

Abbotskerswell Neighbourhood Plan

Written Evidence Base

ABBOTSKERSWELL COMMUNITY PLAN November 2007

[abbotskerswell community plan - Teignbridge District Council](http://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/chtphandler.ashx?id=13811)
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Steering Group's Views November 2015:

- 1) This Plan is a very valuable document as it gives a comprehensive overview of what was important to the community just 8 years ago and, because in the intervening period no significant developments have taken place, it remains relevant.
- 2) It shows a remarkable consistency with the 2015 survey, and this despite the fact that there are very large developments taking place on our doorstep. The main outcomes which are the same, are that a significant majority of the population feel that Abbotskerswell has a great environment and community spirit. The only major concerns, as today, being traffic and parking which in the intervening years, has clearly got worse.
- 3) On the negative side, it might act as a deterrent to the residents supporting any Plan produced, as so many of the issues raised in 2007 have not been addressed. The Parish Council undertook to have the 2007 Plan regularly on its agenda and communicate progress or otherwise on the issues.

Some key points from the 2007 Plan with comments from a 2015 perspective.

Quote from the 2007 Plan:-

“Abbotskerswell is a village where the residents are generally happy and there is a strong sense of community. This community strength means any threats to the peaceful and pleasant life within it are swiftly addressed. At the time of this questionnaire there were no critical issues threatening the relative contentment within the community and as such the focus moved to issues such as parking, speeding and environmental issues, all of which were considered to be significantly important to the community. There was also strong response that indicated any perceived threat to the status of the community, as an independent village, would be vigorously defended.”

Now there is a significant threat – the Wolborough development – but it is interesting to note that in the main, the same overall feelings and responses came through in the Neighbourhood Plan survey.

However, the questionnaire in 2007 was much more detailed giving respondents a wider opportunity to comment on many aspects of live in Abbotskerswell, and there was a significantly

higher response, with almost 40% of households responding; a rate for this type of survey being exceptional. Out of the 268 (167 in 2015) respondents, 237 (89.7%) {93.7% in 2015} were from within the village (Abbotskerswell), 6 (2.2%) {2.5% in 2015} Stoneyhill, 9 (3.3%) {1.35%} Two Mile Oak and 12 (4.4%) from the Priory.

Quotes from the 2007 Plan:-

"... a village is the way the residents perceive the environment and is the way they seek to keep it. "

"There is no desire to become a suburb of any future expansion of Newton Abbot."

"The mixture of buildings built out from an ancient centre, nestled in a secluded valley has helped create a wonderful character to the village."

"With less than 10% in favour, there is little feeling the Village envelope should be expanded. As to future residential development, responses indicate a slight emphasis towards low cost, rather than social housing. Within the free responses, there was a definite feeling that the village should remain a separate entity, keeping the present character intact. There was little desire for change."

This position was, by and large, reinforced 8 years later in the NP survey

Key Issues in 2007:-

Traffic and parking

Environmental concerns

Keeping the services the village had, like the Post Office

Quotes from the 2007 Plan:-

Traffic and parking .." emerged as key themes in the questionnaire responses. In addition, 33% of respondents gave detailed feedback on issues related to road and pavement conditions. A high level of concern was shown in the following locations: Wilton Way, Priory Hill, Manor Road, Odle Hill Grove, Court Grange Lane, Odle Hill, and Grange Road. Detailed responses in the open question answers, seems to reflect a significant degree of concern for the general state of the community roads and thoroughfares in Abbotskerswell."

"A clear majority seek speed restrictions within the village. Local authorities should support these clearly expressed views. Parking on the access to the village from the Totnes road should be addressed. The issue of parking and congestion by the school and shop are more challenging to address, but nonetheless concerns are high and a resolution to this problem is required"

Environmental concerns... "Keep 'green issues' an agenda item for both District and Parish Councils, ensuring villagers attitudes are voiced as a continuing concern. Maintain awareness of the concerns within the community not only over Waste Management, but also over litter and fly tipping. Channel the very high level of support for the protection of birds and wildlife through a volunteer group suggested by the draft biodiversity audit for Abbotskerswell."

“It is clear that, alongside the issue of dog fouling and keeping dog bins emptied, addressing the issue of overgrown shrubbery and hedgerows would have the greatest benefit to improve the community footpaths.”

The Waste Management issue is no longer a concern with the closure of Ruby Farm landfill site. However, all the other issues of concern in 2007 are still around to a greater or lesser extent.

Keeping the services the village had like the Post Office... *“The Post Office remains a vital service for many in our community and everything should be done to maintain its presence in the village.”*

This failed and the 2015 survey shows it still as a significant issue

Children’s Survey 2007:

It was good to see that there was also a children’s survey undertaken in 2007 and with very similar outcomes although there was a swimming pool back then

Quotes from the 2007 Plan:-

“It was heart-warming to understand that the children appear to be content and happy with the village and its facilities. With that in mind, we should continue to provide a safe environment for them. Abbotskerswell Community Plan, with respect to speeding control and other factors, will contribute towards this goal. A suggestion could be for a ‘fund-raising opportunity’ for the children’s one dream – A swimming pool, with deep water!!”