
INTERIM REPORT ON THE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRES SENT TO THE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES OF AMPHILL

Firstly, let me thank all of you who made time to complete the questionnaires distributed by the Town Plan Steering Group to Ampthill households and businesses. The response to the questionnaires was impressive with 1100 or 37% of the Residents Questionnaires returned.

In this report summaries of your responses are presented in a lay out similar to that of both of the original questionnaires. The results have enabled us to start identifying major issues and priorities. This together with other data made available to us, will be used to create a plan for the improvement and development of Ampthill and to facilitate its implementation.

We hope you find that this report gives you a clear picture of Ampthill at the present time and that it represents a solid foundation for further progress. The Steering Group will continue to seek your views and we will encourage you to make them known to us.

Our next step is to organise sub-groups of volunteers to look at the major issues with a view to developing specific plans for the future.

The full list of sub-groups is:

- **Transport Facilities & Infrastructure,**
- **Sports, Social, Leisure, Entertainment, Community and Youth Facilities,**
- **Tourism, Visitors to the Town, and Special Events,**
- **Health & Social Services,**
- **Environmental Issues,**
- **Housing,**
- **Employment, Training & Education,**
- **General Shopping, Retail, Business & Business Development,**
- **Security, Police and other Emergency Services & Community Safety.**

To join a sub-group please can you leave your name and area of your interest with the Ampthill Town Council Office telephone: 01525 404355.

Many of you have asked about the funding, origin and composition of the Steering Group responsible for developing an Action Plan for Ampthill.

The main funding of the Steering Group comes from the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) in the form of a government grant, and to a lesser extent from the Mid Beds District Council and the Ampthill Town Council.

At a public meeting towards the end of 2002, the then Town Mayor called for people to develop an action plan for Ampthill from the grass roots upwards. As a result, about twenty people volunteered. Now, the Steering Group comprises: Zoe Ashby (BRCC), Alan Cardwell (Chair), David Bushman, Hector Chappell, Roberta Calvert, Brian Horne, Richard Holden, Kelvin Horton, Frank Inns, Chris Mills, Peter Mears, Anthony Northey, Mark Smith, John Stoddart, and Gary Summerfield.

Please look out for further up dates to keep you informed regarding our progress.

Alan Cardwell

Chair

Ampthill Town Plan Steering Group.

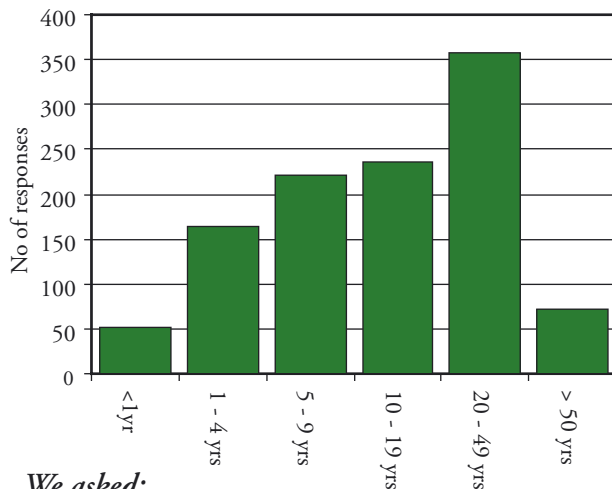


HOUSEHOLD

We asked:

How long have you, as a household lived in Ampthill?

You told us:



We asked:

Why do you as a household live in Ampthill?

You told us:

I like the community	770
Housing 311	
Near to where I work	279
Near to a good school	234
Near to a railway station	132
Near to family	62
Born here/lived most of my life here	59
Attractive/historic town	57
Houses are cheaper than nearer London	44
Attractive countryside	41
Good facilities to hand	14
Other reasons	39
Total	2042

EMPLOYMENT

We asked:

If employed where do you work?

You told us:

Ampthill/Millbrook/At home	291
London	173
Bedford/Kempston	170
Luton/Dunstable	159
Milton Keynes	96
Home Counties	64
Flitwick	53
Bedfordshire	39
UK in General	29
East Midlands	18
Silsoe	17
Maulden/Clophill	16
Cranfield	15
Shefford	12
Others	135
Total	1287

TRANSPORT

We asked:

How do you travel to work?

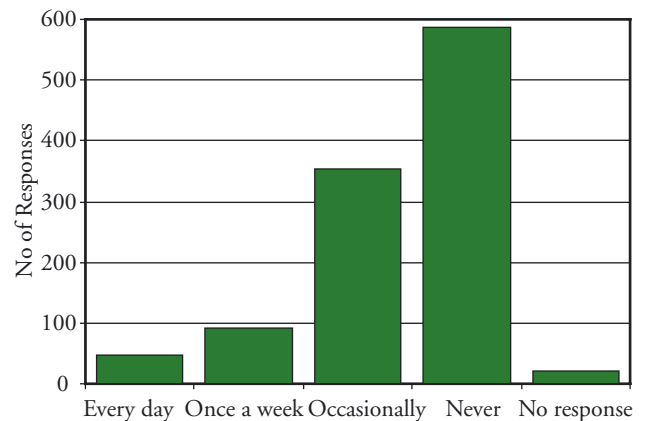
You told us:

Car/MC	948
Train	151
Walking	120
Bus	26
Cycling	12
Flying	3
Community bus	2
Taxi	1
Not classified	19
Total	1282

We asked:

How often do members of your household use buses?

You told us:



We asked:

What improvements to the bus services would encourage your household to use these services more?

You told us:

More frequent service	466
More reliable service	371
New destinations	248
Reduce the cost of travel	228
More direct service	204
Better/cleaner buses	36
Will never use one	21
Integrating bus times with the trains	11
More publicity on timetables	7
Theatre evenings in MK	5
Sheltered bus stops	3
Better information	2
Cleaner buses	2
Better evening service to MK	1
Other reasons	47
Total	1652

We asked:

Do you want Ampthill railway Station to be reopened?

You told us:

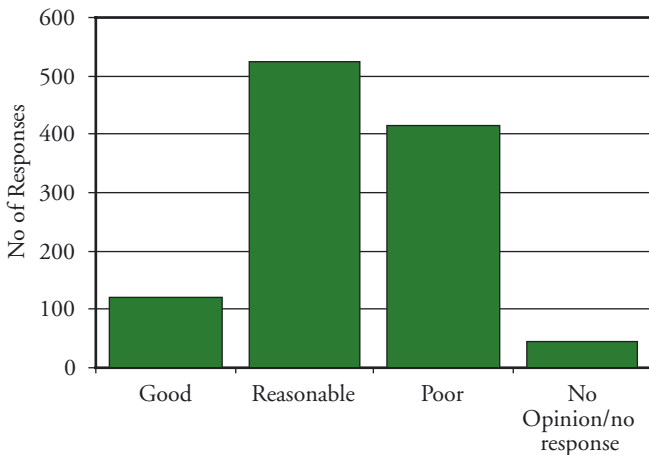
No	182
No opinion/No response	40
Yes	886

EMERGENCY & OTHER SERVICES

We asked:

What are your views on the police coverage of Ampthill?

You told us:



We asked:

Are there areas of Ampthill where you feel unsafe?

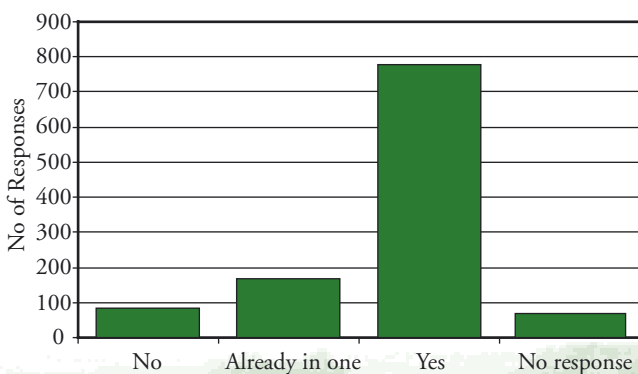
You told us:

- 492 responded with 601 reasons
- Over 500 were concerned with youths, especially intimidating or drunken youths in various parts of the town and the park during the evenings but mainly at weekends, the associated vandalism. Also the lack of police presence at these times
- 64 identified poor lighting in various parts of the town
- A few identified speeding traffic, bad parking etc

We asked:

Would you support a neighbourhood watch scheme?

You told us:

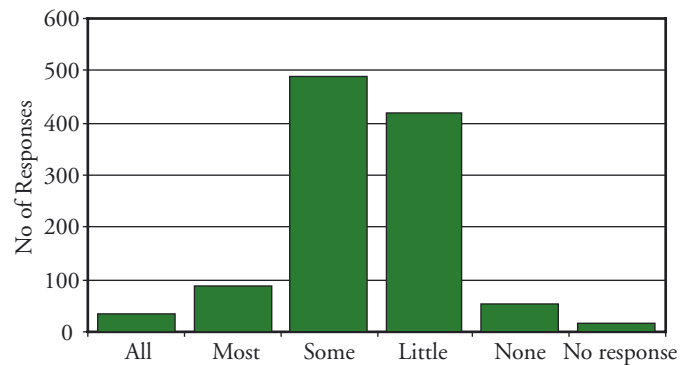


RETAIL & OTHER FACILITIES

We asked:

How much of your normal shopping is bought in Ampthill?

You told us:



We asked:

If you shop in Ampthill, could you please give the reason?

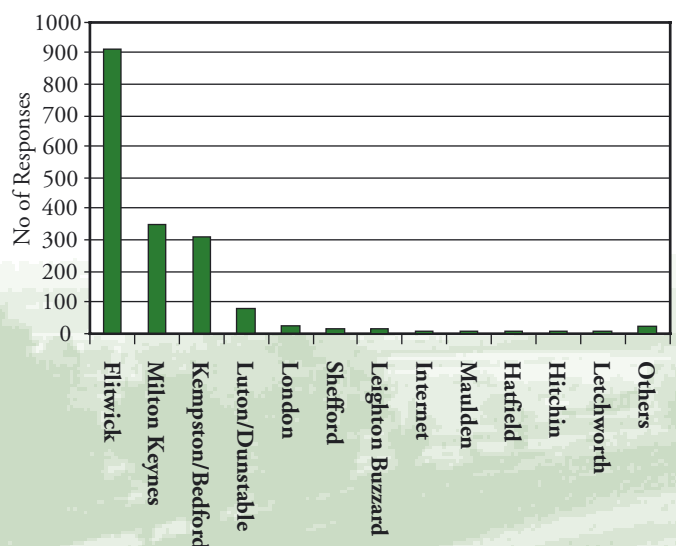
You told us:

Convenience	645
Last minute items	622
I like to support local business	580
Social contact	122
It saves transport costs	103
No transport	75
The shops give good value	68
Specialist shops(Butchers/bakers/PO etc)	43
The markets	13
I like to walk to the shops	6
Housebound	2
Antique shops	1
Other reasons	12
Total	2292

We asked:

If you don't shop in Ampthill for your normal shopping, where do you shop?

You told us:



We asked:

Why do you do your normal shopping outside Ampthill?

You told us:

More choice	820
Easier to park	410
The goods are cheaper	339
Near to where I work/school	73
No suitable store in Ampthill	56
Longer opening hours	5
Taken there, no transport	2
Use the Internet	2
All shopping under one roof	1
Convenience	1
Because Tesco is nearby	2
Other reasons	26
Total reasons given	1736

We asked:

What additional or improved retail facilities would encourage you to shop more in Ampthill?

You told us:

Better supermarket	347
Larger supermarket	184
More diversity/choice	157
Specific food shops	124
Other shops (clothes, shoes DIY etc)	122
Better parking	99
Keep Ampthill as it is/no supermarket	21
Very large supermarket	19
Cheaper goods	9
Out of town supermarket	9
Longer hours/Sunday opening/Access	9
Other improvements	28
Total	1155

HOUSING

We asked:

What type of additional accommodation is needed in Ampthill?

You told us:

Starter homes	325
Low cost homes	284
Restricted sale to local people	166
No more houses	149
Owner occupier	113
Sheltered housing	108
Shared ownership	81
Executive homes	68
Social housing	55
Housing for special needs	46
Private rented homes	36
Bungalows for elderly/infirm	11
Other	29
Total	1471

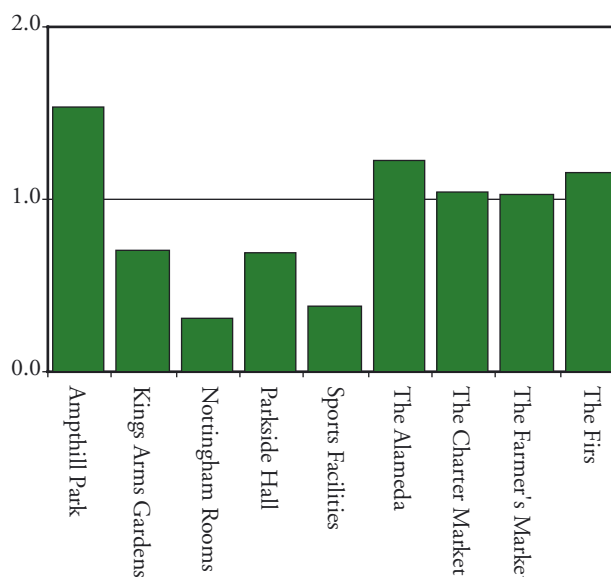
ENVIRONMENT

We asked:

Please give your views on Ampthill's current amenities?

You told us:

Good (2) Moderate (1) Never (0)

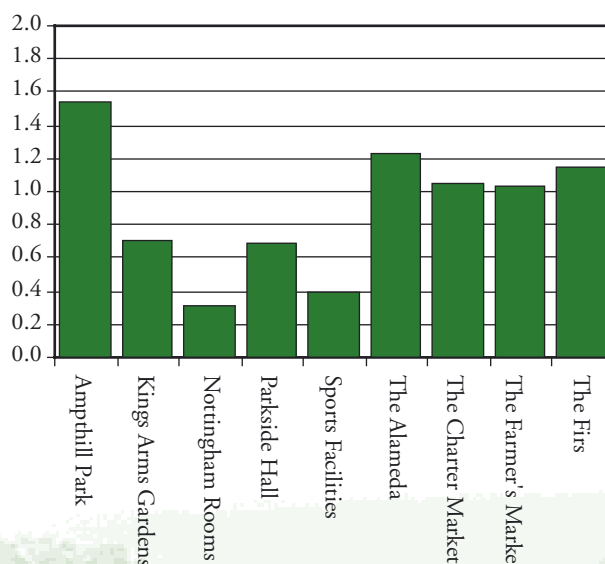


We asked:

Which of the following facilities have you used in the last 18 months?

You told us:

Good (2) Moderate (1) Never (0)



SOCIAL & ENTERTAINMENT

We asked:

What amenities do you think Ampthill needs?

You told us:

More central parking	644
New/better Community Centre	579
Youth Centre	573
Better security	412
Cinema/Theatre facilities	404
Museum/Heritage Centre	381
More Hotel & Guest Houses	308
Amenity signposting	188
Arts Centre	185
More restaurants	107
Disco/night clubs	51
More public houses	42
Swimming pool	37
Sports Centre	23
Leisure Centre	15
Keep Ampthill as it is	5
Other amenities	87
Total	4040

We asked:

What facilities do you think Ampthill Community Centre should provide?

You told us:

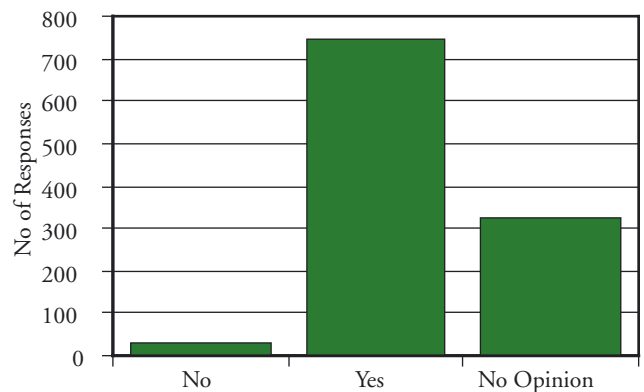
Youth club	243
Elderly/infirm day centre	73
Theatre/drama	59
Nursery/child care/Crèche/Playgroup	41
Tea/coffee shop	33
Evening/day classes	25
Drop in Centre	24
Cinema	24
Art Centre	21
Exercise club	18
Sports, Social & Leisure /events	24
Music	17
Visitor Centre	13
Dancing/Dancing classes	9
Conference centre	1
Wedding receptions	3
Other	89
Hardware	235
New Hall etc	4
Total	960

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

We asked:

Is there a need for the Good Neighbour Scheme in Ampthill?

You told us:



PEOPLE

We asked:

What are your current sporting activities?

You told us:

Football	295
Golf	289
Tennis	189
Badminton	161
Rugby	155
Athletics	109
Squash	102
Cricket	96
Swimming	80
Netball	71
Hockey	33
Walking	18
Cycling	16
Bowls	14
Other unspecified sports	772
Other specified sports	68
Total	2468

Additional comments received:

- A number of people said that they decided to move here because of Ampthill's attractiveness, historic charm, and rural surroundings.
- Some people said that Ampthill might lose its identity as a Georgian Market Town if development spoilt the virtues of living here.
- Many people requested additional central car parking spaces, including the provision of disabled car parking spaces.

We asked:

What are your social, cultural and voluntary activities?

You told us:

Eating out	266
Cinema	221
Walking/Rambling	196
Church activities	171
Pubs	123
Music/singing	146
Theatre/Drama/Opera	191
Swimming	80
Charity work	69
Gardening/Allotments	63
Reading/Library	71
Dancing/ballet	55
Scouts/Guides	38
351 Other activities	1126
Total	2816

We asked:

What additional sporting, social and cultural activities would you like to see in Ampt Hill?

You told us:

Swimming pool	262
Cinema	139
Youth club	82
Theatre	68
Leisure Centre	62
Tennis	50
Skate park	36
Badminton/squash	26
Gymnastics	69
Cycling	24
Sports Hall	41
Dancing	25
298 Other activities suggested	585
Total	1470

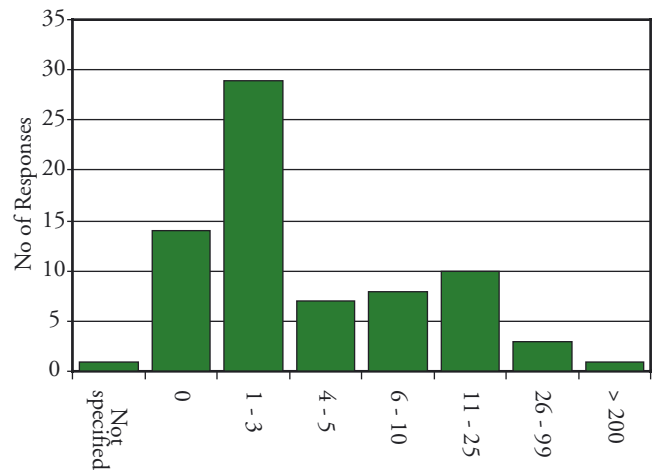
- A significant number of people felt that Ampt Hill had been allowed to deteriorate to the extent that it looked uncared for.
- Many people said how nice it is to live in a small friendly environment.
- Many people also felt that there is plenty of community spirit, and that people would participate in projects that would enhance the town.

BUSINESS RESPONSES

We asked:

How many people do you employ in Ampt Hill?

You told us:



We asked:

Over the last 12 months have you had any recruiting difficulties?

You told us:

Insufficient basic skills	8
Insufficient qualifications	6
Insufficient experience	3
Transport	3
Unsocioable hours/shift work	2
lack of parking	1
Total	23

We asked:

What should be encouraged in Ampt Hill?

You told us:

Strongly in favour (2) In Favour (1)
No opinion either way (0)

