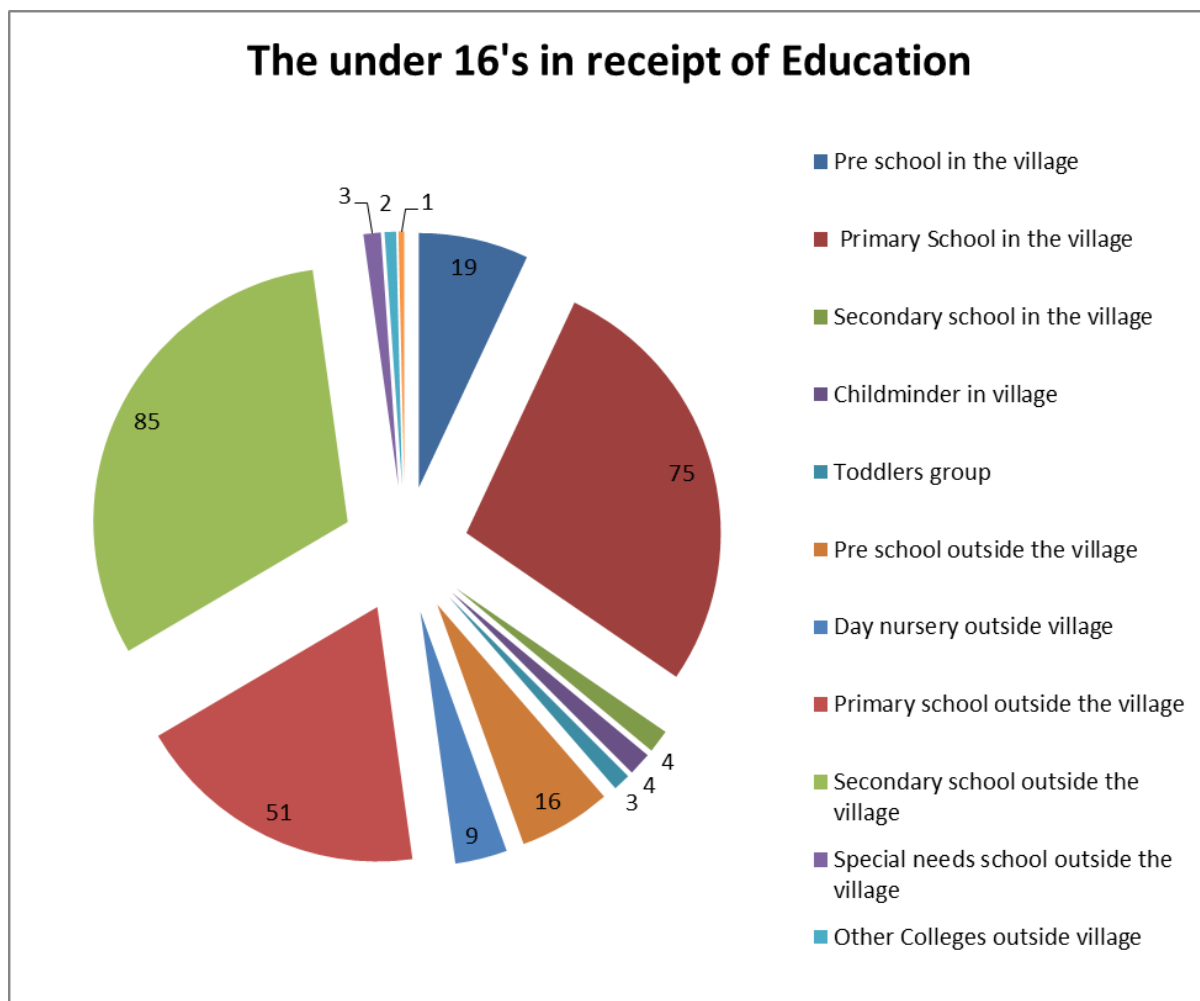
School

The village currently only has a primary school, which is situated on the southern edge of the village and at a cross roads where 5 roads meet. Although this is a rural location most of the children, who attend the school, are brought to the school by vehicles, which can cause congestion at various times of the day. 22% of the respondents felt that car parking at the village school needs significant improvement. The majority made no comment on what improvements were required at the school.



What improvements would you like made to the village school?

23 households, who completed the survey, said they had children at the school and this accounted for 31 pupils. Nearly a third of respondents felt that the primary school needed better car parking and vehicular access. This would be very difficult as the roads surrounding the school are narrow and there is little room for on street parking. There is a pre-school nursery at the primary school and another nursery at the village hall. All secondary school children, who live within the area of the village, have to attend schools either at Alton or Alresford and the majority travel on school buses or coaches.



From the survey 68% of all primary school aged children, who live in the village, attend primary school education outside the village, namely Ropley, Medstead, Chawton and Alton. The village school currently has one temporary building which is used by the pre-school nursery. Should there be any significant increase in the village population then the school may have to be enlarged to cope with the influx of extra children that this would bring.

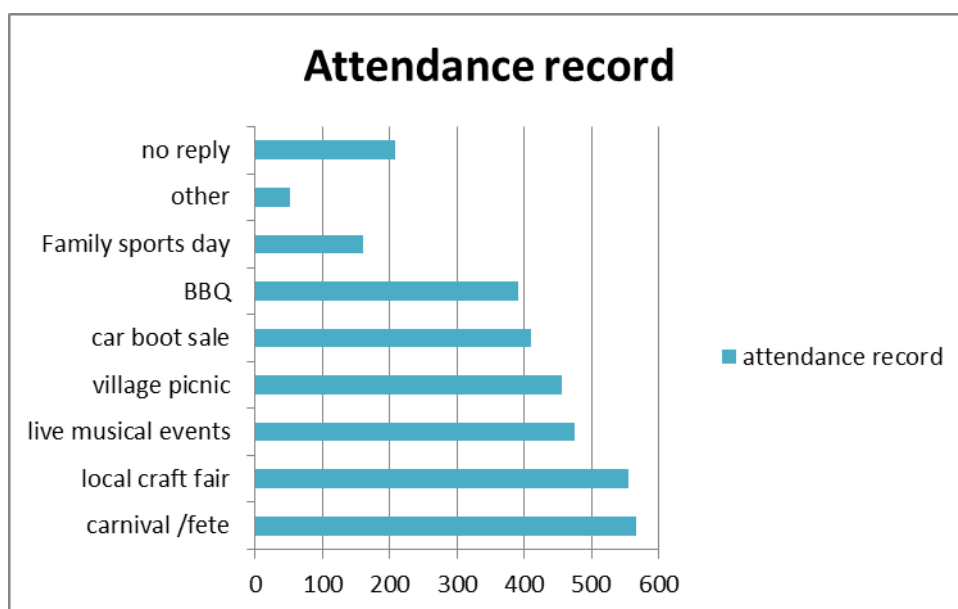
Community

The village has many clubs and societies for villagers to join including the usual sporting clubs. There is also a sailing club, archery club, art classes and tennis courts. The venues for these clubs are situated currently at either the recreation ground or the village hall. There are other facilities in the village for the scout and guide movements, but their buildings in conjunction with the youth club are falling into disrepair and should be considered for renewal.

90% of the respondents felt the people in the village are friendly towards each other.

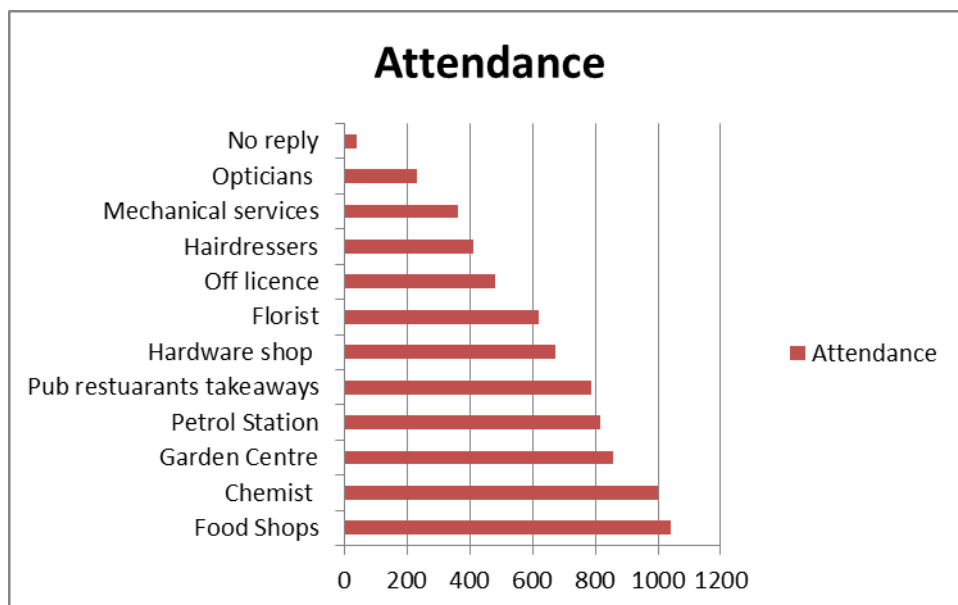
The majority of respondents do not attend clubs and societies or any social activity in the village, but would like to see more community projects undertaken.

58% of respondents said they do attend village events i.e. village picnic.



Number of respondents who attend village events on annual basis.

The village shops are well patronised by the community with over 90% using the food shops in Oak Green Parade and in the surrounding areas. The next chart shows a breakdown of shop usage within the village and it would appear that the village has a good eclectic match of shops for the community. Only 7% of the respondents use the mobile library service supplied by the Hampshire County Council.



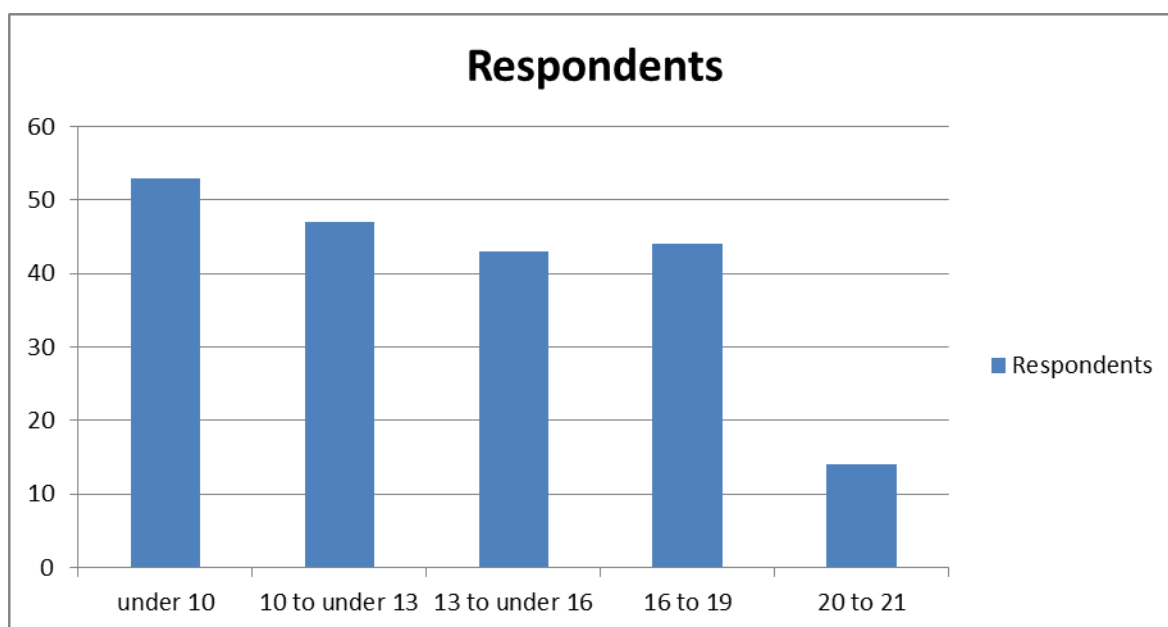
Breakdown of the use of the shops in the village centre by respondents

More than half the respondents recycle their bottles and tins within the village as well as other recyclable goods. Over three-quarters of the village respondents felt that recycling services in Four Marks were adequate and not in need of change.

“If you are elderly or disabled, do you need help to access these services?” 69 respondents replied to this question. The majority stated they need help getting to the hospital and with garden and house maintenance. This group of villagers also encountered problems crossing the road (13%), obstructions on the footpath (10%) and a lack of seating within the village (4%)

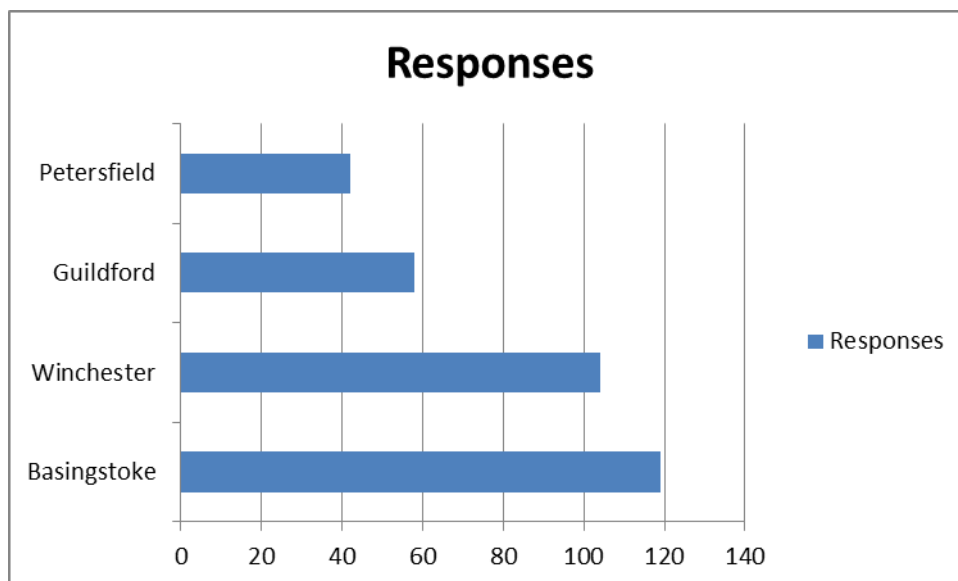
Young People

Each village was required by government to create a plan based on the views of all local residents and this survey attempted to discover the views of the whole village including young people. An additional set of questions were set out within this survey to canvas the views of residents up to the age 21 years. Responses were also obtained as a result of an EHDC youth worker talking to young people in and around Four Marks. 211 responses were received to this part of the survey (51% male and 49% female).



Respondents by age group

The survey showed that 185 were in education and 17 were employed or in apprenticeship schemes, 4 were unemployed and 5 failed to reply. Over half did not use the local bus service. When asked the majority felt the bus fare was too expensive and there needed to be cheaper fares or subsidised and more frequent to run later at night.

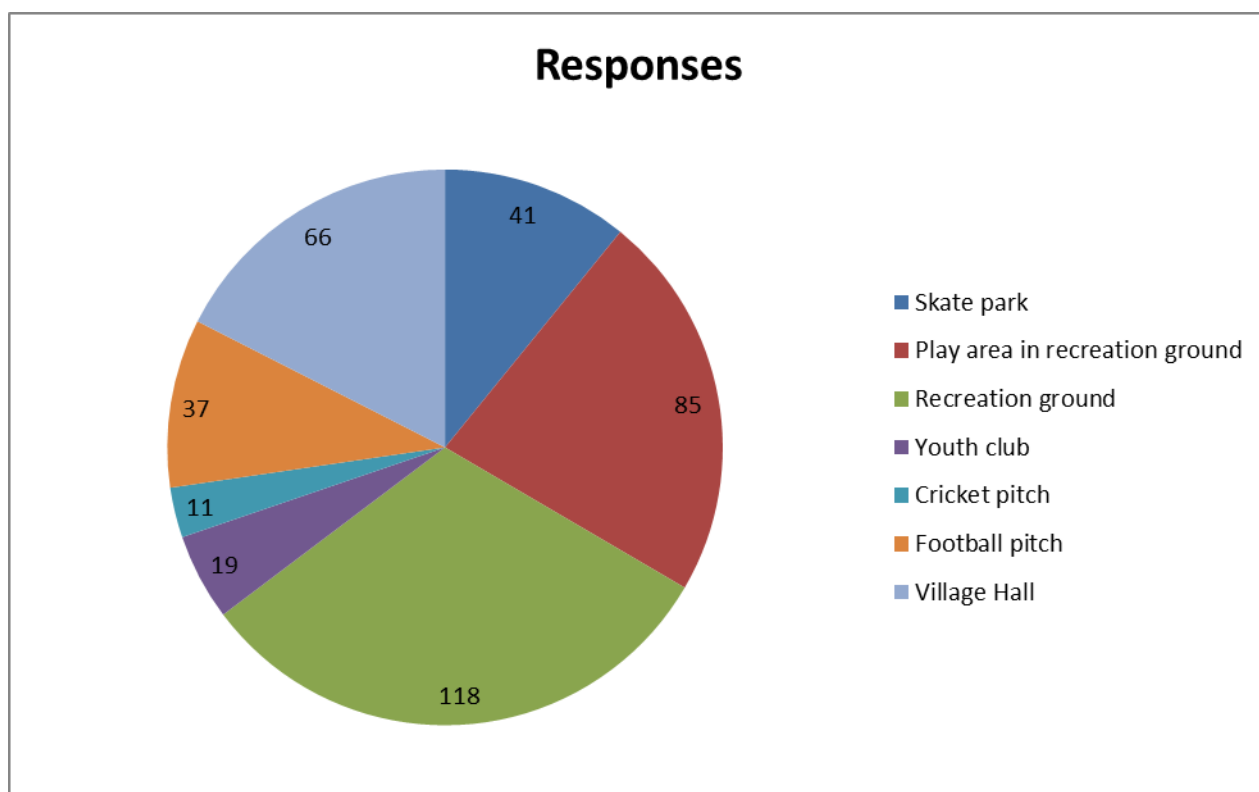


***The responses to the question:
“Which towns or cities, if any, would you like to travel to by bus from Four Marks?”***

Over half the respondents 56% use the recreational ground with 40% specifically using the play area in the recreation ground.



The childrens playground with the Benians pavilion behind situated in the recreation ground

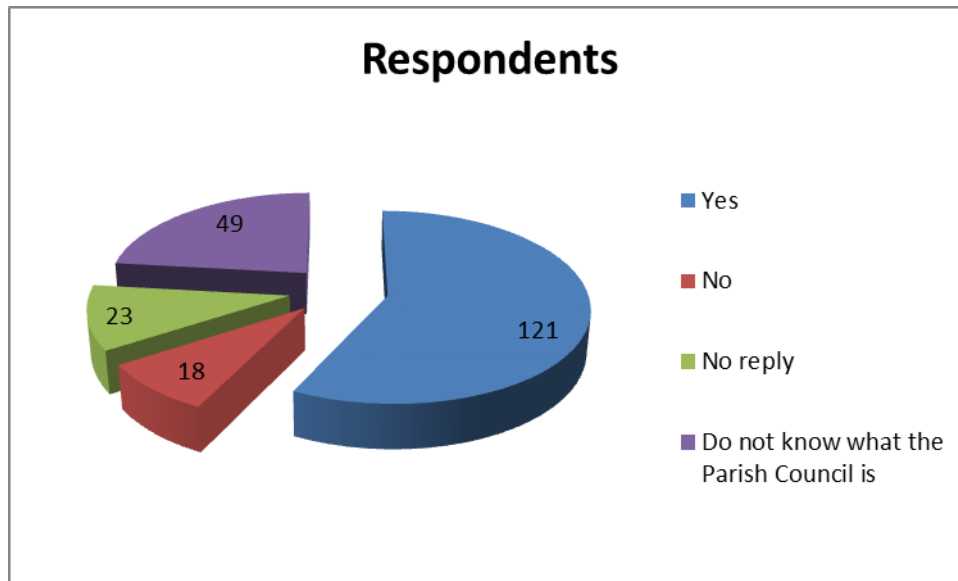


Most used area in the recreation ground

The young people, who were asked about the present facilities in the village, 68% felt that they were average to good whilst 28% felt the village facilities were poor. When questioned as to what they would like to have in the village there was a variety of answers. The most popular was a swimming pool; however a better play park was next highest on the list followed by a better leisure and sports / leisure facility.

65% of the young people questioned stated that they did not hang around the village with little to do. However nearly a quarter (50 young people) stated that they do and it was identified that the young people did need somewhere to meet and be with their friends. The majority of the young people (58%) questioned would help to raise money for appropriate facilities. The majority stated that they were not told about events happening in Four Marks.

The majority of the respondents think that young people should have a voice on the Parish Council.



This chart shows the respondents answers to the question: “Do you think that young people should have a voice on the Parish Council?”



The Old Pavilion on the recreation ground with the scout hut to the right. These buildings need replacing and enlarging to create better facilities for village use. The building on the left is no longer a safe enviroment and has now been closed.

Summary of Youth/Young persons questionnaire

51% of the respondents were male

30% of respondents were under 10

The majority of respondents were students at school or college

50% reported on the bus service being good

45% wanted cheaper bus fares

144 young people would like direct bus services to Basingstoke, Winchester, Guildford and Petersfield from Four Marks

45% of the respondents think that the present facilities in the village are average

28% described the facilities in the village as poor

98 respondents told about things they would like, a swimming pool and better play areas being at the top

88 respondents are members of youth / young person's groups in the village.

64% of respondents, who are members of groups, said it is based in the village.

66% of young people questioned stated they do not hang around the village with little to do.

50% stated they would like a facility or place to meet with their friends.

57% stated they are not informed about events happening in Four Marks

57% of the respondents felt that they should have a voice on the Parish Council

23% did not know what the Parish Council is

Appendices - Actions Identified from the Questionnaire

Action Plan	Responsibility	Timeframe	Comments
Business & Economy			
1) To reintroduce a Post Office to the village by identifying a suitable location and person who would take on that responsibility.	CPAG Parish Council Local retailers The Post Office	Review 12 months	
2) To encourage more local employment by promoting local businesses	CPAG Parish Council EHDC	Review 12 months	
3) Promote and improve the broadband infrastructure to the village and within the parish to help the local community and business	CPAG BT and other internet providers	Review 12 months	
Communications			
1) Promote better use of the village website by upgrading it and making it more accessible to all	Parish Council	Review 12 months	This is currently being undertaken by the parish council
2) Investigate the need for additional village notice boards at selected sites around the village	CPAG Parish Council	Achieved	Notice board outside school now available for village use.
3) Is there a requirement to produce welcome packs for new residents to the village	CPAG, Parish Council via website Estate agents and developers	Review 12 months	
Healthcare			
1) Promote better dental healthcare by promoting a NHS dental practice within the area of Four Marks	CPAG	Review 12 months	A Private practice is available, but not available to every body
2) Encourage more volunteers to be involved in providing more affordable transport for hospital and medical visits for the elderly and disabled within the village	CPAG Local Voluntary groups		

Four Marks Community Plan

Housing			
1) Ensure that all future developments within the parish are suitable and affordable and sustainable and are built within the National Policy	Parish Council EHDC Residents of the village	On Going	Use The National Planning Policy Framework as the rule book
2) Ensure that the village unique character is not spoilt by overdevelopment and provide minimum of 2 parking space per build	Parish Council EHDC Residents of the village	On Going	
3) Ensure that new builds are environmental friendly and are fitted with the latest carbon reducing features	Parish Council EHDC Residents of the village	On Going	
Transport			
1) To liaise with the local bus companies about reducing the fare costs and create a timetable that coordinates with the train times at Alton Railway Station	CPAG to liaise with Stagecoach group Company	Review 12 months	
2) To promote better road safety in the village by providing improved access onto the A31 from the side roads and to identify hotspots to the relevant authorities	CPAG Parish Council Hampshire CC. (Highways)	Review 12 months	
3) Educate and actively promote lawful and safe parking by Oak Green Parade and on the A31	CPAG Parish Council Police	Annual review	
4) Reduce the number of vehicles that persistently exceed the speed limits in the village by creating a speed watch within the village	CPAG Parish Council Police	Review 12 months	
Safety and Crime			
1) Investigate the concerns of villagers over vandalism and anti-social behaviour are they real.	CPAG	Review 12 months	
2) Promote the profile of "Street Watch" as many of the villagers did not understand their effectiveness	CPAG	Review 12 months	

Four Marks Community Plan

Leisure and Environment			
1) Investigate and evaluate the need for a larger village hall and facilities and to promote its better use to reflect the increase in the village population	CPAG Parish Council	Review 12months	
2) Look at ways of improving the village's carbon footprint and promote recycling and energy saving devices such as Solar panels	CPAG Parish Council	Review 12months	
3) Undertake and identify a full wildlife survey of the village and publish the findings and encourage villages to protect the wildlife	CPAG see www.wildlifesupportandconservation.org	Completed but needs to be updated bi annually	
School and Community			
1) Reduce congestion and improve parking arrangements at the school	CPAG Parish council EHDC Hampshire CC Education Dept	Review 12 months	
2) Ensure the school is adequate for the needs of the community. Does the school have the capacity to cope with village population increases	CPAG Parish Council EHDC Hampshire CC Education Dept		
3) Take steps to ensure that the elderly and disabled are catered for evaluated better ways to focus on vulnerable people within the village and encourage and promote and assist all local and community groups.	CPAG Parish Council EHDC		

Four Marks Community Plan

4) Maintain Community Aspiration by better use of advertising events, ie. press village website and noticeboards	CPAG Parish Council EHDC		
5) Ensure that that all developers contributions are spent on the needs of the village and not spent in other areas of East Hampshire District	CPAG Parish Council EHDC		
Youth			
1) Investigate how the Youth of the Village could be represented on the Parish Council.	CPAG Parish Council		

CPAG = Community Plan Action Group

EHDC = East Hampshire District Council

Acknowledgements.

The steering group would like to thank East Hampshire District Council for its support, time in collecting, providing an analysis as a result of the questionnaire returned and help in providing maps and photographs.

The steering group would also like to thank Four Marks Parish Council for providing additional financial support and for providing valuable data from the village website and Village Design Statement.

The original group consisted of :-

Mike Sanders – Chairman

Reg Pullen – Vice Chairman

Robert Wilson – Treasurer

Julie Brake - Secretary

Anne Storey

Julia Hilden

Members from the Parish Council who have been involved during the preparation of the plan have been – Ingrid Thomas, Tim Brake, Terry Taggart, Paul Turner, Wayne Howsego

Grateful thanks to all those members who have helped during the preparation of the plan not mentioned above.

If you feel that you would now like to get involved and assist the committee in the implementation of the action plan then please contact –

Reg Pullen – 01420 562845



Logo designed by Vivien Thirkettle of Four Marks Primary School